

Holistic healing

Allamanda implements alternative techniques to help cancer patients deal with emotional and physical pain



Lisa Keeley, clinical hypnotherapist with patient

Well-being programs specifically designed for cancer sufferers and survivors have greatly improved the lives of patients at Allamanda Private Hospital.

Since the Healthscope-operated hospital appointed Clinical Hypnotherapist Lisa Keeley last year to offer complimentary care to patients at its sister facility, Pacific Private Day Oncology, the feedback and results have been astounding.

Ms Keeley uses techniques such as clinical hypnotherapy, neuro-linguistic programming and stress management to help improve patients' mental well-being and provide them with alternative methods to deal with pain, nausea and stress-related issues.

Allamanda Private Hospital General Manager David Harper said everyone who worked with Ms Keeley gave extremely positive feedback, and the hospital was now supporting Ms Keeley's efforts to offer similar programs to the general public.

"The improvements shown in patients who work with Lisa at Pacific Private Day

"It's worrying that most people don't have access to these holistic methods, because it's something that could save their lives and make their fight against cancer an easier one"

Oncology have been absolutely incredible and we feel many cancer sufferers, their carers and survivors can benefit from this holistic approach," he said.

Cancer survivor Eve Kelly, who worked with Ms Keeley, said without this program her journey would have been unbearable.

"Lisa has been instrumental in my recovery and I know I would not be where I am today if it wasn't for working with her," she said.

"I was really having a horrible time dealing with my disease but Lisa's work saved me. It's worrying that most people don't have access to these holistic methods, because it's something that

could save their lives and make their fight against cancer an easier one."

Ms Keeley said helping patients cope with the emotional journey of their disease is important.

"The work I conduct with patients at Pacific Private Day Oncology involves assessing how they are coping emotionally with their diagnosis and chosen treatments," she said.

"This is an extremely important phase of recovery as many patients with a serious medical condition like cancer feel they have lost control in their lives.

"We work together so they can gain back some of that control and learn coping mechanisms to help them through a very stressful time."

Ms Keeley said feelings of panic, anxiety, fear, anger and sadness are commonly associated with a serious health diagnosis and these emotions contribute to heightened stress levels.

"We practice deep relaxation, visualisation and breathing techniques to help the individual reduce their stress levels and to stay in control of their emotions," she said.

"I teach simple techniques that the patient can practice at the unit under my guidance and also provide concise literature so they can continue this practice at home."

Ms Keeley also treats symptoms such as nausea and pain with techniques including hypnotherapy and said these therapeutic interventions are already adopted in many oncology units internationally.

"Overseas, hospitals clearly understand the importance of a holistic mind and stress management program to assist in their patients' mental and physical well-being," she said.

"Allamanda is taking a modern and open approach to treatments and I am hopeful that in the future, there will be professionals like myself working with patients in hospitals Australia-wide." 

By Karla Simpson