



Speaking from Experience *Bowel Cancer*

Transcript for chapter 9 of 10: Medical & other support

Debra - Mum and dad used to come up and look after Alexander when he was quite small. And I was having chemotherapy when he was only seven months old. So I really needed some support then. I also had a cleaning lady come in to help with things around the house. But family support was fantastic. I have two sisters and they were great as well. Friends, very good friends we have, and very close friends - who would bring meals, you know, knock on the front door with a meal, and that was fantastic.

Caroline - A lot of people coming around asking me to take part in projects, like 'Going Home' projects - how are you going to look after yourself and who is going to help you? And a dietician came around because I wasn't very happy with the transition from ice to liquid to light food to ordinary, you know, to regular food.

Debra - There is also a nurse within the hospital who gives you extra support and you can ring her any time with any difficulties. You know, if you have a sudden bout of diarrhea or something like that or things aren't going just as well as they should. You can ring her at any time and speak with her. So there's plenty of support there.

Peter - I'm working for the Ostomy Support Group. I go out and I counsel males, mainly, because when I needed a male after what happened, there was no male to talk to. And I go and see a lot of people in hospitals.

Caroline - In hospital, besides the fantastic doctors and nurses, they have quite a few auxiliary people. Like there's a cancer support officer that came around to let me know about a Cancer Support Group that's starting up in October. You know, a six week series to get some reading material and help, she was very good.

Debra - I just found the oncologist so easy to talk to. We had a really good rapport and that was a great benefit to me. He was much younger than me too, which you sort of think "Oh..." But he has a lot of experience and he's keeping up to date all the time. And also the nurses, who worked in the day care centre with the oncologist, they were great and we've become very good friends.

Dennis - It's of paramount importance that you've got a GP that you can trust and you know very well - and he knows your family history and also your own history.

Caroline - It's very important that the medical people that you're dealing with - the specialist and later the surgeon - that they treat you with warmth and compassion and understand. Even though I'm sure they've had to break bad news to many, many people. I certainly felt as though I was being treated as a special individual at that moment.

Debra - Let people do things for you. Let people help. Because they want to, and that's great. Let them support you a bit. But just keep getting up in the morning and getting out of bed.



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