

HEADED NOTEPAPER

Date

Dear Dr,

The experience of spiritual healing

For my PhD, I am studying the experience of spiritual healing in women with breast cancer who are receiving long term hormonal therapy and commonly report adverse side effects. I am working in collaboration with the Complementary Medicine Research Unit at the University of Southampton.

Spiritual healing is a comparatively neglected area of research, does not employ drugs, manipulation, needles or any form of instrument to heal. Healing is sometimes referred to as the laying on of hands, although it does not necessarily involve direct touch. Whilst it is often referred to as 'spiritual' healing, it is available to people with any religious belief and to those with no belief. Healers do not claim to cure cancer, however they may be able to help people cope with their cancer journey. At present we don't know if or how spiritual healing works and I want to investigate these issues in some depth.

Healing will take place in the Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Facility at Southampton General Hospital and patients will be able to book up to ten healing sessions, free of charge, with healers from the Harry Edwards Healing Sanctuary.

The Cancer Sciences Protocol Review Committee has approved my request to ask for your assistance in the recruitment of 20 patients through the Oncology Department. I have provided an inclusion criteria checklist to assist in the selection of suitable patients (copy attached). Please could you give suitable patients a patient information pack.

Thank you very much in anticipation.

Fiona Barlow MSc., BA, BACP(Accred.)