

Title of Workshop: Bringing the Evidence-based Message to Consumers: Classic Missteps in Health Care

Facilitators: Kay Dickersin and Maryann Napoli

Precis/Summary: This consumer workshop focuses on the importance of evaluating the evidence for health care decision making. Three cases in which untested therapies or surgical approaches became clinical practice will be presented. Participants will analyze relevant literature and engage in group discussion in an interactive, informal format.

Objectives: The workshop will improve consumers' understanding of evidence-based health care by examining three cases in which therapeutic interventions were widely used before good evidence was available, often with disastrous results.

During the workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Discuss the quality of evidence used in all three cases;
2. Explain how evidence from controlled trials would have changed outcomes; and
3. Discuss consumers' role in communicating appropriate use of evidence in policy making and communication about an intervention's effectiveness and safety.

Description: Facilitators will provide an overview focusing on three interventions: hormone therapy for postmenopausal women, high dose chemotherapy (autologous bone marrow transplant) for breast cancer patients, and Rezulin (troglitazone) used to treat type 2 diabetes mellitus. Participants will engage in analysis and guided discussion of each case, with emphasis on how evidence should have been used to guide information dissemination and personal decision making. All participants should leave the workshop with increased awareness of informed decision making, given different levels of available evidence.
