**School of Science and Health**

**Honours Projects 2014**

**TITLE OF PROJECT:** Integrative Oncology Programs across Australia: How Integrative Oncology Is Being Practiced Across Australia

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**CAMPUS PROJECT IS OFFERED AND CONDUCTED:** Campbelltown

**BACKGROUND (200 WORDS):**

Integrative oncology focuses on the complex health of people with cancer and proposes an array of approaches to accompany the conventional therapies of surgery, chemotherapy, molecular therapeutics, and radiotherapy to facilitate health (Sagar SM, 2008). People with cancer are increasingly using complementary medicine to supplement their cancer treatment across Australia. Around 87% of breast cancer patients reported using CAM in an Australian survey [1]. The process of integrating CM into oncology care is largely consumer driven. Patients are increasingly seeking CM care and expecting their doctors to be able to know about CM or at least be able to discuss options, and initiate referral to CM providers.

Integrative oncology programs are diverse in their structure and process of care. A recent survey of the field internationally documented no programs in Australia [2]. The literature reporting examples of oncology programs in Australia is sparse and limited to descriptions of single programs or entities. An Australian Senate enquiry into Cancer Care in 2005 found that Australia is lagging behind in the development of integrating CM in oncology care [3].

In order to understand this emerging field and its implications for health policy and practice we first need to map that field.

**AIM OF STUDY:**

To better understand how integrative oncology is being practiced in Australia, this project will map the field. The project will review the literature to identify what is known about the integrative oncology programs in Australia; and survey the operators of these programs to describe integrative oncology programs operating within Australia.

**METHODS:**

The supervisors will work closely with the student to train the student in all steps to undertake a review of the literature, map the integrative oncology field in Australia and where possible, describe these programs. The project will involve:

- Review of literature on integrative oncology in Australia;
- Identification of integrative oncology programs operating in Australia through literature search, yellow pages, online investigation and contacting key players and leaders in the integrative oncology field;
Design, seeks ethics approval and administer a survey (using Survey Monkey) of integrative oncology program leaders. The items to be surveyed will include description of clinic, components of care (therapies offered), structure, process of care, and any measurable outcomes used.

Conduct statistical analysis of results;

Draft discussion and conclusion with a view to publication.

Expertise in statistics is not expected and full support will be provided for the analysis. The student will be offered authorship of a publication submitted for review.

ETHICS APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS: An ethics application will be completed and approved with UWS Ethics

KEY REFERENCES:

