

**Welcome ...** to the Holistic Cancer Care Centre at The James Cook University Hospital. The aim of this leaflet is to provide you with some general information about your Reiki treatment and answer some of the most commonly asked questions. You may find it helpful prior to your first visit, to make a note (on the back of this leaflet) of the things you would like to ask.

### **what is reiki?**

Reiki, like other complementary therapies focuses upon the whole individual. So often when people are given a diagnosis the focus is turned to the cancer site and not the person.

Many patients suffering from cancer make use of complementary therapies, with Reiki being a popular choice. Reiki is the Japanese form of hands on healing; it is a natural therapy designed to positively boost our sense of well-being. There are no religious connotations within Reiki, therefore no belief system is necessary to receive this method of healing. Reiki has many health promoting effects:

- ◆ to contribute to pain relief
- ◆ to promote relaxation
- ◆ to improve sleep pattern
- ◆ to reduce tension, stress and anxiety

- ◆ to provide emotional and/or spiritual support
- ◆ to contribute to a sense of well-being
- ◆ to reduce side effects of chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

Receiving Reiki is a very relaxing experience. Patients typically report a pleasant warmth or heat coming from the practitioner's hands and a gentle "letting go" of stress and strains. The room is warm and quiet with gentle relaxing music being played in the background and before the session begins, patients are encouraged to talk to the practitioner. The effects and gentle touch of Reiki, the individual care, attention and relaxing music, all contribute to the benefits of the treatment.

Recipients can receive Reiki fully dressed whilst sitting in a relaxing chair or lying on a couch; the only item of clothing removed is the shoes, however, even this is not obligatory. The practitioner places his/her hands either on or just above certain points on the body; gentle stroking and/or light finger pressure may be applied.

Using a holistic view of each patient in order to alleviate their stress and discomfort can also be beneficial in reducing the side effects of the person's cancer treatment. Ideally,

Reiki should be an integral part of the care provided for such individuals.

### **how can Reiki help me?**

Many people come to Reiki for help with specific symptoms or conditions. These might include anxiety states, hot flushes, insomnia, indeterminate aches and pains, lethargy and low vitality.

Reiki can be used alongside conventional medicine in the treatment of both acute and chronic disease. Some people may have Reiki as a preventative measure or because they feel unwell in themselves without being "ill" in the Western sense. As with any therapy, the response to Reiki can vary from one person to another.

### **what will happen on my first visit?**

The Reiki practitioner needs to assess your general state of health. You will be asked about your current symptoms and what treatment you have received so far, your medical history, sleeping patterns, emotional state and current problems. You will also be asked what you would like the sessions to achieve and to choose an area of concern, spiritual, psychological or physical, upon which we will focus. The practitioner may offer suitable self-help practices to ensure your desired outcome which may range from simple creative imaging to techniques for letting go of negative thoughts and

