An Interesting Day as Hepatitis C Treatment Comes to a Finish

August 15, 2015 By Greg Jefferys

14th August 2015

Another interesting day.
It began in the morning with me swallowing the last Sofosbuvir tablet of my 12 week treatment and ended with me swallowing the last of the Ribavirin. I'm very glad to have finished the pill popping!
After breakfast I went straight into the Hobart Hepatitis Clinic to organise blood and viral load tests and met the clinic's new nurse who is replacing J while she is on long service leave. We discussed how many people in Tasmania and Australia have begun using India generic Hep C medication and how many other clinics and doctors are supporting the patients who are taking this course in order to gain access to otherwise inaccessible medication.
After I had my bloods taken I drove out to Huonville to meet up with the film crew again. This time they were interviewing M who was one the first person in Tasmania that I had helped to get the Indian generics. She is a bit more than nine weeks into her treatment and generously and bravely agreed to be interviewed by the current affairs program. I did ask a number of people but the stigma associated with Hep C is such that all felt uncomfortable with the idea of a national news story on their very personal battle with this disease, which I totally understand. Only M agreed to an interview.
It was very moving for me sitting in the background and listening to M's story again, hearing of the debilitating effects of the disease and the soul destroying knowledge that the cure exists but is inaccessible because of price. The waiting and hoping that one might get on a trial or that some other miracle will happen.
Another amazing co-incidence occurred because M had received her 8 week viral load report the previous day and she had agreed not to tell me about it so that she could spring it to me on camera. Brilliant news... her viral load has come down from the millions to none detected! It was a privilege to share in her joy.
It was also great to see how she was looking ten years younger than the first time I had met her and bubbling with energy and vigor.
After the the filming was done I went up the Huon River trout fishing, no mobile phone reception and not a computer for miles. The river was in flood and each fish I hooked managed to use the flood currents to throw the hook and escape. Lucky fish, unlucky me! But it was a lovely relaxing day.
Back at home I swallowed my last three Ribavirin tablets with dinner and then settled down to work through my correspondence.
Finished the night with a game of Canasta with my lovely wife who again beat me.

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