



*Myra Bluebond-Langner*

**Title:** When cure is not likely: Understanding children's, parents' and clinicians' responses and improving clinical practice

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## **ABSTRACT**

The impact of cancer on families is ongoing and evolving. In this presentation we focus on the impact of cancer from the time the cancer recurs and cure is not likely, through to deterioration and death. We examine what families find problematic, how they define the issues and sources of their perceptions. We also identify drivers of behaviour and the strategies families use to make their way through the journey. We provide a framework through which the experiences of children, parents and siblings with cancer can be understood. We see such an understanding as key to building and maintaining the relationships with various members of the family, essential for the delivery of palliative care at any level and at any point in the illness.

Our approach to understanding the impact of cancer is, like palliative care itself, multidisciplinary. While attending to results from psychology our approach also relies upon sociology and anthropology. We stress the importance of understanding behaviour as relational and as social interaction. Attention is given to conversations between and among children, parents and clinicians, individuals' perceptions and enactment of their roles and responsibilities.

Our aim is to provide an understanding of the impact of cancer which will enable clinicians to both assess the needs of children and families and to provide the necessary support.