



BREAST CANCER RESEARCH TRUST

# BrEaST *Bulletin*

September 2024

Nine women are diagnosed every day with breast cancer in New Zealand, so it's likely that someone in your workplace, whānau/family, neighbourhood, or from your community has been affected. Next month is breast cancer awareness month. I encourage you to mark October with raising awareness of breast cancer symptoms, self-checking, and early detection through regular mammograms.

To support wāhine/women in our communities and our breast cancer research cause, why not organise a pink-themed event over breast cancer awareness month? This could be a workplace morning or afternoon tea, a bake sale, or a golf club tournament. Join a community Pink Walk in Hamilton, Putaruru or Huntly (see below).

In August we welcomed Kimberley Dalgety and Danielle Donaldson to our BCRT team. Kimberley is the Midland Data Manager for the Breast Cancer Foundation National Register. Cathy Head has left this role to become the National Register Data Manager Team Leader. Danielle takes on a Data Coordinator role with the Register. We acknowledge the wonderful work of the Breast Cancer Foundation NZ in funding and governing the Te Rēhita Mate Ūtaetae Breast Cancer Foundation National Register. The Register is a vital resource for monitoring standards of care, service planning, and for research.



The “Suppression of Ovarian Function trial” (“SOFT”) has recently completed 20 years of follow-up. We acknowledge the 17 Waikato women who participated. Over 3,000 women from 25 countries were enrolled in this clinical trial. Research nurses like myself form a close working relationship with women as we journey alongside them throughout trial treatment and long-term follow-up. These are the women that inspire our work and for whom we always want to improve outcomes.

Ngā mihi nui

**Jenni Scarlet**

**BCRT Secretary & Breast Cancer Research Nurse**

## **The Suppression of Ovarian Function Trial 20 years on**

The SOFT is a large international clinical trial specifically for younger women with hormone receptor positive breast cancers. Very young women have had worse outcomes than older women diagnosed with breast cancer. The SOFT trial was carried out to understand if suppression of the production of oestrogen could result in a better outcome compared to the standard treatment for young women.

Results so far have shown there was an overall reduction in recurrence of breast cancer, and this information has changed practice in many parts of the world. We need to look and see whether suppression of the production of oestrogen ultimately improves survival. We now await the results from the 20-year follow-up analysis.

Waikato SOFT participants were pleased to hear of the advancements in treatment that have come about through this trial and were pleased to contribute to the now improved standard of care.

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## **Keytruda to be funded from 1 October**

This is good news for New Zealanders diagnosed with advanced triple negative breast cancer who will soon receive free treatment with Keytruda. From 1 October 2024 Pharmac will fund Keytruda (also known as pembrolizumab) for those with recurrent or advanced (incurable) triple negative breast cancer.

Although the best time for these women to begin Keytruda would have been earlier, last month's announcement from Health NZ brings us closer to the treatment that those diagnosed with this aggressive type of breast cancer urgently need.

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## **Wills Month: A Time to Plan and Protect**

September is Wills Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of having a will.

At the Breast Cancer Research Trust, we understand that planning for the future can be a sensitive topic, but it is an essential step in ensuring that your wishes are honored and your loved ones are cared for. Creating a will is not only about distributing your assets; it's about making thoughtful decisions that reflect your values and priorities. It provides peace of mind, knowing that your affairs are in order and that you have made provisions for those you care about most.

As you consider your legacy, we invite you to think about the impact you can make on the future of breast cancer research. By including a gift to the Breast Cancer Research Trust in your will, you can help us continue our vital work in finding a cure and supporting those affected by breast cancer.

This Wills Month, take the first step in securing your future and the future of those you love. Your thoughtful planning today can make a lasting difference tomorrow.

For more information on how to include the Breast Cancer Research Trust in your will, please contact us directly. Together, we can create a future free from breast cancer.

[Click here if you would like more information on how to include the Breast Cancer Research Trust in your will](#)

### **Marg Jenkins' Legacy: A Gift of Hope**

The loss of a close friend to breast cancer and seeing the enormous ripple affect her loss had on her family, friends and far-reaching community was the catalyst for my volunteering for the Breast Cancer Research Trust (BCRT) in 2017.

I wanted to contribute in some way to help people diagnosed with breast cancer. I had built a connection with the team at the BCRT through my work at the Waikato Times and when I retired, asked if there was any volunteer work I could do to help. Gathering donated prizes for gala auctions and spot prizes was one way I could contribute.

What the team at the Breast Cancer Research Trust do is progressive and inspiring. The passion to make a difference for breast cancer patients, their families and their futures is nothing short of commendable.

The BCRT team has participated in more than 50 trials covering aspects of breast cancer care from prevention to new surgical techniques, better drug treatments, better radiation therapies, better patient communication and studies to help improve patient quality of life.

None of this is possible without the financial support of funding grants and creative fundraising events, as there is no government funding for this research. Around five women are diagnosed with breast cancer in the Waikato every week. Around 3,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer across New Zealand every year.

I won't always be able to help through volunteer work, so I made a bequest to contribute to ongoing research, which will improve the outcomes for more women who will go on to live productive lives, as well as futureproofing research for those yet to be diagnosed.

***Margaret Jenkins***

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**BREAST CANCER  
RESEARCH TRUST**

# **PINK WALK & RUN**

**31 OCTOBER 2024**

**HAMILTON LAKE, INNES COMMON**

Entertainment from 4.30pm | Walk/Run from 5.45pm


Walk distance: 3.8km | Run distance: 5km


Wear your pink finery for breast cancer awareness or yellow in support of local breast cancer research. Even better, mix pink and yellow together. Prizes for BEST dressed individuals, BEST dressed group & BEST dressed pooch.


[Click here for more information or to ENTER NOW!](#)








 **Date:** 21 October 2024


 **Location:** Hakanoa Lake, Huntly


 **Start Time:** 5:30 PM

 **Entry:** Gold coin donation

 **Date:** 23 October 2024

 **Location:** Garden of Memories, Putaruru

 **Start Time:** Registration from 5pm, warm up at 5.15pm, Walk starts at 5.30pm

 **Entry:** Gold coin donation



This Father's Day, we honour fathers who are pillars of strength and love in our community.

Whether you're a father, grandfather, or father figure, we wish you a wonderful Fathers' Day.

The Breast Cancer Research Trust team.



As we mark World Cancer Research Day on 24 September, the Breast Cancer Research Trust celebrates the strides made in the fight against breast cancer.

We recognise the tireless efforts of researchers, healthcare professionals, and advocates working to improve the lives of those affected by cancer.

We are grateful to everyone who has contributed to our cause. Your support inspires us to continue our work with renewed determination.

Join us in celebrating the progress we have made and the promise of future improvements. Whether through donations, volunteering, or spreading awareness, your involvement is crucial in our fight against breast cancer. Together, we can achieve remarkable things.



**Breast Cancer  
Research Trust**

*Gaining Knowledge. Saving Lives.*

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