



Breast Cancer  
Foundation NZ



**Towards Zero Deaths**  
Annual Report 2019

# Towards Zero Deaths

## Annual report 2019

**How can we achieve our vision of zero deaths from breast cancer? By pushing for new frontiers in early detection, treatment and support.**

Every year, 3,300 new cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in New Zealand. That's nine women a day. Every year, more than 600 women die of breast cancer. In our 25th year, through four key initiatives, Breast Cancer Foundation NZ continued making a difference:

- 1 Educating** New Zealanders on the importance of early detection. Survival rates are higher when breast cancer is found early
- 2 Investing** in innovative **research** that could improve treatment and save lives
- 3 Improving** quality of life of people with breast cancer by offering **support** and funding counselling, rehabilitation and lymphoedema therapy
- 4 Advocating** for more and better government funding, and equal treatment for all



**In Breast Cancer  
Foundation NZ's  
25<sup>th</sup> year:**

**Adult Kiwis  
reached**

**30**

**million**

times with awareness

**campaign**



**2,360**  
registered for  
**webinars**

**507,000** 

printed education resources given out



**Breast nurse helpline calls:**

**1,164**

Nearly

**3,000**

private messages & emails  
**sent to patients**

**People spoken to  
face-to-face**

**24,000+**

**792**   
**patients funded**

for physio and exercise  
programmes

**394**   
**counselling  
vouchers issued**

# From the Chair and Chief Executive



**Our vision is zero deaths from breast cancer. We're nowhere near that point yet – we still lose more than 600 Kiwis a year to breast cancer – but we do believe that one day, zero deaths will be a reality.**

To get there, we need to keep pushing the boundaries in early detection, because finding breast cancer early is the key to saving lives. As a country, we must be committed to offering everyone the best possible treatment – that's why BCFNZ funds research into new, affordable treatments and why we help hospitals purchase new equipment sooner. We must support those going through their breast cancer journeys, because no one should face this challenge alone.

Finally, people with advanced breast cancer deserve to live longer and stronger, with the best possible quality of life. In 2018/19 we funded innovative research, provided state-of-the-art equipment to hospitals, educated health professionals and at-risk groups, and advocated for better and more equitable treatment for all Kiwis.

We are working on many more exciting initiatives which we will launch next year.

**Justine Smyth**  
(Chair)

**Evangelia Henderson**  
(Chief Executive)



**\$3 million committed**

(2018-2023) **to the operation and expansion of the Breast Cancer Foundation National Register**

**\$1 million committed**

**for improved breast cancer services at North Shore Hospital**

**\$982,000**

**worth of research projects funded**

**4 clinical trials**

**supported at Auckland District Health Board**

**2,300 new patients'**

**disease and treatment data recorded**

**3,000+**

**medical professionals trained or reached with education**

# Research & Medical

**BCFNZ continued working with New Zealand's smartest scientists and medical minds in a constant quest for urgently-needed breakthroughs.**

We made available nearly \$1 million for projects in such promising areas as digital pathology, development of breast cancer vaccines, genetics related to immunotherapy, better treatment of triple negative breast cancer, and a clinical trial to reduce the side-effects of breast cancer chemotherapy.

We completed the consolidation of four regional patient registers, now called the Breast Cancer Foundation National Register. This national register includes patients treated in both public and private healthcare systems and contains the most comprehensive collection of patient treatment and outcomes in the world.

This rich data is allowing research into various areas, including identifying inequities for Māori. We will spend \$3 million in the next five years on maintenance, including data entry and further automation, and extending its cover from 70% to 100% of New Zealand.

In 2018/19 we also committed \$1 million to the development of world-class diagnostic breast cancer services at North Shore Hospital, and funded equipment for better treatments in hospitals and clinics around the country.



# Support

**BCFNZ supports people throughout their breast cancer journeys.**

Our **online app mybc connects breast cancer patients** and helps them share advice and encouragement. It continued flourishing in 2018/19, with 624 new members joining.

We run **free bi-monthly informative webinars** where patients can listen to and ask questions of doctors and other experts.

We offer a **free 0800 breast nurse helpline** for patients to discuss concerns and get expert advice. In 2018/19, 1,164 women were supported via the helpline.

**Free counselling and rehabilitation** is also available to breast cancer patients. In 2018/19 we funded physio, exercise and counselling for 1,186 people affected by breast cancer.

We **started funding lymphoedema treatment** in March 2019. By the end of July, 34 providers were signed up to offer the service and 175 women had received funding.

We also **support other smaller breast cancer organisations** around the country.

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**"I can't thank you enough for this introduction to physio. I felt physically weak, was afraid to exercise my upper body, was slouching and had pain in my shoulders and arms. After the first session... I felt like Lazarus rising from the dead! Thanks for all that you do." – Catherine**

# Early detection

**Finding breast cancer early is the key to saving lives. In 2019 we promoted this message on air, online and on the road.**

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Our breast awareness campaign, **‘Breast cancer touches the whole family,’** was seen millions of times.

**“When I first saw this campaign, as a breast cancer survivor, it connected with me deeply. The impact of a breast cancer diagnosis, and the challenging journey that follows, has such a huge impact on your entire family. My husband in particular almost felt forgotten as everyone’s focus was on me. Thank you for opening people’s eyes to the wide-reaching impact that a diagnosis has.”** – Lou, Auckland

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Our focus remained on boosting screening numbers, which had slipped to just 65% coverage for Māori women. **Our Pink Caravan visited 30 towns**, concentrating on areas with the lowest screening rates, and caravan nurses had in-depth conversations with 1,725 people.

**“What a brilliant vehicle you have to share such an important message.”** – Pink caravan visitor, South Waikato



Our educators visited workplaces, expos, Fieldays, schools, and GP and nurse conferences to keep breast awareness uppermost in people’s minds.

**“Debra, what an amazing ambassador you are for the breast cancer cause. We so admired the amount of information you provided covering current statistics, new diagnostic tools, and development in research and treatment so ably and audibly, then fielding questions with grace and humour.”** – Te Pahu Women’s Institute



**Educating and awareness-raising: spreading knowledge, saving lives**

# Advocacy

**In September 2018 we released “I’m still here”, our ground-breaking report on advanced breast cancer (ABC). It revealed that Kiwis are dying of ABC twice as fast as people in comparable countries. Average survival for a Kiwi with ABC is just 16 months, compared with two to three years, or more, in countries like Australia, Germany and France.**

Once diagnosed with ABC, our patients seem to receive less treatment than in comparable countries, and up to one-quarter receive none at all. We called for an urgent change in attitude that sets expectations higher for people with ABC in New Zealand.

Prompted by the report’s release, Health Minister Dr David Clark met with oncologists at BCFNZ’s office. In January 2019, we brought Dr Fatima Cardoso, a world authority on ABC, to New Zealand. She gave a patient seminar in Auckland and a public lecture in Wellington, and spoke at the Cancer Care at a Crossroads conference for healthcare professionals. While there, she met with breast cancer specialists and Ministry of Health officials. Following her visit, we kept up the pressure.

**We actively supported petitions and marches on Parliament and made powerful submissions to the Health Select Committee demanding funding of life-extending drugs Kadcylya and Ibrance.**



**Dr  
Fatima  
Cardoso**

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**“I had a very productive meeting with the oncologists here. We discussed writing guidelines, so that everybody is treated not according to what an individual physician thinks, but according to what’s the best care available.” – Dr Fatima Cardoso**

# Making a difference

Katja was the first patient to use scalp cooling technology during chemotherapy treatment in Nelson hospital in a pilot funded by Breast Cancer Foundation NZ. Of the patients that completed treatment, none lost more than 50% of their hair, and some had as little as 10% hair loss. None of the patients needed a wig.

Following this successful pilot, we are funding 10 more scalp cooling systems worth up to \$500,000 across New Zealand with donors' support.

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**"I am so happy that this hair cooling system is an option for all the others who have to go through this. It makes a huge difference." – Katja, breast cancer patient**





**\$250,000** from bequests – supporting the longevity of our work and ensuring support for future generations

**110,000** Boobeads sold through Farmers in the last five years – raising awareness as well as fundraising

**Over 9,500** volunteers for Pink Ribbon Street Appeal, House & Garden tours and Pink Star Walk

**120,000** hosted or attended a Pink Ribbon Breakfast in 2019



**2,731** people organised their own fundraisers to support us



  
**11,650** people donated to our written appeals

  
**24 years** Estée Lauder Companies have supported us





Breast Cancer  
Foundation NZ

To view the 2018/19 Breast Cancer Foundation NZ  
financial reports, go to [www.charities.govt.nz](http://www.charities.govt.nz)



@pinkribbonNZ

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