

Cancer NGO's  
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Dear Prime Minister,

**A plea from CANGO to the Government: don't "shrug your shoulders" at cancer deaths**

The members of the Alliance of Cancer NGO's (CANGO) would like to commend you on the approach to COVID deaths that you voiced during the September 23 COVID briefing. When asked what is an acceptable level of deaths from COVID, you said that a principled approach means zero tolerance for preventable deaths.

We now urge you to adopt that same approach to cancer deaths, for the sake of the 10,000 Kiwi families who lose a loved one to cancer each year.

Like you, we don't want a situation in New Zealand where we simply "shrug our shoulders" and accept that we have a disease that takes lives, when that can be prevented.

CANGO believes that if the zero tolerance principle is applied to cancer, the number of cancer deaths will be drastically reduced.

I have attached, and refer you to, the CANGO Manifesto that was provided to the Minister of Health last year which highlights the key priorities that we collectively promote and support. Furthermore the learnings from New Zealand's COVID response should also be applied to cancer, specifically equitable access for Maori & Pacifica.

We've seen what New Zealand can do when we put our hearts, minds and budgets into dealing with a killer disease. We've seen how the Government has unhesitatingly committed to spend whatever it takes to prevent the devastation that COVID could cause – the same devastation that cancer wreaks on Kiwi families every single day.

So our plea to you, Prime Minister, and to the Government, is, don't let's shrug our shoulders. Let's do for cancer what we've done for COVID. Let's have the same zero tolerance approach to the 50% of cancers that are preventable, driving and investing in the early detection of cancers, which will save thousands of lives a year at substantially less cost to the Government and economy than is being spent on COVID.

Yours sincerely



Peter Fergusson  
Chairperson  
Alliance of Cancer NGO's

