



Newsletter

Volume 7 – December 2011

www.stgeorgescancerinstitute.co.nz



Greetings

This newsletter is to wish you all a Happy Christmas and a much better 2012, especially for Christchurch.

Thank you all for your support of the Cancer Care Centre over the past year. Your donations and thoughts have been really helpful.

We were very sad at the passing of Richard Elworthy, our Chairperson. He supported and dedicated a large amount of time to the development and success of the Cancer Care Centre. He is sadly missed.

And as you will read our Trust fund is providing support to those who need that little extra help to give them the best treatments available. We are also making sure that we will be in a position to update machinery and include the most modern treatments available.

During 2012 our aim is to raise the remaining \$2 million for the linear accelerators so that we can support more patients with the most optimum treatments available.

Have a great Christmas and a better 2012.

Cilla Glasson
Chair, Cancer Institute Trustees Limited and Fundraising Committee

Fundraising

The Cancer Institute received a donation from the Macquarie Group Foundation, thanks to Scott Aucutt, Society member and Chair of the Advisory Committee. Below is an extract from the letter from the Head of the Macquarie Group Foundation, Julie White:

"Dear Associate Professor Atkinson

I am very pleased to enclose a cheque for NZD1,284.75 in favour of St George's Cancer Institute. This donation is in recognition of staff service to Macquarie.

All staff who have attained a length of service of 10 years are able to nominate a charity to receive a donation of AUD1,000.00 from the Macquarie Group Foundation. This particular donation has been made at the request of Scott Aucutt."

This is a great initiative.

Update: March 2010 – December 2011

The St George's Cancer Care Centre has been particularly busy over the last 12 months despite the interruption following the earthquake. The Centre became the evacuation area for St George's Hospital and for a number of days the corridors and clinical rooms resembled a front line military hospital with patients in stretchers crowded into many nooks and crannies.

Since the radiotherapy treatment programme began in late March 2010, over 450 patients have received treatment, almost all receiving treatment for potentially curable cancers. A smaller number of patients have received radiotherapy to relieve symptoms such as pain caused by their disease.

The chemotherapy clinics have also been busy with 250 patients being assessed and 140 patients starting a chemotherapy course.

Physiotherapy, Dietitian, and Clinical Psychologist Services have also been in demand. Patients have appreciated the availability of these services within the Cancer Care Centre.

Another highlight of 2011 was the introduction of superficial radiation therapy to treat skin cancer. Christchurch has not had a skin cancer radiotherapy treatment unit since a very

old machine at Christchurch Hospital was decommissioned about five years ago. Patients requiring this treatment had to travel to Dunedin or were treated with surgical techniques that may not produce the best outcome.

A superficial radiotherapy machine can deliver highly accurate treatment to small tumours that are not deep-seated in the body. It is particularly useful in the treatment of skin cancer where surgery may be difficult, such as eyelids or where the cosmetic result from surgery may be suboptimal.

Treatment Support Grant

Letter from a grateful patient the Trust assisted under this initiative: (published with the consent of the patient)

"Please accept my sincere thanks for the cheque received for me to use for my travel expenses to attend my radiotherapy this month and next.

I felt really good to be able to use my medical insurance for my operations and follow on treatments and allowing someone else to use the public system.

I was floored to find out the next day that my job was to go and this meant that our budget would go from good to lean until I could get up and well again which will happen at the completion of my treatment.

I do realise that this is a privilege not a right and wish to acknowledge Dr Chris Wynne for having to witness a tear or two as that week was not the best week for me.

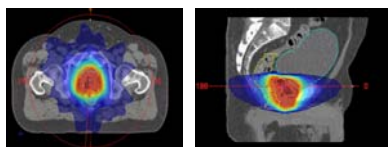
I truly thank everyone involved and this money will be a huge help to our petrol cost in the next 5 weeks.

Thank you"

Technical Aspects of Radiotherapy

Prostate and brain patients at the St George's Cancer Care Centre are now able to be treated with VMAT (volumetric intensity-modulated arc therapy).

This highly sophisticated treatment enables irregularly shaped cancers to be treated very rapidly and extremely accurately using radiotherapy beams that rotate around the patient. By shortening the treatment time, patient comfort is enhanced and it is much more likely that the radiotherapy beam will be delivered precisely, decreasing the chance of side effects and improving the chance of tumour cure.

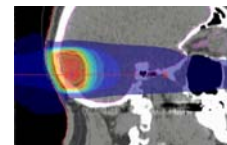


VMAT plans for prostate treatment

Input by physicists and radiation therapists into every patient's treatment plan takes many hours and a very powerful computer

often works overnight to calculate the individual treatment that must be delivered within extremely precise parameters.

The coloured image shows that the highest dose can be accurately given to the tumour with much lower doses, shown in different colours, administered to surrounding organs.



VMAT plan for brain treatment

St George's Cancer Care Centre was the first New Zealand Centre to introduce VMAT.

Chris Wynne, Radiation Oncologist

St George's Cancer Institute, St George's Hospital Inc., Private Bag 4737, Christchurch 8140, New Zealand

DIRECTORS: Cilla Glasson (021 662 195), Rob Black (021 505 816), Christopher Weir (021 832 988)

Tony Young (021 221 1614), Dr Chris Atkinson (027 522 8447), Dr Chris Wynne (027 244 3963)

'Cancer Care Centre Swimming Pool!!' post February Earthquake

Our basement "swimming pool" after the 22 February earthquake, however with the commitment of the Cancer Care Centre team and Elekta we were up and running in five days.



Note reflection on the floor!



Kathryn 'paddling her feet' Mary 'wading through water and liquefaction'



Psychosocial Services

This services started with financial assistance from the Cancer Institute in October 2010 and since then has provided 71 first consultations to patients with cancer or their family and 133 follow-up consultations and five telephone consultations. All of these consultations have been provided free of charge as a result of the support from the Trust. The financial support over this time is \$62,790. Since the start of the Trust's financial year on 01 April 2011 up to 30 November 2011, there have been 51 first consultations, 109 follow-up consultations and three telephone consultations with financial support of \$40,290.

Treatment Support Grants

The Trust started providing financial assistance to qualifying patients in July 2011 and up to 30 November 2011 has assisted 21 patients with financial support totalling \$52,517 with an average assistance amount of \$2,500.

Research

The research programme at the St George's Cancer Care Centre is evolving and patients are participating in studies across a wide spectrum of research areas. Despite the earthquake early in the year, Christchurch women have volunteered to participate in a Breast Cancer Prevention study with so many enrolling that by October, Christchurch was the leading centre in the world for women entering the study in 2011.

Other areas being studied are the risk of thrombosis in chemotherapy patients, the psychosocial stress associated with cancer diagnosis and its treatment and high technology areas including IMRT and VMAT.

On the horizon for 2012 are research studies involving the development of new medicines, such as oral chemotherapy and bio-similar medicines which have the potential to reduce the cost of very expensive cancer chemotherapy medicines.

St George's Cancer Institute Newsletters

We trust you find the regular updates on the St George's Cancer Care Centre and the fundraising activities of the St George's Cancer Institute Fundraising Committee interesting.

As previously advised, in an effort to reduce printing costs and improve distribution, you can receive future newsletters via email. *We may already have your email address in our database, however until you give us permission to send newsletters via email, we are legally unable to do so. We encourage you to add your name to our email distribution list - please advise details:*

EMAIL: _____

NAME: _____

Thank you for your support and interest in the St George's Cancer Care Centre.

If you no longer wish to receive future newsletters, please tick (✓) the box and advise your name:

NAME: _____

Please complete and return in the self addressed envelope enclosed.



From the St George's Cancer Care Centre team and the Directors of the Cancer Institute Trustees Limited – Merry Christmas and best wishes for a hopefully more settled 2012.

DONATION CARD

To support St George's Cancer Care Centre, please fill out the form, including your cheque or credit card details, and post to: **St George's Cancer Institute, Private Bag 4737, Christchurch 8140.**

I will be paying by (tick appropriate)

Visa MasterCard Cheque Internet Banking

Card no _____ Expiry Date _____

Amount NZ\$ _____ Signature _____

Internet banking to St George's Cancer Institute, Account no 06-0801-0643073-00

First Name: _____ Mr/Mrs/Miss/other Surname: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

A receipt quoting the St George's Cancer Institute number CC26864 will be posted to the above address.

The Trust is registered under the Charities Act 2005 No CC26864

Thank you