

Newsletter

Volume 5 – June 2010



Introduction

This is our 5th newsletter and the first since the full range of services have been operational. It has been extremely gratifying to walk through the Centre and on occasions talk to patients who are receiving various types of treatment. Without exception they have been impressed not only with the surroundings but the speed of access and quality of care. This is a tremendous accolade for the all the staff and clinicians working in the facility.



Our fundraising activities continue, and over the months of June and July several fundraising events will be held in the Cancer Care Centre.

Several of these nights will coincide with All Black Test matches and the guests/donors will have the opportunity to experience a comprehensive tour of the facility and watch the test match on the large 3.5 x 2.5 metre TV matrix.



Whilst our fundraising efforts to date have been very encouraging we still require \$2.7 - \$2.8 million to achieve our target. If you would still like to make a donation, please complete the donation form on the back of this newsletter. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Cilla Glasson
Chair, Fundraising Committee

Cancer Care Centre Activities

In the few months since the St George's Cancer Care Centre has opened for radiotherapy it has been extremely encouraging to see the patient volumes steadily increase. From the time of commencement until now volumes have exceeded expectations with one of the two linear accelerators now 70 – 80% utilised being virtually full with patients receiving radiotherapy. Many of these patients are receiving the hitherto unavailable IMRT therapy, which enables higher doses of radiotherapy to be targeted at the cancers without causing collateral damage to surrounding organs.

Patients are now having radiotherapy treatments on specific cancers with little or no side effects, which is

a tremendous step forward in the treatment of some cancers.

The St George's Cancer Care Centre is well underway with introducing video conference technology, which it plans to use in seven or eight locations around the South Island to provide cancer patients residing outside of the greater Canterbury area with faster access to specialist Oncologists.

The use of the video conferencing will allow patients to have their first consultation with an Oncologist within a targetted 48-hour period. Once these clinics are up and running it is expected that Oncologists will be visiting those areas on a regular basis, however the speed of access via the video conferencing will do much to alleviate many patient concerns, by reducing the waiting time between diagnoses and talking to a specialist.

Patient Demographics

We have had patients not only from Christchurch and surrounds but also from Nelson, Timaru, Ashburton and Central Otago. They have all been very impressed by the facility and timeframes in getting underway with their treatments. Some have stayed at the Cancer Society accommodation – Daffodil House, whilst others have stay with family or made their own accommodation arrangements.

Viv Ali, Radiation Therapist Clinical Manager

Radiation Technology

We are all enjoying working on the new machines; the technology is exciting and further developments in our practice are being introduced throughout the year.

Our patients have all been great under the circumstances and have found the treatment pathway pleasing. The combination of excellent equipment and soothing environment make the department a great cancer treatment facility.



Andy Savin, Radiation Therapist

Consultant Viewpoint

One of the most satisfying aspects of being a clinician treating cancer patients is knowing that you are providing international best care to your patients and their families

In many ways commencement of the new radiation treatment service at the St George's Cancer Care Centre has fulfilled a clinician's dream.



To walk the patient to the CT room to plan radiation treatment within a day of the initial consultation, then potentially start treatment

within a few days, is a joy.

No longer are there delays for appointments, delays for CT scanning and yet further delays before treatments are commenced.

Using the new technology and the IMRT function of the new machines, has been a major step forward for the care of patients, and we have seen most prostate patients now have fewer side effects than were previously seen with less sophisticated treatments.

Chris Atkinson, Radiation Oncologist

Patient Feedback

"As a recent patient at the above Centre I wish to comment on the excellent care and attention given to me. Obviously no one wishes to have to undergo this type of treatment but I have nothing but praise for the way I was looked after. The staff are both friendly and very efficient and make one feel like a person not just a patient."

Neil Dunn

"Those terrible words no one wants to hear - "You have got cancer".

However I need not have worried, St George's Cancer Care Centre staff took care of absolutely everything from the biopsy, hormone treatment, seed insertion to the radiation treatment, even the insurance documentation.

The Oncologist's description of when and what would happen at each stage of the radiation treatment was very accurate and made me feel very confident.

The staff right from the reception to the radiation area (they have a great sense of humour down there, ask them about the yellow badge!) and back to the Oncologist made me feel very comfortable, changing appointment dates to suit me when something unavoidable at work arose.

With my treatment now finished I feel fantastic - so men don't be SOOKS get to your GP, get tested, and if necessary get to St George's Cancer Care Centre."

Dave Macalister

Invitation to Visit

For donors living outside of the greater Christchurch area who have not visited the St George's Cancer Care Centre, and would like to do so, you are invited to contact Cilla Glasson on 021 662 195.



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