

Newsletter

Volume 4 – March 2010

Introduction

Chemotherapy patients are already being treated in the new facility and the radiotherapy suites will go live on Monday 29 March 2010 after 3 months of software input in readiness for the most up to date treatment in the world.

Finally this is the realisation of almost 6 years of planning to give the people of South Island the cancer treatments they deserve

John Belcher's four-wheel drive rally on Sunday 07 March attracted an enthusiastic group and \$3,000 plus was raised. A great effort, thanks for all your hard work John.

Hopefully we will see you at the Open Day. Feel free to bring any family or friends with you.

Cilla Glasson
Chair, Fundraising Committee

St George's Cancer Care Centre Opens



After nearly six years of planning, design and construction the new St George's Cancer Care Centre is now fully complete.

The tremendous effort on the part of many St George's Hospital staff, fundraisers, clinicians, consulting engineers and architects has brought to fruition a Cancer Care Centre, which is truly

world class in every regard.

From February 2010 the ground floor has been substantially complete and as a result chemotherapy consultations and treatments have been taking place in the new 6-chair chemotherapy treatment area.

Commencing at the end of February 2010, consultant oncologists have been undertaking clinics preparing the first patients for radiotherapy treatments, which are expected to commence on Monday 29 March 2010.

The staff in the Cancer Care Centre has been extremely busy setting up the various work processes and structuring the IT systems that sit in behind the treatment planning and treatment delivery systems for patients.

A group of patients who are anticipating having their radiotherapy treatments from the new Elekta linear accelerators are currently in the process of having their planning CTs that will enable their tumours to be modelled ready for treatments from Monday 29 March.

Showcasing the New Facility

On Monday 15 March 2010 a special function was held to showcase the new facility to nine or ten donors who collectively have contributed nearly three-quarters of the nearly \$4.3 million of funds that have been raised to date. This was a special function in many regards, not only was it the first but provided those involved with the service to show these key donors what a special place they had helped to create.



Of particular note was the presence of several Luney family members, who have contributed a significant donation, and as a consequence have chosen to have the Chemotherapy Suite

identified with the late Charles S Luney. In addition it was wonderful to have Judith Ross and her daughter Anna, present to view the plaque commemorating the late David Ross.



The very substantial gift given by the Ross Family and the Christchurch Radiology Group in recognition of David's contribution to radiological services in the South Island was very welcome. It was also great to be able to showcase the finished facility to both Tim and Cilla Glasson, who have also been a significant contributor to the fundraising.

Over the two weeks commencing Monday 15 March 2010 the facility will be showcased to a wide variety of groups. These include surgeons and anaesthetists who are working in the area of cancer treatment. Another night is dedicated to representatives from the Cancer Society, Nurse Maude and Pegasus GP group allowing them to see first hand what patients will experience at the Centre.

In the week commencing Monday 22 March 2010, evenings will be held on three further nights for donors and members of the public who have expressed an interest in seeing the Centre with the view to donating. St George's Hospital Society members will also get the opportunity to preview the Centre.

On Friday 26 March 2010 a special evening will be held for all of the St George's Cancer Care Centre staff, their partners and families with a special invitation being extended to the entire Oncology Department at the Canterbury District Health Board. The combined event for staff from both departments is a reflection of the way the two departments are working together cooperatively to ensure that the sum of the services at both locations greatly improves the access and service for cancer patients, not just in Canterbury, but also in the greater South Island area.

Facility and Interior Decor

As has been noted in previous newsletters, the design of the facility has included some special effects to provide a vibrant, up-lifting and exciting environment for patients when they visit. Having now taken a number of tours through the Centre, the architects, designers and staff who have contributed can certainly feel proud that they have created a significant 'wow' factor.



Patients are greeted at the entrance by singing native birds, the sound emanating from rock speakers positioned strategically amongst the gardens at the entrance.

The bird sounds follow the patient or visitor into the building where they stand amongst the forest panels and murals in the fluttering sunlight created by theatrical gobo lighting in and around the Reception area.



For patients moving to the Chemotherapy Suite, in the short walk from the Reception area, they pass a major salt water aquarium stocked with vivid salt water reef fish set in a look alike bulkhead of a ship including its riveted panels, LED lighting and again gobo lighting creating a shadowed wave like action across the carpet. This entire nautical scene is complemented by subtle background sea sounds including whales, porpoises, rolling waves and sea birdlife.

For those requiring radiotherapy treatment six metres below ground, patients are greeted by a 3½ x 2½ metre matrix of nine 47" LCD high definition television matrix showing Blu-ray excerpts of nature scenes. The entire waiting area includes a magical home theatre like atmosphere with dimmed lighting, full height glazed panels with forest scenes etched on them.



When moving from the waiting area to the secondary waiting area immediately outside the bunkers, patients are greeted with more high definition LCD televisions fully integrated to provide large picture and entertainment systems while they wait for their treatment. Throughout the entire waiting areas, again gobo lighting creates a mystifying and light presence to entertain and occupy patients as they wait, typically for 10 or 15 minutes for each treatment to commence.

Public Open Day

On Saturday 27 March 2010 the Cancer Care Centre will be holding a public open day between 9.00 am to 1.00 pm.

This will be advertised widely in the media, including The Press advertorial feature the previous Thursday and also a limited number of radio stations over the two days before and on the Saturday morning.

Entry is by way of a donation going towards the St George's Cancer Institute, which is still maintaining ongoing fundraising to reach the targeted \$7.6 million.

