

PINK RIBBON PRESS

Exciting news, myHT Guide is live!

This vital new programme is supporting women as they begin – or continue – hormone therapy for breast cancer. This is a significant milestone, and it is only possible thanks to the incredible generosity of people like you.

Hormone therapy is an important part of breast cancer treatment. It can reduce the risk of breast cancer returning by 30% and offers a 40% improvement in overall survival.

But it is a long-term treatment and can come with exhausting side effects like hot flushes, memory loss, anxiety, and joint pain which can have a huge impact on day-to-day life. It's not easy! Up to 50% of people prescribed hormone therapy stop taking it within five years.

myHT Guide is helping women like Susan who have felt abandoned following hospital-based treatment.

"The way I would describe it is I just feel disconnected. You go from being a high value 'person of interest' seeing your doctors every week, to a follow up every six months if at all.



Susan, pictured with her husband, takes hormone therapy to stop her breast cancer returning.

"I persist because I'm not 100% sure if the cancer returned, I could go through chemo again. That's the truth of it."

This is why myHT Guide exists. Too many women feel isolated during a critical phase of their recovery. You believed in the vision of supporting women. Now, that vision is real.

We've partnered with Whangārei Hospital and have started with 100 women in Northland, and their voices are already shaping what comes next. In the months ahead, we'll roll out myHT Guide across the country

We can't wait to keep you updated.

Kia ora,

This spring it's been incredibly rewarding to see the launch of myHT Guide, our new nurse-led support programme for people taking hormone therapy for breast cancer. Thanks to you, this programme is helping a small group of women in Northland to take life-saving medication to prevent their cancer from returning. In the coming months, this programme will roll out to other parts of the country.

Zero deaths from breast cancer starts with earlier diagnosis – where breast cancers are more treatable – and optimal treatment to save and extend lives. To do this, knowledge and research are key.

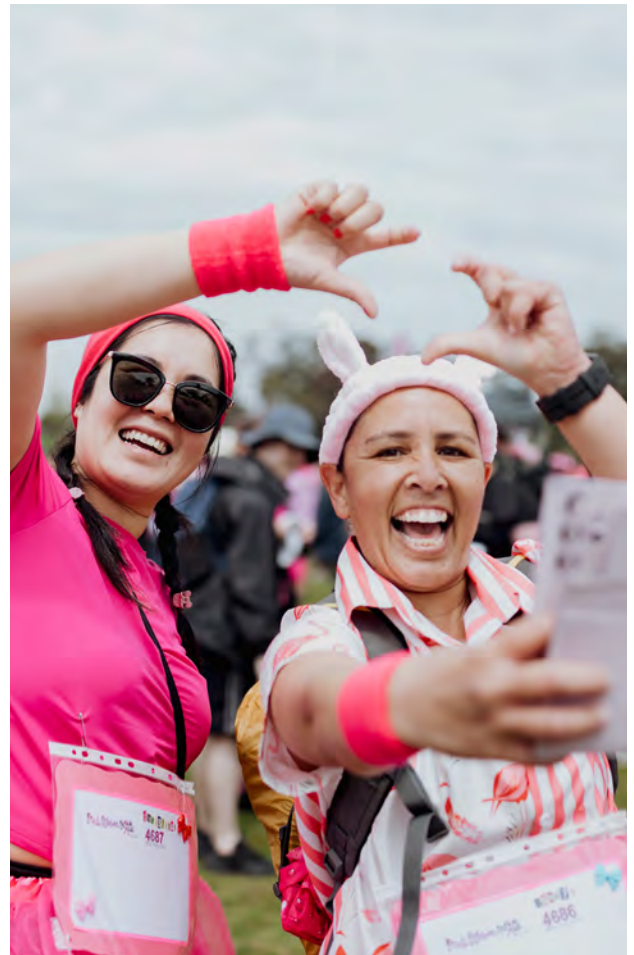
In this edition of the Pink Ribbon Press, we introduce you to Mehdi Shahbazzpour, our new head of research and strategic programmes. We also highlight the research projects you're making happen and the importance of data from Te Rēhita Mate Ūtaetae - Breast Cancer Foundation National Register.

Every step towards our vision is made possible through the power of collaboration – between researchers, clinicians, policy makers, and supporters like you.

One day, no one will die of breast cancer. We're doing everything we can to bring that day forward. Thank you for joining us.

Best wishes,

Ah-Leen Rayner
Chief Executive



Key dates for your diary

Pink Ribbon Walks

Auckland: Sunday 5 October 2025

Christchurch: Sunday 12 October 2025

Walk for the ones you love with your friends, whānau and workmates. And help beat breast cancer, together.

Pink Ribbon Street Appeal

Help kick breast cancer to the kerb at the Pink Ribbon Street Appeal

The Pink Ribbon Street Appeal is back on Friday 17 & Saturday 18 October. Volunteer for a two-hour collection shift at a time and location that suits you.

Dr Edmond Ang is excited for myHT Guide to help support women in Northland

"This is about us reaching out to our patients – not waiting for them to look for help themselves"

Thanks to your generosity, myHT Guide is already making a real difference. But, it's not just participants who are welcoming the programme, clinicians are too.

Dr Edmond Ang, a medical oncologist at Whangārei Hospital, has been on the frontline of breast cancer care in Northland for years.

He's seen firsthand the challenge of supporting women to stay on treatment, particularly in a region where there are many challenges.

"It's arguably more challenging in Northland... given the rurality and socio-economic barriers many of our patients face. The current strain on our health system threatens to reduce our capacity to support these women."

Dr Ang explains that hormone therapy can be perceived as an 'easier' treatment (than chemotherapy or surgery). "Because of this, patients leave hospital-based care, appointments are few and far between, and they're increasingly discharged to the GP.

"myHT Guide fills in an important gap that is widening. If the project can succeed in Northland, it will succeed anywhere in the country."

Dr Ang views myHT Guide as more than a helpful add-on. It is a vital piece of the care puzzle.



Dr Ang, medical oncologist at Whangārei Hospital

"It has the scope and focus to serve as an invaluable parallel support programme: a one-stop resource centre for women going through hormone therapy."

myHT Guide is helping to relieve pressure on busy health services, while giving women the expert, compassionate support they deserve. It's a true partnership, between clinicians, nurses, and donors like you.

Thank you for helping to make this possible. You're not just supporting patients; you're strengthening the whole system around them.

17,096 New Zealanders call for urgent action to fund a life-saving drug for the deadliest form of breast cancer

Last month we were honoured to host Catherine as she presented her petition to National MP Nancy Lu, calling for Government funding of Keytruda for early-stage triple negative breast cancer (TNBC). Catherine, a mother and business owner from Auckland, was diagnosed with TNBC last November. To cover the \$85,000, she has had to sell her family home.

Keytruda is currently only funded for advanced TNBC, despite strong evidence showing it can prevent recurrence in early-stage TNBC. This is hugely important to stop TNBC from becoming incurable and it's already funded for early TNBC in 40 other countries including Australia, Canada and the UK.

Catherine's petition, which has attracted over 17,000 signatures, is sending a powerful message to the Government: people want to

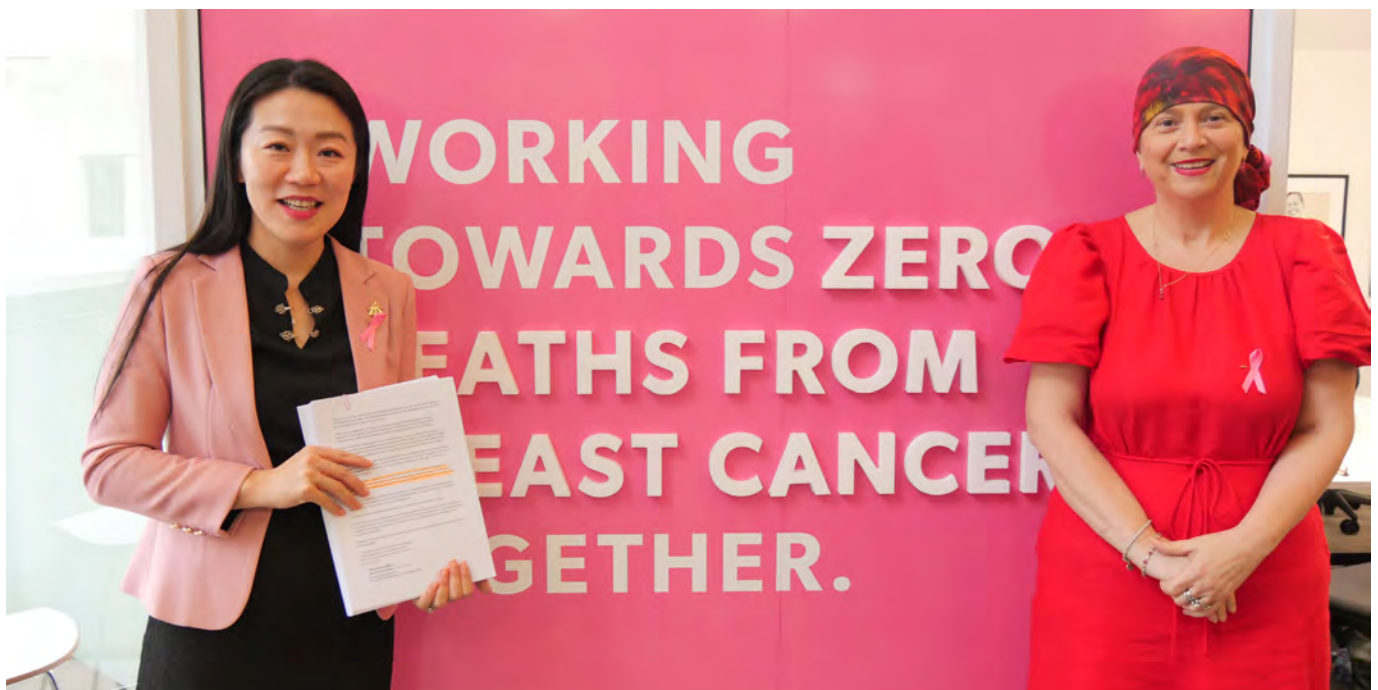
see NZ catch up with the rest of the world when it comes to accessing life-saving medicines.

Breast Cancer Foundation NZ Chief Executive, Ah-Leen Rayner said

"It's atrocious that New Zealanders are selling their homes or potentially going without treatment that could save their lives."

"We are so grateful to Catherine for working tirelessly for better drug access for New Zealanders in the future, but she shouldn't have to."

Your support helps us advocate for these essential medicines that are standard of care around the world. Thank you for helping us drive change for New Zealanders diagnosed with breast cancer.



Catherine hands the petition to National MP Nancy Lu, at Breast Cancer Foundation NZ's office



Hon. Marama Davidson, Green Party Co-leader, speaking at the Breast Nurse Study Day

Your support enabled us to run a free Breast Nurse Study Day

Recently, more than 110 dedicated nurses from around the country gathered for Breast Cancer Foundation NZ's Breast Nurse Study Day: a day of learning, inspiration, and connection focused on supporting every stage of a person's breast cancer journey, from diagnosis through to treatment and beyond.

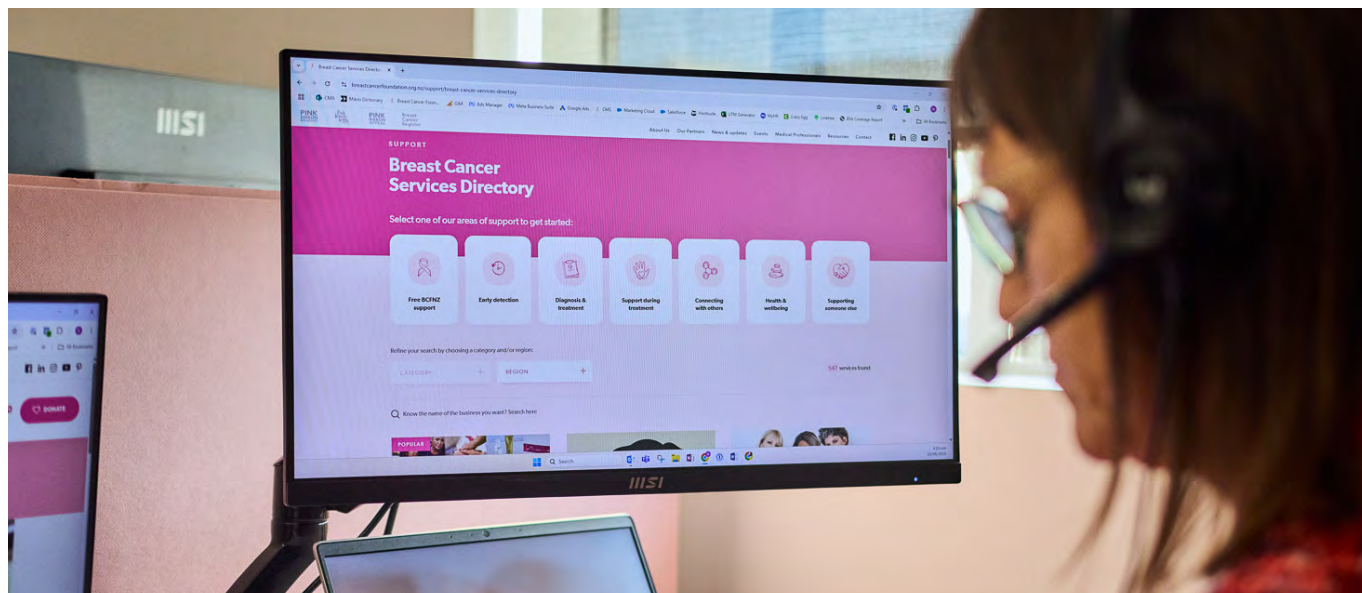
The programme featured a powerful line-up of speakers, including Green Party co-leader Hon. Marama Davidson, who shared her personal experience of being diagnosed with breast cancer in May 2024. Her courageous story deeply resonated with attendees. Attendees also heard from clinical psychologist Dr Jemma Gilchrist, who delivered two impactful sessions on communicating effectively with patients and supporting nurse wellbeing in clinical settings.

Breast nurses play a vital role, not just in treatment, but in standing alongside New Zealanders diagnosed with breast cancer, supporting whānau, advocating for needs, and helping people navigate the emotional and physical realities of breast cancer. But to care for others, they also need care themselves.

All of the surveyed attendees said the event was relevant to their practice and helpful, with glowing feedback:

"I loved it, learnt so much. All speakers were great to listen to and highly engaging. I loved the patient experience speakers. All of it was fabulous. Thank you so much for putting this on for us!"

Your support makes this kind of professional development and peer connection possible, giving nurses the tools they need to continue delivering life-changing care across New Zealand.



Every year, more than 10,000 calls are made to Breast Cancer Foundation NZ's Nurse Advice Line

Thanks to your generosity, breast nurse specialists, like Louise, are there to answer the call. Louise answers a commonly asked question.



"I've noticed a change. What happens next?"

"If you've noticed something different about your breast, perhaps a lump, dimpling, or a change in your nipple, it's understandable you might feel anxious. Most breast changes won't be cancer, but it's important to get it checked.

"At your appointment, your GP will begin by asking some questions about what you've noticed, when it started, and whether it has changed over time. They may ask about your general health, any family history of breast problems, and whether you've experienced recent hormonal changes, such as pregnancy or menopause.

"With your consent, your GP will then examine both breasts, including under your arms. You can bring a support person if that would help you feel more comfortable.

"If your GP feels further assessment is needed, they'll refer you to a breast clinic. This doesn't mean something is wrong, it just means your symptoms need a closer look, usually with an ultrasound, mammogram, or sometimes a biopsy.

"Please don't delay seeking help. The sooner a GP can assess a breast change, the better. Whether it turns out to be something minor or something that needs treatment, early detection makes all the difference.

"If your GP asks to assess you again in a few weeks, book that appointment as you're leaving to give yourself peace of mind."

Your impact, behind the scenes

Thanks to your generosity, **Te Rēhita Mate Ūtaetae – Breast Cancer Foundation NZ National Register** is helping support our vision of zero deaths from breast cancer. The Register holds anonymous information about breast cancer diagnoses, treatment and outcomes across New Zealand. It's a critical tool for doctors, researchers and health planners working to improve care and reduce deaths from breast cancer.



Cassie is one of the expert analysts who ensures this real-time data is accurate, complete and ready to drive change. Here's what a typical day looks like behind the scenes:



8:30 AM – starting the day

Coffee first, then data. I start my morning by reviewing any urgent data requests or queries that may have come through from researchers or clinical teams.

10:00 AM – diving into the data

One of the key responsibilities is ensuring the data is accurate, complete and behaving itself. It's important to spot discrepancies early on.

1:00 PM – supporting clinical and research projects

In the afternoon, I shift gears to support a report commissioned by BreastScreen Aotearoa (BSA). Data in the BSA 2020 report was used to help support the age-extension of free mammograms to women aged 70-74. It's so exciting to see data being used to make a such a meaningful difference.

4:30 PM – wrapping up and planning for tomorrow

Before logging off, I check for any last-minute data issues, update my to-do list, and make a mental note that tomorrow will probably bring new data mysteries to solve. No day is the same, but I love it.

I would like to make a donation to Breast Cancer Foundation NZ



Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Thank you for your support

Please send this form to: Breast Cancer Foundation NZ,
Private Bag 99906, Newmarket, Auckland 1149

Please accept my gift of:

☐ \$35 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$250 ☐ Other \$ _____

Credit card: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Amex

Card number:

Name on card: _____

Expiry date: Signature: _____

Direct bank transfer:

12 3030 0534226 07 (One-off donation)

12 3030 0534226 06 (Monthly donation)

Please include your **donor ID**
and **PRP Spr** as a reference

Casey's commitment to breast cancer support

Amazing New Zealanders like Casey are donating their time to raise vital funds for breast cancer support, research and education this October. You can join them.

She was already a nurse, but when Casey's mum Robyn was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2017 it sparked a passion for supporting women and families going through breast cancer diagnosis and treatment.



Casey is going to be out collecting at the Pink Ribbon Street Appeal in October this year

"I'd been a nurse for about five or six years and then after Mum's diagnosis it triggered my interest in breast cancer."

Now, Casey works as part of the Breast Care Centre team at Waikato Hospital.

Last year, Casey and Robyn joined forces to collect vital funds for the Pink Ribbon Street Appeal.



"It was a fabulous day; the community were so generous and keen to get involved. I've signed up again this year and I'm doing it with my nursing colleague Felicity. The support Breast Cancer Foundation NZ provides is amazing. We see it in our work every day. We just recently got pink scrubs for work and plan to wear those for the Street Appeal!"

Thanks so much to our amazing partners for their ongoing support

Corporate partners



Major trusts/grants



Contact us

Email: info@bcf.org.nz

Phone: 0800 902 732

Ask a nurse: 0800 BC NURSE (0800 226 8773)

Website: breastcancerfoundation.org.nz