

PINK RIBBON PRESS

“It wouldn’t cost the government anywhere near as much as it’s costing individuals like me”



Judith is one of more than 140 New Zealanders who would benefit from Enhertu but will need to pay more than \$64,000 for treatment.

Because of supporters like you, we have been able to join forces with 16 other patient advocacy organisations to launch the Forbidden Pharmacy campaign, raising awareness of the distressing situation many New Zealanders find themselves in: paying astronomical amounts for medicines they need because they are not currently funded in New Zealand.

Judith was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 2008. After reaching the 10-year milestone, she was diagnosed again in 2019, and in 2024 learned her cancer had spread to her bones.

For 15 months, Judith’s cancer was stable, but this came at a cost. She had to spend \$90,000 of her own money on the medication she needed – which would have been funded had she lived in Australia.

“I considered moving to Australia. But one of the main reasons I want to stay alive is for my grandchildren. Why would I move to another country?”

She is currently having to weigh up her next treatment options. Enhertu has been recommended, a targeted therapy which is the best option for someone like her with HER2-low breast cancer. But even with medical insurance, half a year will cost her just under \$64,000.

After selling her home, Judith moved in with her daughter and son-in-law. She worries about how long her savings will last and her quality of life is significantly impacted by the decisions she must now make for her treatment.

Hundreds of medicines (funded in Australia, the UK, and other countries as standard of care) remain out of reach for New Zealanders, which is why we are asking the next government to improve access to these medicines.

Campaigns like this only happen because supporters like you make sure we can act when it matters.

Please visit forbiddenpharmacy.org and sign our open letter to show the next government just how many New Zealanders care about this pressing issue.

The more people sign it, the harder it is for the next government to ignore. Will you add your voice?

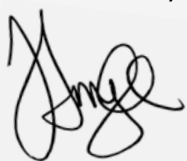
With two months until the 2026 general election, your voice is helping to ensure policies, funding decisions and improvements to the health system have the potential to save lives. Thanks to thousands of supporters like you, we can keep pushing for lasting change across the health system for people affected by breast cancer.

Our eight-year campaign to extend the eligibility age for free mammograms from 69 to 74 is a powerful example of what your support makes possible. Sustained advocacy, backed by people like you, helped drive a policy change that now gives more New Zealanders access to life-saving early detection. In the first eight months after the national rollout began, 230 cancers were found in women who would've otherwise missed out on screening, giving them the greatest chance of effective treatment and survival.

In this edition of Pink Ribbon Press, you'll see your investment in action as we use evidence, research and patient voices to influence policies and decisions that will shape breast cancer care now and into the future.

This edition also marks an important moment as we farewell our CEO, Ah-Leen Rayner. Thanks to her dedicated leadership, and with the support of our incredible donors and community, Breast Cancer Foundation NZ has achieved meaningful progress in research, advocacy and patient support. On behalf of the Board, thank you, Ah-Leen for your exceptional contribution. We wish you every success for the future.

Best wishes,



Justine Smyth
Chair – Board of Trustees



Key dates for your diary

Pink Ribbon Walks

Christchurch: Sunday 4 October 2026

Auckland: Sunday 11 October 2026

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

Find out more at pinkribbonwalk.co.nz

Pink Ribbon Street Appeal

Give two hours and help make a difference.

The Pink Ribbon Street Appeal is back on Friday 16 & Saturday 17 October. Head to pinkribbonvolunteer.co.nz to volunteer for a two-hour collection shift at a time and location that suits you.



World-leading cancer expert on the Breast Cancer Foundation NZ Board

We're proud to have internationally respected cancer leader Rami Rahal recently join the Breast Cancer Foundation NZ Board of Trustees.

With more than 30 years' experience improving cancer care in New Zealand and internationally, Rami brings exceptional expertise to our mission. As former Chief Executive of Te Aho o Te Kahu - the Cancer Control Agency - he led major national cancer initiatives, including the country's largest-ever investment in cancer medicines. He also chairs the International Cancer Benchmarking Partnership, helping improve cancer outcomes across 21 international jurisdictions.

Rami has dedicated his career to reducing inequities in cancer care and ensuring everyone has the best chance of surviving cancer. His expertise will strengthen our work to improve early detection, champion equitable access to treatment, and fund research that saves lives.

Thanks to the support of donors like you, the Foundation continues to attract influential leaders who help turn research, evidence and advocacy into meaningful change for people affected by breast cancer.

"Breast Cancer Foundation NZ is well positioned to connect what women and whānau are experiencing on the ground with what needs to shift nationally. With my experience inside the cancer system, I see real opportunities to reduce delays, remove barriers, particularly for Māori and Pacific peoples, and ensure all cancer patients get the care they need when they need it."



Rami Rahal is the newest member of the Board of Trustees.

Thank you for supporting Pink Ribbon Breakfasts 2026!

Pink Ribbon Breakfasts had over 6,098 people registered, raising a total of over \$3.7 million.

Thanks to your support life-saving education, life-changing patient support and ground-breaking medical research will bring us closer to a day when there are zero deaths from breast cancer.





“Anyone with a lobular breast cancer diagnosis deserves to know what stage they are at”

Auckland woman Gretel hopes the LUMINA trial will make the FAPI-PET scans publicly funded for more people like her.

Gretel had been getting regular mammograms and ultrasounds, when in November 2023 she noticed her left breast looking a bit weird – so went to her GP to get it checked.

A biopsy followed and she got the news in December that she had lobular breast cancer. She thought the cancer had been caught early. What she didn't realise at the time was just how difficult lobular cancer is to see on regular scans, because of the way it grows in strands rather than a lump.

She started chemotherapy in January, and had a double mastectomy in July. When a few lymph nodes were tested, she discovered the cancer had spread. She had stage 3 breast cancer.

That's when she was told about a more advanced type of PET-CT scan (called a FAPI-PET scan), which would be able to precisely identify how far the cancer had spread.

“I had the scan and I lit up like a Christmas tree - the cancer was throughout my chest, bones, liver - everywhere, except my brain.

Following the scan, my diagnosis was changed to stage 4, and I was told I needed a different treatment plan. I'm hugely grateful because, if it were not for the scan, we would not have known the extent of the cancer's spread, and I wouldn't have been given the best treatment for my situation.”

This FAPI-PET scan is part of the LUMINA trial, made possible by supporters like you. The four-year study is a partnership between Breast Cancer Foundation NZ and Allevia Radiology, investigating whether this FAPI-PET scan can more accurately stage lobular breast cancer to make sure patients receive the right treatment while avoiding unnecessary procedures and side effects. Thanks to you, the trial has reached an exciting milestone, with recruitment of 50 participants completed ahead of schedule.

Research like this could help more people with lobular breast cancer, like Gretel, get the right treatment for their situation. Making this FAPI-PET scan publicly funded in New Zealand, would not be possible without your generous support. Trial results are expected in early 2027.

Our nurses making a difference across Aotearoa

Thanks to your support, Breast Cancer Foundation's nurses are reaching communities across the country with trusted breast health information, practical support and reassurance.

From Fieldays at Mystery Creek to primary care conferences and community events, our nurses are helping more New Zealanders understand the importance of breast awareness, screening and early detection.

In the Pink Campervan tour across Wellington, Manawatū and Kāpiti Coast, alone, the team attended 57 events, spoke with more than 2,570 people, encouraged 33 people to see their GP about concerning symptoms and referred 20 people for screening mammograms.

Whether it's supporting healthcare professionals with resources, answering personal questions through our free nurse advice line, or connecting with wāhine and whānau in community settings, our nurses are making a lasting impact. Time and again, people tell us their guidance brought reassurance during one of the most difficult times in their lives - showing the invaluable difference your support makes every day.



Nurse educators - reaching communities all across New Zealand.

Regular self-checking saves lives

Demi was diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer at just 27, after finding a lump on her breast. Triple negative breast cancer is one of the most aggressive forms of breast cancer, more likely to grow faster, spread earlier and recur more often.

Breast cancer in your 20s is rare, but as Demi's experience shows, breast cancer can happen at any age. Luckily for Demi her diagnosis was at an early stage, and the cancer had not spread beyond her breast. She was grateful to have found it so early and now urges other women of all ages to check their breasts regularly.

"If something is not right, you absolutely need to get it checked. Don't put it off!"

Women under 45 are not routinely invited for free mammogram screening. As a result, breast cancer in younger women can be more likely to be diagnosed at a later stage, when they can be more aggressive and harder to treat.

That's why in October, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we'll be encouraging young women to make regular breast self-checks part of their routine and to see their GP promptly if they notice anything unusual.

Thanks to you, thousands of New Zealanders receive life-saving breast health education each year. By helping more women recognise the signs of breast cancer earlier, you're giving them the best possible chance of earlier diagnosis, more effective treatment and a better chance of survival. Thank you for making this possible.



Demi urges young women to check their breasts regularly.

Your support of Te Rēhita Mate Ūtaetae makes vital research possible

Te Rēhita Mate Ūtaetae - Breast Cancer Foundation National Register, holds data gifted by over 60,000 breast cancer patients across Aotearoa. Your continued support enables the Register to provide this data for approved research, to audit care, and to help plan breast cancer services.

Qian Chen is a researcher at the University of Auckland whose work focuses on ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS), a non-invasive breast cancer. Her research uses the Register to investigate patterns of care and clinical outcomes of women with DCIS in Aotearoa.

Research, like Qian's, will help to better understand cases of DCIS most likely to progress to invasive breast cancer, to enable a future where people receive the treatment they need while avoiding unnecessary treatment where it is safe to do so.

Your donations make this vital research possible.



Qian Chen's research would not be possible without Te Rēhita Mate Ūtaetae.

"The Register is highly important as it is used by researchers to deliver real impact for patients and to clinicians. Each time I analyse a piece of data in the Register I'm very grateful for each anonymised data point – I know it's a taonga (treasure) and by combining them and aggregating them, my research can help to inform better clinical practice."

Help fund breast cancer education, research and patient support.

It's only because of you and your commitment to a future of zero deaths from breast cancer we can continue this vital work.

[Click here to give a gift today.](#)



Breast Cancer
Foundation NZ

A mother's mission to give back after breast cancer



Gina volunteered for the street appeal saying, "This is my way of supporting a fabulous organisation that had supported my daughter through her journey."

On Friday 16 and Saturday 17 October passionate volunteers will be hitting the pavements for the Pink Ribbon Street Appeal.

People like you signing up for two-hour shifts make a big impact in collecting donations over the two-day appeal, raising vital funds for breast cancer research, education and support.

Gina's daughter Leanne was diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 45. She was with her daughter every step of the way, including seeing first-hand the support and services she received from our wonderful nurses.

Now she volunteers for the Pink Ribbon Street Appeal to help give back, so more people like her daughter can also get the support they need.

"There is so much a mum can do, but Breast Cancer Foundation NZ filled in the gaps that a mother could not."

If you have two hours you can give this October, please sign up to be a volunteer at pinkribbonvolunteer.co.nz

Business partner recognition

Breast Cancer Foundation NZ is grateful for the support of our major partners:

Corporate partners

ESTÉE
LAUDER
COMPANIES

SKELLERUP

Griffin's Snacks

Farmers

Stuff

harrisons
Wonderful made easy

Major trusts/grants

THE LION
FOUNDATION

MASFEN
FOUNDATION

RANO
COMMUNITY TRUST

Contact us

Email: info@bcf.org.nz

Phone: 0800 902 732

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

Website: breastcancerfoundation.org.nz