



BREAST CANCER RESEARCH TRUST

BrEaST *Bulletin*

November/December 2023

This year has been undeniably tough for most of us.

As the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world in 2020, life as we knew it changed, and we had to get used to living a new 'normal'. A 'normal' that, agreeably has returned to.....well.....normal but that some of us are still struggling with. We seem to get more easily overwhelmed and try to hoard responsibilities that are not ours to carry.

The festive season is probably the best time to reflect on the past year, take some time to unwind and unburden yourself of those extra loads. If it's beyond your control, let it go and find ways to cultivate a positive mindset.



Over and above spreading cheer, let's spread respect, love, patience, tolerance and compassion. Let's be there for one another. Some people are facing battles we don't know about.

I wish you a festive season filled with love, laughter and precious memories.

BrEaST wishes,

Cindy Jacobs

Manager: Marketing/Fundraising & Events

Pink Walk & Run - Hamilton 2023

The Breast Cancer Research Trust wishes to say a massive thank you to everyone who attended and/or supported the Pink Walk & Run Hamilton 2023 held on Thursday 26 October at Innes Common, Hamilton Lake. We celebrated another very successful event which helped raise breast cancer awareness and vital funds for research. We are elated to inform you that a record breaking \$38,000 was made.

A special and BIG thank you to:

- sponsors, Braemar Hospital (gold), Direct Group Uniforms (silver), our anonymous bronze sponsor and all our other valued sponsors
- our generous prize and hamper sponsors
- Mayor Paula Southgate

- our MC's, Stu Smith from The Breeze Waikato 99.4FM and Ann-Marie Case-Miller as well as all the entertainers
- vendors, face painters and photographers
- Hamilton City Council
- the BCRT dream team and all the volunteers for giving your time and expertise so generously

Last but certainly not least, we wish to thank the Huntly Ladies Allsortz as well as Pride In Putaruru for hosting another Pink Walk in their communities. We are grateful that you are part of our circle and further enable us to hold lives together through evidence-based research.

We welcome you to view some of the photos on the Pink Walk and Run Hamilton on the Pink Walk website (www.pinkwalk.co.nz). Photos should be up within the first week or two of December.



[Would you like to join Huntly and Putaruru and host a PINK WALK in your town in 2024? Click here to get in touch!](#)

SNAC1 Clinical Trial Results

Whether or not cancer has spread to the axilla lymph nodes remains the single most important indicator of outcome for women diagnosed with breast cancer, and helps predict the need for further treatment, such as chemotherapy and radiotherapy. Up until the early 2000's axillary node status was determined by surgical removal of most of the lymph nodes being removed, called axillary clearance, or dissection. This operation may lead to arm swelling (lymphoedema), pain, some loss of skin sensation, or shoulder stiffness.

In 2001 Breast Surgeons in Australia and New Zealand began introducing sentinel node biopsy; removal of a small number of armpit lymph nodes most closely related to the breast cancer. The introduction of this lesser surgery was through participation in the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons "SNAC1 trial".

Sentinel node-based management (SNBM) results in fewer side effects than axillary clearance. However, with sentinel node biopsy, there is the risk of not removing an axilla lymph node with cancer spread, thus leading to a small increased risk of cancer return/recurrence in the axilla.

Ten-year follow-up of the 1080 ANZ women participating in the SNAC1 trial showed that axillary recurrence is low in women meeting the SNAC1 eligibility criteria; including mainly good outlook biology and unifocal cancers; but was more frequent with SNBM (1.85%) compared to those women who underwent axillary clearance (0.37%).

The ten-year results confirm that SNBM should remain the treatment of choice in this lower risk group of women and is now the international standard of care in the surgical treatment of early breast cancer. However, for those with higher risk breast cancers, further study is needed because the frequency of axillary recurrence might alter the choice of axillary surgery for these women.

We acknowledge the 1080 women who participated in the SNAC1 trial, including the 70 women from the Waikato Hospital centre.

Reference entry

10-Year axillary recurrence in the RACS SNAC1 randomised trial of sentinel lymph node-based management versus routine axillary lymph node dissection Ian Campbell, Neil Wetzig, Owen Ung, David Espinoza, Gelareh Farshid, John Collins, James Kollias, Val GebSKI, Rebecca Mister, R. John Simes, Martin R. Stockler, Grantley Gill. *The Breast*. 2023 Aug;70:70-75. doi: 10.1016/j.breast.2023.06.009. Epub 2023 Jun 23.

GIVE BEYOND YOUR LIFETIME



A gift in your will to the Breast Cancer Research Trust will make a difference to lives now, and in the years ahead. It's a way to give beyond your lifetime and make a lasting contribution towards the fight against breast cancer.

Research is the best weapon we have to help fight a disease that affects over 3000 women in New Zealand every year; a disease that causes over 600 women to die every year.

Clinical trials help us to bring the very best treatments and outcomes to patients who have their lives and families/whānau disrupted by this challenging and sometimes incurable disease.

[Click here to contact us to learn more about a bequest to research](#)

A touch of pink makes all the difference in raising awareness and FUNDS for breast cancer. We share some of the highlights of how 2023 was PINKAFIED



*Annual Appeal
Chartwell Shopping
Centre*



Coombes Johnston BMW Golf Day



Graham Brown & Co went Pink for a day



IBCPC Dragon Boat Festival



Kaz Design Pink Breakfast



Meade Clinical Centre Reception B



The Op Shop for Breast Cancer first birthday



Pink Walk & Run Hamilton



Heather Flay & Jeanne van der Merwe ran the Kirikiriroa Marathon in benefit of the Trust



We are very proud of our BCRT Trustee and Medical Oncologist Dr Marion Kuper-Hommel, who recently presented at the Advanced Breast Cancer 7 conference in Lisbon, Portugal about further results from the ABCpro study.

This study is introducing a telehealth and online service currently offered to patients living with advanced breast cancer (ABC) at Waikato Hospital, and at private hospitals in Wellington and Sydney.

The project is funded by Breast Cancer Foundation NZ and Te Whatu Ora – Waikato and helps to better monitor (through completion of a weekly symptom checklist) and manage ABC patient symptoms and treatment side effects with interventions and support by an ABC nurse specialist.

Study results show a significant improvement in social, emotional, and cognitive functioning, as well as an improvement in fatigue, insomnia, appetite and constipation. With the weekly online checklist that patients complete, Dr Kuper-Hommel knows exactly what happens week by week so she can have a more focused discussion with patients about their symptoms and what affects their quality of life.

Our BCRT Research Nurse, Jenni Scarlet is the ABCpro study coordinator.

If you would like to help fund research into breast cancer treatment and prevention, and hopefully give those affected more time to spend with their loved ones, consider giving a gift that will keep on giving by making a donation to the Breast Cancer Research Trust.

Consider giving a gift that will keep on giving by making a donation to the Trust ([Insert hyperlink](#))

[Click here to give the gift of more time!](#)



The Breast Cancer Research Trust team would like to share our gratitude with everyone who shared their time, love and support for us in 2023.

Thank you for supporting our cause, through donations, participating in events, volunteering and shopping at our Op Shop for Breast Cancer.

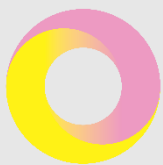
We truly appreciate the dedication many of you have given us and we couldn't continue our important research without the generosity of our community.

Thank you for helping us gain knowledge through research and save lives!

We wish you a happy and safe festive season and a new year filled with joy, peace and prosperity.



*This photo was taken before Hina Pokaia joined our team. We will be sure to renew this photo in 2024.



**Breast Cancer
Research Trust**

Gaining Knowledge. Saving Lives.

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