

# MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 29 August

For Daffodil Day tomorrow - Friday 30 August



## BEHIND THE CANCER HEADLINES, A GREAT MANY CANCER PATIENTS RELY ON FREE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CANCER SOCIETY AND ITS VOLUNTEERS

- **Daffodil Day donations help fund vital free support services across New Zealand**

Behind the headlines about a cancer crisis and the Government being pressed to overcome cancer inequality in New Zealand, a growing number of New Zealanders are reliant on the support services provided free by organisations like the Cancer Society.

A recent survey by the Cancer Society ahead of Daffodil Day found that well over a third of respondents (36%), who had cancer or had supported a loved one through cancer, rely heavily on accommodation and transport services to attend treatment.

A similar number (38%) also said that these and other services may have been out of reach if they had not been available for free through the Cancer Society.

This is exactly what Daffodil Day is about - increasing awareness of these much-valued and vital support services and reaching out for [donations](#) to continue to fund them. The Cancer Society receives no direct Government funding.

“What we provide is extra to what our DHBs and health system do. They include our 0800 cancer information line, accommodation, transport and counselling,” says Mike Kernaghan, Cancer Society Chief Executive.

For example:

- Today across New Zealand, Cancer Society volunteers will drive around 2800 kilometres getting people to and from their treatment appointments.
- Tonight, the Cancer Society will provide accommodation for 130 people at the five lodges it operates close to major hospitals.
- In the past year specialist nurses have been able to answer more than 8000 information line calls and spent more than 5,400 hours providing information and support.
- Each day, the care team have met face-to-face with 45 people who are dealing with a cancer diagnosis; and they will call, text or email nearly 300 others.



The Cancer Society of New Zealand | Patron Her Majesty the Queen  
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Cancer Information Helpline 0800 CANCER (226 237)

Many more Kiwis facing cancer will meet with cancer nurses, counsellors and other specialists, attend support groups and workshops, and even exercise and relaxation classes.



None of this would be possible without the generous support of New Zealand donors and volunteers, particularly as the Cancer Society receives no direct Government funding. By donating money on Daffodil Day you are helping your local community access the support they need when faced with a cancer diagnosis.

Mike Kernaghan explains, “Cancer is almost always a blow to life as you knew it. It impacts in so many ways - emotionally, physically, and practically, and is almost always guaranteed to hit household finances as people’s ability to earn is reduced and costs increase.

“The Cancer Society’s services are those that often fall outside the remit of New Zealand’s health system and the day-to-day treatment of cancer, but they can be vital to a person’s ability to attend treatment, and extremely helpful in their ability to cope and recover.

“Every year, the Cancer Society provides millions of dollars’ worth of support to people with cancer, their family and friends, and we know that for many of them, the Cancer Society is the only way they and their whānau can access or afford them.”

“We can provide extraordinary value to people in need of these services, but they are not without a cost and that’s where your donations are essential.”

Whether someone needs expert information and advice, or just a friendly impartial ear, the Cancer Society is there to offer practical help, information, guidance and support for anyone affected by cancer.

ENDS

For more information, contact:

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#### Notes about the survey

- The Cancer Society conducted an online survey in July 2019, asking more than 1500 New Zealanders about their experiences related to having cancer or supporting a loved one with cancer.
- Around 40% of respondents had used Cancer Society services, although this was not a prerequisite.
- The percentages quoted were based on a question with 442 responders.

