



Media Release – For immediate release
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Lodge December Progress

A new accommodation and support facility for people undergoing cancer treatment is set to open in February next year.

The new Cancer Society's Lions Lodge in Hamilton will provide free accommodation and meals to around 700 people from around the region per year while they receive treatment for cancer at Waikato Hospital.

Waikato/Bay of Plenty Cancer Society chief executive Judy Gould says the new lodge is an exciting development for the organisation's work, offering a service unlike any other in the region.

"The lodge will not be a motel, palliative care, treatment or hospice facility – it will be a place where people who are going through similar experiences can support and learn from each other in a comfortable and supportive environment."

The lodge will host 55 ensuited bedrooms and 5 self-contained family units. The building is currently under construction on Tainui St at the site of the former Braemar Hospital and will house guests from February 1, 2011.

Around 1000 more people each year will benefit from the society's expanded support services and health promotion activities, such as support groups, information sessions, Look Good Feel Better classes and therapeutic massages, which will be based at the lodge.

The current lodge on the grounds of the Waikato Hospital has been in operation since 1971, but due to increased demand on the facility and the Waikato District Health Board's need to expand its services, a new lodge was needed.

"The existing lodge is a wonderful place which goes a long way towards supporting those in our community affected by cancer. However, as the incidence of cancer rises, so does the demand on that facility. Our new lodge will allow us to support even more people at what can be an emotional and stressful time for them and their families," says Judy.

Fundraising Progress

As the need for a new lodge was anticipated for a number of years, the society was able to plan and budget for much of the \$15.6 million project. However, a fundraising appeal is underway to raise the \$5 million needed to complete the project.

Fundraising progress currently stands at \$1.4 million, with Lions Clubs recently contributing \$250,000 – the first milestone of their fundraising target.

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Lions Clubs have supported the existing lodge significantly since it was established nearly four decades ago, and their support has continued for the new building. Fundraising for the lodge is now a district-wide activity, with over 90 clubs carrying out fundraising activities over the past and coming months.

District Governor Alan Schofield says the Lions' long association with the lodge holds a special place for members.

"Everyone feels very strongly for the project as we've been associated with the lodge for 40 years, from helping with its establishment to assisting with fundraising for refurbishment and expansion, to now helping with the new lodge.

"One of our clubs, Waikite Ngakuru, has only eight members and has raised over \$18,000 for the lodge so far – that shows what a special project this is for the Lions. We have hundreds of projects happening throughout the region including auctions, bowls and golf tournaments, and dinners, including the Gallagher Tribute to Sir Colin Meads which was held in September."

People can learn more about the building and fundraising campaign, or make a donation to the project, by visiting www.cancersociety.org.nz or www.lionslodge.co.nz.

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For further information, please contact:

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Editor's Note:

The Waikato/Bay of Plenty Division of the Cancer Society of New Zealand Inc is a non-profit organisation that receives no direct financial support from the Government. We are funded by bequests and donations from the public as well as fundraising activities.

We are committed to minimising the impact of cancer in our communities by providing:

- Quality support services for people affected by cancer
- Education to promote early detection and help reduce the risk of cancer
- Free information and resources on cancer
- Support for research into the causes, prevention, detection and treatment of cancer

