



Cancer Society of New Zealand
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MEDIA RELEASE

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Budget welcomed, but not enough has been done, says Cancer Society

The Cancer Society of New Zealand has welcomed the Budget announcement that further work is to be undertaken on the cancer control strategy, and that more money will be injected into the pharmaceuticals' budget.

However, the organisation says it is concerned that almost \$2 billion of that additional funding is maintenance or “catch-up” spending that chief executive, Dalton Kelly, says will only just about help New Zealand to keep its heads above water:

“Cancer is New Zealand’s second biggest disease in terms of loss of life and remains one of the biggest health sector costs, with one in three New Zealanders affected by the disease at some point.

“We believe the government needs to re-prioritise this important area of the health sector.”

The Cancer Society is urging government to focus on four key issues that will affect the viability of the whole cancer control strategy, including:

- Actively engaging NGOs in the newly established regional cancer networks: The organisation believes that unless this is addressed, there will be a disconnection between cancer control policy and funding, and community service delivery.
- Supporting and increasing the long-term capacity and competency of the cancer workforce: New Zealand's cancer workforce is under increasing strain.
- Improving New Zealanders' access to cancer treatments: New Zealand's cancer medicines spend is one of the lowest in the world, and has not kept pace with the development of new and increasingly sophisticated cancer treatments, and other innovative therapies, that are available in many other countries.
- Increasing the funding provided for cancer research: This area of cancer control needs additional and better targeted funding.

Mr Kelly adds: "Today's announcement is a start, however we are very keen to see how the new funding will actually be spent and what more may be in the pipeline."

- Ends -

Media Enquiries:

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