

## **Cancer Society welcomes Cancer Registry initiative**

“Upgrading and enhancing the Cancer Registry, as announced by Government today, will bring substantial and exciting benefits to the cancer community,” Dalton Kelly, Chief Executive of the Cancer Society said.

“Some of the benefits might not be immediately apparent such as the enormous value of a robustly populated cancer database the register will provide to New Zealand cancer researchers. They will have access to New Zealand-specific data on the incidence, treatment trends and outcomes of cancers.

“Currently this information is not available, and researchers are obliged to extrapolate data from other countries.”

Dalton Kelly said that New Zealand, while small, is unique, particularly with the large Maori and Pacific Island populations. “Researchers know very little about the effects of cancer on these populations and therefore can recommend very little at this stage,” he said.

“The Cancer Society has long lobbied for appropriate resources to be provided to the public health sector, and often, we have noted that planning for new and expensive, but effective, equipment often lags behind trends in treatment.

“The database within the enhanced Cancer Registry will mean that trends, such as moves from surgery to radiation treatment, can be monitored in real time. Health planners will see the trends as they happen, rather than waiting for shortages and lengthening waiting times to indicate resources are needed.

“A robust and real-time Cancer Registry is long overdue, and the Society congratulates the Minister, the Ministry of Health and Cancer Control New Zealand for the initiative, and wishes them well as they address the inevitable hiccups as the Registry is developed and bedded down. The results will be fantastic,” Dalton Kelly concluded.

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