

BCAC committee member, Dr Chris Walsh, was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for services to women's health in the New Year's Honours.

Chris has been an active and valued member of the BCAC committee since 2007. During this time she has demonstrated a passion, energy and commitment to improving breast cancer treatment and care in New Zealand.

Chris was diagnosed with HER2 positive breast cancer in 2006 and became a leading figure in the debate to secure Government funding for a 12-month treatment programme for the breast cancer drug, Herceptin. She was instrumental in leading a group of women to take legal action against PHARMAC over its decision not to fully fund the drug.

In addition to this work, Chris has been heavily involved with BCAC in its efforts to secure consumer representation on various health-related organisations. Chris is passionate about improving the health system for all and believes this is more likely to be achieved when there is meaningful engagement between patients/consumers and those providing health services.

Chair of BCAC, Libby Burgess says, "we're very proud of Chris. This recognition for the valuable work she has done to help New Zealand women with breast cancer is incredibly well deserved. Chris works with passion and dedication to improve the lives of others and demonstrates deep loyalty to the worthy causes close to her heart".

Chris says, "I am very humbled by the award. The advocacy work has been supported hugely by BCAC Chair Libby Burgess as well as Claire Ryan and Alison Davies (past committee members). The Herceptin campaign benefited greatly from the knowledge, expertise and commitment of women like former committee member Anne Hayden. My partner Sue Ellis has stood by me throughout and provided reassurance, loving and support. I'm looking forward to enjoying cucumber sandwiches at the ceremony later this year!"