bcac breast cancer aotearoa coalition

ANNUAL REPORT **2026**







Together we're stronger

Tangata tū pakari tonu



Chairperson's Report

Kia ora koutou,

Looking back on another year of intense activity for BCAC I can report that we have engaged constructively across many elements of the health system in our efforts to bring timely world class care to the 3,700 New Zealanders diagnosed with breast cancer each year. We've advised, consulted, submitted, advocated, collaborated and been educated to shift the dial in a positive direction for patients, but there's still so much more to do. We've seen positive progress in some areas but resistance and inertia in others. You need stamina in this game and that's a quality we're not short of. Our member groups have continued to provide incredibly valuable services and we're so grateful for all the support that has made life better for Kiwis with breast cancer.

We've provided BCAC's Step by Step support pack to over 1,300 patients this year and continued to support the many who contacted us for advice and information. Our website offered information on all elements of the breast cancer pathway, delivered news and research results, and notified readers of seminars, member group events and more. The 75,000 page hits show it was a useful source, while our Facebook page had 51,000 views and our Facebook group memberships grew. Committee member Denise Lemmen did a great job of coordinating the Metavivors NZ and related Metavivors NZ - Action Facebook groups. Metavivors provides an incredible depth of wisdom and peer support for those with advanced breast cancer while the Action group has more of an advocacy focus.

Following last year's Pharmac Consumer Engagement Workshops, and the independent report on these by Dame Kerry Prendergast, Pharmac established a Consumer and Patient Working Group (CAPWG) for a one-year term to provide advice on how it could improve its culture and operations to become more outwardly focused, transparent and timely. Members of CAPWG were nominated by the patient advocates who attended the workshops and included some of Pharmac's harshest critics, suggesting Pharmac is serious about committing to genuine change through its Reset Programme and beyond.

As a CAPWG member I attended fortnightly online meetings and two in-person workshops with Pharmac. We had input on revised values, strategy, patient/consumer input, consultation and budgeting, and brought a sharp focus on the need to establish more timely assessment processes and positive funding decisions. The group represented a wide range of conditions needing unfunded medicines, with members openly expressing the pain and frustration that patients and their whānau experience when denied access to vital treatments that would deliver healthier lives, greater wellbeing and more years of life.

The transformation sought by patients is supported and encouraged by Pharmac Board Chair Paula Bennett and Pharmac Minister David Seymour through his Letters of Expectation. Pharmac is now being ably led by new Canadian CEO Natalie McMurtry. My perception is that attitudes and aspirations have shifted significantly within Pharmac under this new leadership and that the Reset has identified essential changes and built the foundation for the next four years of transformation. Pharmac's Timely Assessment Programme now aims to develop and embed a new culture of transparency, collaboration and better processes that deliver tangible high impact outcomes. A new Consumer and Patient Advisory Committee will be established early in 2027 to cement the strong patient voice throughout the ongoing reform processes.

The elements of Pharmac we engaged with appear committed to positive change, with the level of transformation constrained by available budget. However, despite a commitment to improvement and patient focus, Pharmac's Advisory Committees are continuing to provide advice that is out of step with the rest of the world and harmful to patients. They recently rejected our repeated request to fund retreatment with trastuzumab (Herceptin®, Herzuma®) after progression in advanced HER2 positive breast cancer. This is a globally adopted



treatment recommended by experts worldwide and in international and NZ guidelines. They also recommended olaparib for advanced BRCA-mutated breast cancer with only a low priority, even though this is recognised globally as a vital treatment. The Committees appear to be untouched by the Reset and continuing with the rationing mentality of "Old Pharmac" that we've struggled with over the years. We hear the Advisory Committee functions will be subject to a long-overdue review next year and hope they will be instructed to recommend best clinical practice for NZ patients to support a move to an international standard of care.

Pharmac reform aside, our access to medicines will remain dire unless the Government lifts NZ's medicines budget from the bottom of the OECD. A recent analysis comparing medicines access across 20 OECD countries showed that NZ funded only 5% of modern medicines over the last ten years compared to Australia's 25%, the UK's 46% and Germany's 58%. NZ funds far fewer medicines across all major therapy areas than Australia and takes twice as long to do so. For breast cancer there are 19 different medicines and uses that are funded for Australians but not for NZ patients.

To raise public and political awareness of this BCAC joined 16 other charities across a wide range of disease groups in the Forbidden Pharmacy campaign, highlighting the fact that over 200 medicines, funded overseas for cancers, rare disorders, chronic diseases, and more, remain out of reach for NZers. Please visit the campaign website www.forbiddenpharmacy.org and add your name to the open letter to all of NZ's political party leaders asking the next government to unlock the medicines we all need. We're hoping the parties will develop fresh medicines policies pre-election.

Each charity in the campaign was able to choose one medicine to highlight. BCAC's was Enhertu (trastuzumab deruxtecan) for advanced HER2-low breast cancer, funded in 37 countries including Australia, Canada, Scotland, many European countries, Japan, Singapore, Mexico and Lithuania. Around 140 women could benefit each year from this medicine shown in clinical trials to double the time before disease progression and reduce the risk of death by 36%. In NZ, depending on weight, patients need to find $122,000 to $153,000, plus GST and clinic fees to receive this treatment.



The Breast Cancer Foundation chose to highlight pembrolizumab for early triple negative breast cancer in the campaign. Funded in 27 countries including Australia, the UK and Canada, needed by around 210 NZers each year, this medicine reduces the risk of the cancer progressing from early stage to advanced by 32%. Only those who can afford to pay $150,000 can be treated in our country.

Committee member Fay Sowerby who chairs Breast Cancer Cure has been active on many fronts this year. As a member of BreastScreen Aotearoa's Partnership, Action and Equity Group, Fay has engaged on many important issues including screening participation and coverage, extension of the screening age, the use of AI in screening, the measurement and reporting of breast density, the pathway for those who present with symptoms and BreastScreen Aotearoa workforce issues.



Fay has also played a key role as co-lead of AGenDA, Against Genomic Discrimination Aotearoa, along with Prof. Andrew Shelling. AGenDA aims to see legislation enacted to protect NZers from genomic discrimination by insurers. NZ has fallen well behind other countries by failing to prevent insurers from using test results to deny insurance cover or to load premiums for those who have a genetic variant such as BRCA mutations and their family members. Fay and Prof. Shelling have relentlessly educated Government Ministers and other politicians and presented a case to the parliamentary Health Select Committee to progress consultation to legislatively end this discrimination. They have noted the dangers of this misuse of genomic data as it discourages testing, undermining prevention, early diagnosis, family testing, genomic research and clinical childhood treatment. Disappointingly, the Minister has stated that pressing 'go' on this is not a priority, so further advocacy will be needed after the election. Fay is also an active member of the NZ Genomic Medicine Collaboration, aiming to match targeted medicines with those who would benefit the most.



Committee member Maria Marama provided a Māori perspective in many contexts, including engaging with Te Whatu Ora as a member of the Consumer Advisory Group on Breast and Cervical Cancer, contributing to Otago University's Familial Breast Cancer and Ovarian Cancer Research Project and presenting at Auckland University's Matariki Rangahau Symposium.

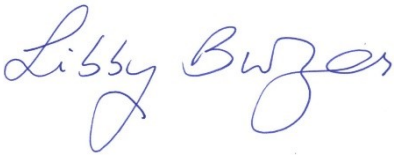
Maria was a speaker at the World Indigenous Cancer Conference, facilitated at the World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education and assisted in a lung cancer research project.

BCAC continued to promote access to clinical trials, with committee member Emma Crowley chairing Cancer Trials NZ's consumer advisory panel and serving as a member of Breast Cancer Trials' (BCT) consumer panel. Committee members attended the BCT Annual Scientific Meeting as well as a range of educational breast cancer conferences, meetings and seminars in person and online, where we were able to deepen our knowledge and strengthen our collaborative networks.

The committee was enriched by Rachel Greenwood who brought her knowledge as a GP and advanced breast cancer patient into the mix, while Tanya Newman provided her wisdom as a registered counsellor and Rowena Mortimer provided valuable legal advice. We were well connected into Sweet Louise through their CE Catrin Devonald, the Breast Cancer Foundation NZ through their CE Ah-Leen Rayner, Breast Cancer Support via National Chair and Peer Lead Liz Pennington, Canteen through their Partnerships Manager Philippa Reed and Aotearoa NZ Breast Cancer Community through Alvina Sciascia-Bizaoui. Thanks also to our Treasurer Louise for keeping the accounts, writing website content and packing and distributing our Step by Step packs. You'll find out more about what we all did this year as you read this report.

A huge thank you to all our awesome committee members and member groups for the great work you're doing to make life better for everyone diagnosed and their whānau! Your efforts are truly worthwhile and valued.

Wishing everyone all the very best and hoping for progress on many fronts,



Libby Burgess MNZM

BCAC Chair

Together we're stronger
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BCAC is an umbrella organisation representing more than 30 breast cancer-related groups in New Zealand. Our role is to support, inform and represent people with breast cancer. We are committed to transforming the lives of those diagnosed with breast cancer by seeking world-class detection, treatment and care.





Key Achievements in 2025

Information and resources

- Delivered more than 1300 Step by Step support packs to New Zealanders newly diagnosed with breast cancer.
- Provided information on breast cancer diagnosis, treatment and recovery via our website **www.breastcancer.org.nz**
- Delivered up-to-date breast cancer news, research results and events via our website (75,000 page views) and Facebook page (51,000 views).
- Delivered a regular e-newsletter to over 1200 subscribers.
- Supported over 3000 New Zealanders through BCAC's main Facebook page and nearly 800 members in our public Facebook group.
- Supported more than 600 New Zealanders with advanced breast cancer through the online communities Metavivors NZ and Metavivors NZ – Action.
- Promoted the Metavivors NZ online peer support group.
- Ensured that our website was up-to-date, including new information on breast cancer diagnosis, sub-types, therapies, access to medicines and support services.
- Responded to more than 100 queries through the BCAC website and Facebook page.

Providing a voice for those diagnosed with breast cancer

BCAC Committee Members participate in a number of consumer and specialist breast cancer groups throughout New Zealand to ensure breast cancer patients are represented in the health system. We also engage in other activities and projects designed to raise the voices of those diagnosed with breast cancer.

- As a member of Pharmac's Consumer and Patient Working Group, BCAC Chair Libby Burgess worked to ensure that the interests of New Zealand breast cancer patients were heard as the Group contributed to Pharmac's Reset Programme, including a new strategic vision, improving processes and enhancing consumer engagement and trust.
- During the year, BCAC Committee Members also attended regular stakeholder meetings with Pharmac.

- BCAC responded to Pharmac consultations on private clinic delivery of medicines, tenders for fulvestrant and other breast cancer medicines, a rule of two assessment pathway, and the exceptional circumstances and named patient pharmaceutical assessment process.
- Throughout the year, BCAC Committee Members met with Pharmac and with pharmaceutical company representatives to discuss specific issues with medicines affecting breast cancer patients, e.g. funding applications for new medicines, brand switches and changes to packaging of existing ones.
- BCAC Secretary Fay Sowerby continued her work with AGenDA (Against Genomic Discrimination Aotearoa) seeking changes to NZ law to ensure that breast cancer patients' genetic test results cannot be used by insurers or others to discriminate against them.
- In June 2025, Fay Sowerby completed her work with the BreastScreen Aotearoa (BSA) Service Standards Expert Group; her role in the BreastScreen Aotearoa Partnership Action and Equity Group, which provides independent advice to NZ's national breast screening programme, continues. Fay also facilitated contact between research groups interested in screening with appropriate contacts in BSA.
- BCAC provided consumer representation on the Breast Special Interest Group (BSIG) of breast cancer specialists, with Libby and Fay attending meetings this year.
- BCAC Deputy Chair Emma Crowley continued to represent New Zealanders with breast cancer as a member of the Consumer Advisory Panel of Breast Cancer Trials.
- Emma also continued as Chair of the Consumer Advisory Panel of Cancer Trials NZ.
- Libby Burgess represented NZ breast cancer patients at the ESMO Asia Pacific Patient Engagement Summit in Singapore in December 2025.
- In August 2025 Libby Burgess and Ah-Leen Rayner met with Minister of Health Simeon Brown to discuss waiting lists for radiotherapy and other matters.
- In October 2025, Fay Sowerby attended the Valuing Life meeting organised by Patient Voice Aotearoa and Medicines NZ in Wellington.
- BCAC also represented consumers on the New Zealand Familial Breast and Ovarian Cancer Group of specialists, with Fay and Libby regularly attending their meetings. Fay helped to facilitate their conference programme and advised on the REACH project to implement an audit alongside the mainstreaming of genetic testing for breast cancer.
- BCAC promoted lobular breast cancer advocacy and research, with a website article and paper. Fay also met and communicated with stakeholders to raise awareness of this sub-type.
- BCAC continued to collaborate with Patient Voice Aotearoa on actions to improve access to medicines for patients with a wide range of treatable diseases in our country.

- BCAC is a member of the ABC Global Alliance, a European-based organization dedicated to improving and extending the lives of women and men living with advanced breast cancer worldwide.
- BCAC supported many women as they negotiated the health system to secure timely and appropriate detection, diagnosis, treatment and care.



Improving access to world class treatment and care

BCAC continued to strive for improved access to breast cancer medicines in New Zealand:

- BCAC worked to encourage system-wide change at Pharmac – Libby Burgess participated in Pharmac's Reset Programme as a member of the Consumer and Patient Working Group, and BCAC Committee members attended Pharmac stakeholder meetings and met with Pharmac staff throughout the year. Libby also learnt about health technology assessment and funding models used in Canada.
- In November 2025, BCAC responded to a Pharmac consultation to shorten its Options for Investment (OFI) list, which included six medicines for breast cancer: Phesgo and Perjeta for early HER2 positive breast cancer, Enhertu for advanced HER2-low, Keytruda for early triple negative breast cancer, and Abraxane and Trodelvy for advanced triple negative breast cancer.
- BCAC submitted that removing beneficial medicines from the list would not achieve Pharmac's stated aim of increasing clarity and transparency on how it manages funding applications. We recommended deep reform of Pharmac's health technology assessment processes to develop a modern best-practice timely and transparent patient-centred approach that would deliver better health outcomes for New Zealanders.
- BCAC contributed to the Forbidden Pharmacy campaign which brought together a wide range of NZ patient advocacy groups to call for change in NZ's medicines funding system.
- BCAC continued to meet with representatives of pharmaceutical companies, encouraging them to supply New Zealanders with modern breast cancer medicines at affordable prices, by registering new medicines with Medsafe, applying to Pharmac for funding and setting up cost-share programmes when medicines are only available privately.
- BCAC engaged in discussions with pharmaceutical companies and Pharmac on particular medicines and issues, including pembrolizumab (Keytruda) for early triple negative breast cancer (TNBC), olaparib (Lynparza) for early and advanced BRCA-mutated TNBC, sacituzumab govitecan (Trodelvy) for advanced TNBC, tucatinib (Tukysa) for advanced HER2 positive breast cancer, abemaciclib (Verzenio) for early hormone receptor (HR) positive breast cancer, trastuzumab deruxtecan (Enhertu) for advanced HR positive/HER2-low and HR positive/HER2-ultralow breast cancers, re-treatment with trastuzumab (Herzuma) in advanced HER2 positive breast cancer, and anti-vasomotor (hot flush) medicines for treating side effects of endocrine therapy.
- Fay Sowerby attended the ISPOR NZ meeting of pharmacoeconomic researchers.

BCAC is helping to pave the way to precision medicine:

- BCAC's Fay Sowerby continued to promote genetic testing for breast cancer patients and to advocate for medicines proven to be effective for breast cancers with particular genetic signatures, e.g. olaparib for BRCA-mutated TNBC.
- Fay Sowerby is also co-lead of AGenDA, a group actively campaigning for legislation to protect against genomic discrimination in NZ by engaging with the government and with insurance and financial organisations. BCAC is a member of AGenDA.
- Fay chaired the DPYD / GenoMoCare steering committee, focusing on mainstreaming DPYD testing and developing audit protocols for a Northland pilot to embed genetic testing pathways.

BCAC advocates for improved screening for breast cancer in New Zealand:

- BCAC continued to support changes in the national breast screening programme that move it away from 'one-size-fits-all' to a risk-based model that encourages widespread, optimal participation and results in more timely detection of breast cancers.
- BCAC's Fay Sowerby continued her work as a member of the BreastScreen Aotearoa Partnership Action and Equity Group, attending meetings, and engaging with others on a range of topics including participation and coverage, extension of the screening age, screening campaigns, the use of AI in screening leading to expected introduction in early 2027, breast density measurement to be concurrently implemented, follow-up screening issues leading to a working group, symptomatic pathway (projects) and workforce issues.
- Fay is also a member of the BreastScreen Aotearoa Indicator Clinical Advisory Group developing indicators, from May 2025 to October 2026.

BCAC encourages access to clinical trials and endorses local breast cancer research:

- BCAC Committee Members met with New Zealand breast cancer researchers to provide consumer input into their projects as well as letters of support to funders for worthy projects.
- BCAC's Emma Crowley continued in her roles as Chair of the consumer advisory panel of Cancer Trials NZ and as a member of the Consumer Advisory Panel of Breast Cancer Trials.
- Emma was also a panel member at Breast Cancer Trials Early Career Training Day.
- Fay Sowerby continued her work as a consumer representative on the University of Auckland research ropu facilitating introductions and agreeing to support research projects.
- Fay was also coordinator of the NZ Genomic Medicine Collaboration, a member of a global breast cancer research team that submitted an expression of interest to the Grand Challenge, and a member of an Advisory Committee for a large breast cancer research project.
- Fay met and worked with several local and international breast cancer researchers seeking consumer input and support for their projects.
- Fay facilitated contact between a Muslim research group and BreastScreen Aotearoa regarding attitudes to, and participation in, mammographic screening.
- Fay and Libby met with BeOne, an international organisation facilitating clinical trials.



BCAC members continue to learn about the science of breast cancer, keeping up to date with research results for new medicines and other treatments.

BCAC uses this knowledge to provide accurate information to New Zealanders with breast cancer, empowering them to make good decisions about their treatment and care, and to ensure that BCAC can engage effectively with patients, clinicians, pharmaceutical suppliers, decision-makers and policymakers to advocate for access to better treatments.

- BCAC Committee Members met with New Zealand breast cancer researchers to provide consumer input into their projects as well as letters of support to funders for worthy projects.
- BCAC Committee Members attended conferences and meetings (in person and online) throughout the year, including:
    - Breast Cancer Trials Annual Scientific Meetings in Hobart in July 2025 and in Brisbane in July 2026
    - San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium in Texas USA in December 2025
    - BC InSIGhts conference in Auckland in March 2026
    - European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO) Patient Engagement Summit – Asia Pacific in Singapore in December 2025.



Improving outcomes for Māori and Pasifika women

- BCAC continued to advocate for removing barriers and improving access to breast cancer screening, diagnosis, treatments and reconstruction options for Māori, Pasifika, rural and disadvantaged women. We encouraged healthcare providers and Pharmac to facilitate delivery of services and treatments close to home.
- BCAC provided Step by Step support packs to Māori health providers supporting Māori with breast cancer throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.
- BCAC Committee Member Maria Marama provided a Māori perspective and advised on a wide range of issues relating to ethnic equity in NZ breast cancer care.
- BCAC members attended the Matariki Ranaghau Cancer Symposium and the World Indigenous Cancer Conference.

Step by Step - Feedback in 2026



"It is fantastic, so informative at a very scary time, when finding out you have breast cancer."

"Wonderful information."

"Excellent booklet. Informative and easy to refer back to when questions arise."

"Bright and cheerful appearance. Very clear and organised information. Very useful. Love the plastic slots for important cards."

"It has been a great help to me. Have had wonderful help from everyone involved."

"Fantastic."

"A very comprehensive guide and pack for patients. Like the additional touch of supplying a planner and note book."

"It's perfect thank you"

"Very detailed information, easy to obtain."

"I love it, it was very helpful and had all the information I needed in one place. Thank you so much."

"Our patients love them."

"Thank you for the booklet. I rate it up there."

BCAC Committee

Those serving on the BCAC committee during 2026 were:

Chair:	Libby Burgess	
Deputy Chair:	Emma Crowley	
Secretary:	Fay Sowerby	
Treasurer:	Louise Malone	
Committee Members:	Ah-Leen Rayner	Liz Pennington
	Alvina Sciascia-Bizaoui	Philippa Reed
	Catrin Devonald	Rachel Greenwood
	Denise Lemmen	Rowena Mortimer
	Maria Marama	Tanya Newman

In addition to the wide-ranging representation outlined earlier in this report, BCAC Committee Members have been involved in many other committees, conferences and meetings in 2025/26, all with the aim of improving breast cancer care in New Zealand.

Libby Burgess, Chairperson



- Member of Pharmac's Consumer and Patient Working Group, meeting fortnightly to provide input on Pharmac's Reset Programme. Provided advice to Pharmac on a wide range of matters including its vision, strategy, medicines assessment and funding pathway, patient engagement mechanisms and budget bids
- Represented BCAC at regular Pharmac Stakeholder meetings
- Provided a BCAC submission to the Minister of Health on Pharmac's Statutory Objective
- Provided a BCAC submission on Pharmac's Named Patient and Exceptional Circumstances consultation
- Consumer representative: Breast Special Interest Group (BSIG)
- Affiliate member of Breast Cancer Trials. Libby attended the Annual Scientific Meetings in July 2025 and July 2026
- Regularly corresponded and met with Pharmac and responded to consultations on Pharmac advisory committees, operations and medicines funding proposals

- Attended meetings of the New Zealand Familial Breast and Ovarian Cancer Group
- Attended a number of meetings with pharmaceutical companies seeking timely, affordable access to breast cancer medicines for New Zealand patients
- Met regularly with Patient Voice Aotearoa representatives to advocate for better access to cancer medicines
- Attended the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium online in December 2025 as a consumer advocate
- ESMO Patient Advocate Member. Attended ESMO Patient Engagement Summit - Asia-Pacific December 2025 in Singapore
- Attended BC InSIGhts scientific meeting March 2026 in Auckland
- Supported many women negotiating the health system and seeking timely access to breast cancer medicines and other treatments.

Emma Crowley, Deputy Chairperson



- Chair of the consumer advisory panel of Cancer Trials NZ
- Member of the Consumer Advisory Panel of Breast Cancer Trials
- Panel member at Breast Cancer Trials Early Career Training Day
- Contributed to BCAC's submission on Pharmac's statutory objectives in Pae Ora Bill
- Attended Breast Cancer Trials Annual Scientific Meetings in July 2025 and July 2026.

Fay Sowerby, Secretary



- Chair of Breast Cancer Cure
- Co-Lead, Against Genomic Discrimination Aotearoa – AgenDA, including writing updates for AGenDA members and contributing to correspondence with Ministers on genomic discrimination protections and opportunity for NZ to consider legislation similar to Australia's
- Chair, DPYD / GenoMoCare Steering Committee
- Member of the BreastScreen Aotearoa Partnership Action and Equity Group
- Member of the BreastScreen Aotearoa Service Standards Expert Advisory Group until its work was completed June 2025
- Member of the BreastScreen Aotearoa Indicator Clinical Advisory Group from May 2025 to October 2026
- Affiliate member of Breast Cancer Trials; Member NZSO
- Member ESMO

- Member of the University of Auckland research rōpū as a consumer representative, facilitating introductions and agreeing to support research projects as a consumer representative
- Coordinator of the NZ Genomic Medicine Collaboration alongside others, including presenting to stakeholders
- Member of a global breast cancer research team that submitted an expression of interest to the Grand Challenge
- Advisory Committee member for a large breast cancer research project
- Met and worked with several local and international breast cancer researchers seeking consumer input and support for their projects
- Met with oncologists to review the HR+ breast cancer pathway, including opportunities to investigate molecular testing and access to new medicines
- Followed up with Pharmac on a joint BSIG/BCAC olaparib application following prioritization by CTAC
- Attended and presented at NZ Familial Breast and Ovarian Cancer Group meetings, helped facilitate 2026 conference programme, and advised on the REACH project to implement an audit alongside the mainstreaming of genetic testing for breast cancer
- Facilitated contact between a Muslim research group and BreastScreen Aotearoa regarding attitudes to, and participation in, mammographic screening
- Attended meetings and communicated with stakeholders to promote lobular breast cancer advocacy and research
- Attended several meetings with pharmaceutical companies and with Pharmac, including monthly Pharmac stakeholder meetings
- Gave presentations and engaged with BSIG, NZ Society of Actuaries conference (November 2025), Pink Breakfasts, and Te Aho o Te Kahu
- Attended the following conferences: BC InSIGhts conference, Auckland, March 2026; San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium, online, December 2025; ESMO Breast Cancer Annual Congress, online, 2025; Monthly Research to Practice and ESMO webinars on topics of interest; Matariki Rangahau Cancer Symposium; ISPOR NZ meeting of pharmacoeconomic researchers; Valuing Life meeting, Wellington, October 2025; World Indigenous Cancer Conference, May 2026
- Provided ongoing support to breast cancer patients and contributed to advocacy on access to medicines and improved care pathways. This included speaking to media regarding access to medicines, including olaparib and trastuzumab deruxtecan for HER2-low breast cancer
- Engaged with stakeholders on unfunded medicines, genomic medicine, breast cancer pathways, molecular testing, and equitable access to screening and treatment
- Wrote a BCAC paper on the use of AI in reading mammograms
- Co-authored two published articles: Bhattacharjee A, Sowerby F. Breast density reporting in Aotearoa New Zealand: policy imperatives and research priorities. N Z Med J. 2026 Mar 13;139(1631):104-109. Shelling AN, Fraser HG, Gamet K, Sowerby F. Genomics and discrimination in New Zealand health and life insurance. J R Soc N Z. 2026 Feb 4;56(1):e70004.

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Louise Malone, Treasurer

- Responsible for keeping accounts and reporting on BCAC's financial performance
- Responsible for distribution of Step by Step support packs
- Attended meetings with pharmaceutical companies
- Wrote news articles and updated information on BCAC's website
- Wrote BCAC's quarterly e newsletter
- Affiliate Member of Breast Cancer Trials; attended the Annual Scientific Meetings in July 2025 and 2026
- Attended San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium 2026 online.



Ah-Leen Rayner, Committee Member

- Chief Executive of the Breast Cancer Foundation NZ, a BCAC member.



Alvina Sciascia-Bizaoui, Committee Member

- Represents BCAC member group, Aotearoa New Zealand Breast Cancer Community Trust.

Catrin Devonald, Committee Member

- Chief Executive of BCAC member group, Sweet Louise
- Involved in various initiatives to support practical, emotional, and social women and men with advanced breast cancer (ABC)
- Involved in health coalition Aotearoa group on lobbying.
- Organised awareness events Auckland and Wellington for women with ABC in New Zealand to coincide with International Breast Cancer Awareness Day October 2025
- Attended meetings with ABC Global Alliance, 2nds Count, Patient Voice Aotearoa, Pharmac Consumer Stakeholder group, and other breast cancer organisations to further support and advocate for ABC patients
- Ongoing partnerships with NZ based pharmaceutical companies to progress campaigns, raise awareness and represent patients / consumers
- Partnership with CANSA worldwide to extend services to families of ABC patients in NZ
- Sweet Louise representatives attended: World Indigenous Cancer Conference, NZ Initiative Health Summit
- Sweet Louise's Head of Member Services Lorraine Bailey is a member of the ABC-NZ treatment guidelines group.



Denise Lemmen, Committee Member



- Co-ordinates Metavivors NZ and Metavivors NZ – Action Facebook groups
- Identified health providers for distributing promotional material for Metavivors NZ
- Co-ordinated Metavivors NZ actions in relation to medicines access
- Identifies upcoming research and clinical trials in New Zealand and Australia and makes Metavivors aware of these
- Brings relevant petitions and information regarding Pharmac changes to the attention of Metavivors
- Makes every effort to meet with Metavivors when travelling
- Helped to identify women with advanced breast cancer willing to share their stories to publicise problems with access to breast cancer medicines and other treatments
- Supported women negotiating the health system and seeking timely access to medicines and other treatments
- Attended the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium 2026 USA in person, December 2025
- Provides regular support and oversight to the Treasurer in keeping BCAC's accounts.

Maria Marama, Committee Member



- Provides a Māori perspective and advocates for removing barriers and improving access to breast cancer diagnosis, treatments and options for wāhine Maori and their whanau
- Member, Consumer Advisory Group (CAG) Breast and Cervical Cancer, Te Whatu Ora. Reviews and approves all material for wāhine Maori and their whanau, leading to an increase screening rates
- Member, Familial Breast Cancer and Ovarian Cancer Research Project, Otago University
- Presenter at the Matariki Rangahau Symposium, University of Auckland
- Presenter at the World Indigenous Cancer Conference, Auckland
- Facilitator at the World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education, Auckland
- Facilitator at Te Oranga Pukahukahu, Waitakere and Midlands.



Liz Pennington, Committee Member

- National Chair and Peer Lead of BCAC member group, Breast Cancer Support Aotearoa
- Member, Breast Cancer Care After Treatment Guidelines Group, Health NZ Te Whatu Ora.



Philippa Reed, Committee Member

- Partnerships Manager of BCAC member group Canteen Aotearoa
- Canteen Aotearoa supports rangatahi (13-24) impacted by cancer, whether it's a diagnosis of their own or cancer in their whānau.



Rachel Greenwood, Committee Member

- Provides a physician's and patient's perspective on breast cancer
- Provides a voice for women with advanced breast cancer.



Rowena Mortimer, Committee Member

- Provides legal advice to BCAC when required
- Member, Breast Cancer Care After Treatment Guidelines Group, Health NZ Te Whatu Ora.



Tanya Newman, Committee Member

- Certified Radical Remission health coach and facilitator
- NZAC registered counsellor and counselling supervisor
- Provides links to counselling and support services.

Supporters

BCAC has once again received generous and kind support from a number of organisations and individuals during our 2025/2026 financial year.

BCAC was very grateful to receive a bequest this year from the estate of Patricia Henderson.

BCAC's relationship with The Good Registry, an organisation that helps people to give charitable donations as gifts, has continued to thrive this year. We have been very grateful for the regular donations we have received from them and their 'givers' this year.

A grant was received from pharmaceutical company Merck Sharpe & Dohme allowing Libby Burgess and Louise Malone to attend Breast Cancer Trials' Annual Scientific Meeting in Hobart, Australia in July 2025.

As always, we have been touched and extremely grateful for donations received throughout the year from members of the public.

Many thanks also to our regular donors and those who choose to support us when entering marathons and other sporting events.

BCAC thanks all these organisations and individuals who have supported us this year and made our work and achievements for New Zealanders possible.





BCAC Member Groups

BCAC is proud to work closely with all our members from the community to improve detection, care and treatment for all New Zealanders with breast cancer. Along with many individual members, BCAC is made up of more than 30 breast cancer related groups.

Age Concern
Alleviate
Aotearoa NZ Breast Cancer Community Trust
Ascot Radiology Pink Dragons
Boobops Dragon Boat Team
Breast Cancer Action Trust
Breast Cancer Cure
Breast Cancer Foundation New Zealand
Breast Cancer Research Trust
Breast Cancer Support Aotearoa
Breast Cancer Support Northland Trust
Breast Cancer Support Service Tauranga Trust
Busting with Life
Cancer Rehabilitation Foundation (Pinc & Steel)
Cancer Support New Zealand (formerly Look Good Feel Better)
CanTeen Aotearoa
Horowhenua Pink Ladies BCS Group
Kenzie's Gift
Lymphoedema Support Network
Mamazon Club
Metavivors NZ
Mindfulness Aotearoa
Rotorua Breast Cancer Trust
Shocking Pink
Support Crew
Sweet Louise
Taranaki Dragons
Te Hā Oranga o Ngāti Whātua
Terrier Race Against Time
The Gift of Knowledge
Waikato Treasure Chests
Well Women and Family Trust

AGE CONCERN NEW ZEALAND
He Manaakitanga Kaumātua Aotearoa

alleviate

AOTEAROA NZ BREAST CANCER COMMUNITY

Bay of Plenty Dragon Boat Club Inc.

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT NORTHLAND TRUST

Breast Cancer Support AOTEAROA
'We've been there too'

breast cancer SUPPORT SERVICE Tauranga Trust

Breast Cancer Foundation NZ

BREAST CANCER ACTION TRUST
Keeping Abreast

BREAST CANCER CURE™

BUSTING WITH LIFE

CANCER REHABILITATION FOUNDATION
PINC & STEEL

KenziesGift
Healthy Minds, Happy Hearts

Cancer Support New Zealand

METAVIVORS NEW ZEALAND

Breast Cancer Research Trust
Gaining Knowledge. Saving Lives.

ROTORUA BREAST CANCER TRUST

SHOCKING Pink!

SWEET Louise
SUPPORT FOR INCURABLE BREAST CANCER

the gift of knowledge

PINK DRAGONS
Paddling with Passion

Te Hā Oranga

Terrier Race Against Time

Waikato Treasure Chests

TARANAKI DRAGONS

SUPPORT CREW

CANTEEN

Well Women & Family Trust

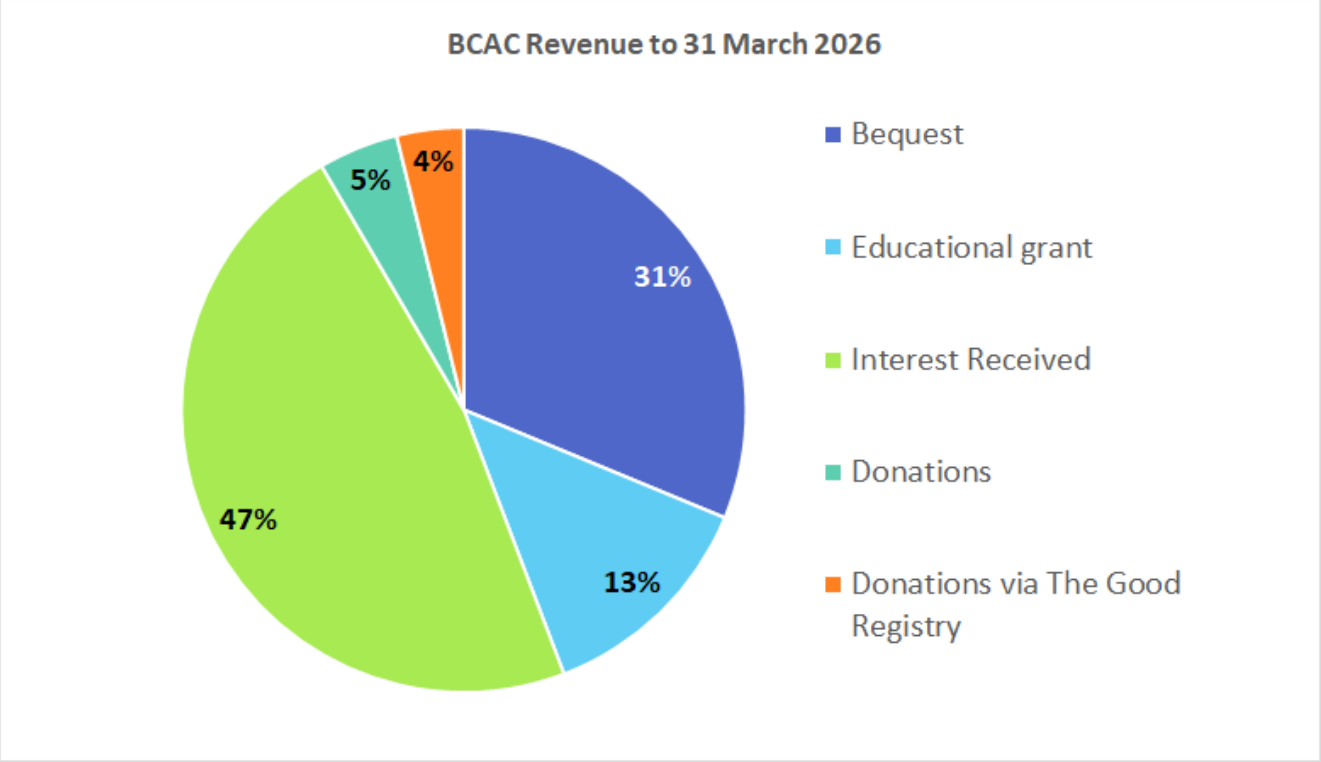
Mindfulness Aotearoa
HEALTH OF MIND

Together we're stronger
Tangata tū pakari tonu

Financials

BCAC Revenue 2025/26

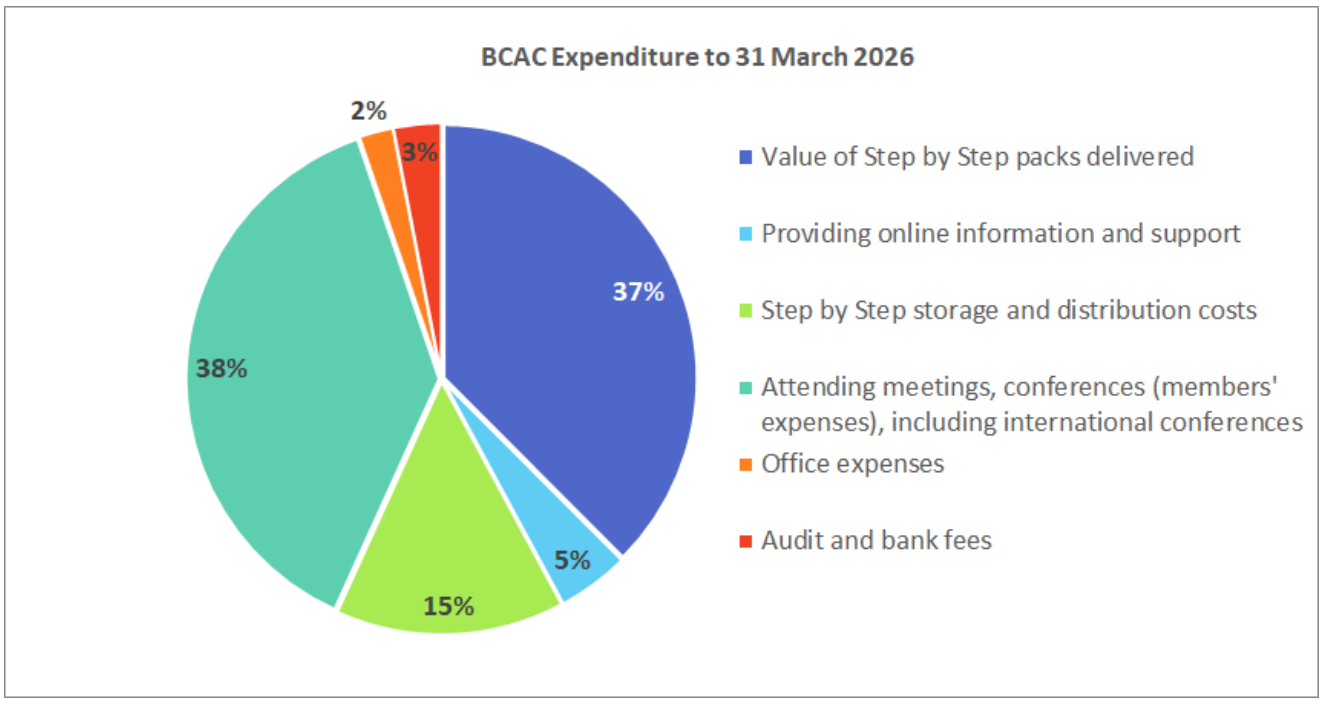
Funding Source	Amount ($)
Bequest	$20,000
Educational grant	$8,315
Interest Received	$30,320
Donations	$2,927
Donations via The Good Registry	$2,455
Total Revenue	**$64,017**



Financials

BCAC Expenses 2025/26

Expenses	Amount ($)
Value of Step by Step packs delivered	$21,270
Providing online information and support	$2,621
Step by Step storage and distribution costs	$8,307
Attending meetings, conferences (members' expenses), including international conferences	$21,537
Office expenses	$1,241
Audit and bank fees	$1,730
Total Expenses	**$56,706**



Plans for 2027

FOR 2027, OUR ACTIVITIES WILL INCLUDE:

To make world class detection, treatment and care accessible to all affected by breast cancer in New Zealand

- Continue engagement with decision makers at all levels
- Continue to update our knowledge of effective treatments through interaction with medical experts and attendance at research meetings
- Support the establishment and implementation of Key Performance Indicators for breast cancer
- Support the development and implementation of NZ Guidelines for Advanced Breast Cancer
- Raise awareness of new and emerging medicines and the need for increased medicines funding
- Meet with Pharmac to champion access to new medicines proven to deliver results
- Meet with pharmaceutical companies and encourage them to import and register their innovative medicines in New Zealand, apply for Medsafe registration and Pharmac funding and offer them at affordable prices in cost-share patient access programmes and free of charge to patients when funding is imminent
- Provide consumer input to BreastScreen Aotearoa's (BSA) Partnership Action and Equity Group
- Continue to review the performance of the Cancer Control Agency Te Aho o Te Kahu and provide patient-focused input
- Advocate for new ways that breast cancer care can be provided to improve outcomes
- Consult, engage with, empower and, when appropriate, represent Māori and Pasifika women on breast issues and advocate for actions needed to increase access to services, and improve breast cancer experiences and outcomes
- Increase education and knowledge of breast cancer, treatments, supportive care and emerging clinical trial results by attending and promoting local and international expert meetings and conferences
- Advocate for the establishment of schemes enabling early and broader medicines access
- Encourage the adoption of genetic and genomic testing in the treatment of breast cancer in NZ and provide support and input to Against Genomic Discrimination in Aotearoa's consultation to prohibit genomic discrimination in insurance in New Zealand
- Engage and network with the key stakeholders across the health system to encourage and support consumer, Māori, and Pacific involvement and participation in breast cancer clinical research and its translation by partnering at a governance, local/regional level
- Continue networking and collaboration among groups and individuals.

To provide information and support to empower those with breast cancer to make informed choices about their treatment and care

- Widely distribute Step by Step to women newly diagnosed with breast cancer throughout New Zealand
- Provide information and support for those with early and advanced breast cancer
- Provide up-to-date information via our website about breast cancer and our advocacy work
- Communicate with the breast cancer community via our Facebook page and group
- Continue to support the Metavivors NZ and Metavivors NZ – Action Facebook groups
- Distribute news and information via our e-newsletter to hundreds of subscribers
- Share findings of breast cancer research through our website and social media
- Respond to requests for information and support.

To provide a unified evidence-based voice for New Zealanders who have experienced breast cancer

- Advocate for timely access to world-class breast care, including treatments and supportive care in New Zealand
- Raise awareness of advanced breast cancer and related needs for support and services
- Actively participate in a wide range of local, regional and national and international breast cancer-related working groups, panels, committees, organisations and conferences
- Respond to consultation opportunities relating to breast cancer
- Provide a public voice through ongoing liaison with media, interviews and media releases
- Support and promote initiatives enabling the early detection of breast cancer such as mammographic screening, breast density reporting and breast awareness by meeting regularly with BreastScreen Aotearoa to encourage continual progress with the national breast screening programme, including broadening the eligible age band and ensuring the backlog of screening caused by Covid-19 related issues is adequately addressed
- Provide information and comment on the most effective ways to achieve early detection.

To support the activities of BCAC through promotion and fundraising

- Apply for grants from charitable trusts
- Approach businesses for funding to support specific projects and activities
- Welcome public donations via our website, social media posts and newsletters.

Together we're stronger

Tangata tū pakari tonu



bcac breast cancer aotearoa coalition

Breast Cancer Aotearoa Coalition
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