



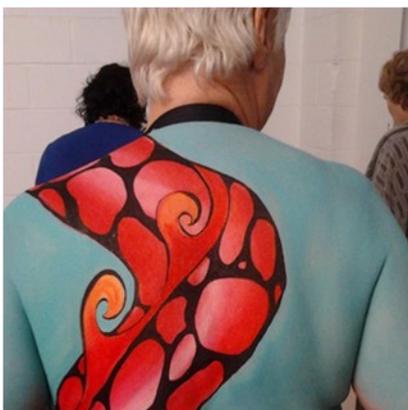
Breast Cancer Support Inc.

Newsletter

October 2013

From BCS Chair Caroline Crann

A year ago if someone had told me I'd get naked in public and be seen by thousands of people I would have said they were mad, but if any of you have the beautiful NZ Breast Cancer Foundation calendar for 2013 open at October, you will see me (and some others from the Pink Dragons Dragon boat team) baring all for a good cause.



Similarly a year ago if someone had told me that I would be chair of Breast Cancer Support I would also have thought they were mad, but here we are.....perhaps it's me that's mad!

Somehow I have found myself in the position of Chair of Breast Cancer Support which I am embracing as fully as I can. It is a challenge, there's no denying that, but for me it is a chance to give something back to a community that has given me great support throughout the trying journey that all of us have been on or are going through.

The New Year has been interesting in that there has been opportunity to make, and be part of, some great changes.

Our newest group, the Young Women's group is a success and it's fantastic to see their numbers growing each month. Coordinators Rosemary and Nicky are doing a fabulous job in keeping things moving along and of course we have the NZ Breast Cancer Foundation supporting us by offering the use of their premises to hold the meetings.

As part of my role as Chair I have elected to keep in contact with our BCS Support Group Coordinators on a regular basis and as such will be contacting them every couple of months for a catch up. In the meantime, if as a Coordinator, Group Member or BCS financial Member, you have any issues to raise, or suggestions to make, please feel free to call me at any time. My phone is always open!!

On that note, I would also like to offer my thanks to all of our Coordinators who do such a brilliant job of arranging meetings, speakers and activities year in and year out. They all deserve a very big 'thank you' from all of us as does Jane Bissell who does an amazing job administering for us. Without her knowledge and networking we wouldn't be as far ahead as we are and we're very lucky to have her committed to our organisation.

We made a foray in to the future with opening up our committee meeting to a wider audience through Skype and apart from one or two technical glitches this is a great way to meet when are located physically so far apart. The committee still meet every other month at Domain Lodge so that we're able to physically hand over material or sign documents etc. It's working really well and we welcome anyone who would like to join the committee and Skype in with us. (Cont)

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BCS gratefully acknowledges the support of our primary funders and sponsors: the NZ Lottery Grants Board, COGS, the Guardian Trust, The New Zealand Breast Cancer Foundation and the team at Alpha Copy Centre for their support of BCS. We thank the women of Zonta for keeping us well supplied with the 'moon cushions' that are of such comfort to our ladies.

(Cont) Our next big event coming up on November 9th is our Strategy Meeting. This meeting is designed to put together a plan to work out where we want to be in the future – what do we want Breast Cancer Support to look like, what do we need to do to attract more Members, what can we provide to our Breast Friends to make their lives easier or more supported.

As Group Members or BCS financial Members, you are more than welcome to attend this meeting, share your ideas and hopefully help us make it take shape. We are a small committee and need your help to forge ahead.

I believe we have an exciting year or two ahead of us and I look forward to being part of that.



Introducing ... Intrabeam Intraoperative Radiotherapy (IORT)

First NZ Women Treated With New One Dose, One Time Early Stage Breast Cancer Treatment
Reproduced from the Media Release issued by Focus Radiotherapy, 1 October 2013

The first two New Zealand women have been treated in Auckland with a revolutionary one dose, one time treatment for early-stage breast cancer.

The Intrabeam intraoperative radiotherapy (IORT) system avoids the traditional 3–6 week course of radiation therapy for 80% of patients and eliminates the need for up to a further 25 visits to hospital for post-operative radiotherapy. This is much more convenient for patients, saves the health service money and could reduce waiting lists.



A team of Auckland breast cancer specialists has formed their own service, Focus Radiotherapy, to bring the new treatment option, using the Zeiss Intrabeam intraoperative radiotherapy (IORT) system, to the Southern Cross Hospital, North Harbour Auckland and intend to make it available to women across the country.

One of the founders of Focus Radiotherapy, Auckland Breast Surgeon Dr Erica Whineray Kelly (pictured above) says: 'This may be an excellent therapy option for women having breast-conserving surgery. We are the first and only centre in New Zealand offering this revolutionary treatment. The goal of this approach is to destroy remaining cancer cells, helping to prevent the possibility of recurrence – and in most cases – eliminating the need for weeks of radiation treatments.'

Professor Mohammed Keshtgar, consultant surgical oncologist at the Royal Free and Professor of Cancer Surgery and Surgical Oncology, University College London who has been involved in trials using Intrabeam therapy from the outset for over 12 years, said: 'We welcome the news that intra-operative radiotherapy using the Intrabeam will now become a viable option for women aged over fifty with grade 1-2 breast cancer seeking treatment in New Zealand and I was delighted to welcome the team of wonderful clinicians from New Zealand in London when they attended our training program and became members of the TARGIT Academy.'

'We are in no doubt that this is the future of breast cancer treatment. Our results show that the technique is safe, has reduced side effects from radiation treatment such as scarring, and is effective with a cancer recurrence rate that is equivalent to giving standard radiotherapy treatment. We believe this will revolutionise the treatment of breast cancer.'

Chairperson of the Breast Cancer Aotearoa Coalition (BCAC), Libby Burgess, says Intrabeam is a wonderful innovation for women with low-risk early breast cancer: 'The delivery of surgery and radiotherapy during a single operation will eliminate weeks of daily trips to the clinic, allowing women to avoid ongoing stress and inconvenience and return to their normal lives much faster.'

'The precise targeting of radiation to the area that the tumour was removed from will avoid unnecessary radiation to healthy tissue. I'm delighted to see this option being offered to New Zealand women', Ms Burgess says.

Currently only women who have early-stage breast cancer, have negative lymph nodes and are 50 and older may be candidates for Intrabeam. The clinically documented treatment delivers a single fraction of radiotherapy in 20-30 minutes during the time of lumpectomy. Other forms of radiation therapy can require three to six weeks of treatment.

(Cont)

(Cont) Localizing the radiation inside the breast is effective because this is where cancer is most likely to recur. The international TARGIT research group has been investigating this new method of delivering radiotherapy for breast cancer in which the treatment can be delivered at the time of surgical lumpectomy since 1988. The results of the trial show the overall number of recurrences of the cancer was very low.

Benefits of INTRABEAM

- A reduction in radiation treatment time for the patient
- Minimized exposure to healthy tissue and organs, such as the ribs, lungs, heart and opposite breast
- No treatment delay for patients who must also undergo chemotherapy as part of their breast cancer treatment
- Same-day treatment with no hospitalisation required
- No travel required to a radiotherapy centre for up to six weeks of daily treatment

Further information:

Peter Boyes, BPR: 0275 540 500 or Dr Erica Whineray Kelly: 027 453 0020 or erica@focusradiotherapy.co.nz

Focus Radiotherapy PO Box 31-415, Milford, Auckland 0741 www.focusradiotherapy.co.nz

Sources

Vaidya JS, Joseph DJ, Tobias JS, Bulsara M, Wenz F, Saunders C, et al. Targeted intraoperative radiation therapy versus whole breast radiation therapy for breast cancer (TARGIT-A trial): an international, prospective, randomised, non-inferiority phase 3 trial. *The Lancet* 2010; 376: 91 - 102

Vaidya et al. "Targeted intraoperative radiation therapy for early breast cancer: TARGIT-A trial – updated analysis of local recurrence and first analysis of survival". San Antonio meeting 2012, S4-2.

News from BCS

Celebrating Mid-Winter Christmas with the 'Breast of Friends'

BCS welcomed all our Breast Friends to a special Mid-Winter Christmas dinner celebration in mid July at the Auckland Cancer Society. Over 30 guests came along to enjoy a delicious spread of ham and salads followed by a mouth-watering array of sweet treats contributed by those attending ...cream puffs, truffles, slices, cakes to name a few ... all delightful and enjoyable. The West Auckland Group had organised a splendid raffle with gift baskets laden with goodies and a beautiful quilt featuring some very gorgeous cats, and Jennifer Woodroffe led everyone through a game of trivia which was hilarious and good fun. All in all, it was a lovely evening of fun and fellowship, providing the women with a chance to catch up with each other and for our new Friends to be welcomed into our support networks.



Upcoming Dates

BCS Strategy Planning Day, Saturday 9 November 2013, 9am—1.30pm.

St Pauls College School Hall, 498 Don Buck Rd, Massey

All Breast Friends and BCS financial Members are welcome to attend this planning day, and help lead BCS into an exciting future! For more information or to RSVP (please by Friday 1 November) contact Jane Bissell 0800 273 222 or email jane@breastcancersupport.co.nz

Thank you to ...

The New Zealand Breast Cancer Foundation for donating the use of their meeting room for our Young Women's Group and for their sponsorship of our monthly website costs.

Our Central and West Auckland Breast Friends for their wonderful fundraising efforts.

Mrs. Margaret Walsh and Mr. Craig Shearer for the kind donation.



Disclaimer: The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of Breast Cancer Support Inc.

Breast Friends – News from our Support Groups

Our Breast Friends groups have interesting, informative and fun programmes for the year. If you would like to know more about any of our groups in Auckland, or would like to speak with someone, please call us on 0800 273 222.

Central (from Christine Rule)

Another great meeting on a sunny July day and our guest speaker was Patricia Melville (pictured) from dove House. The essence of what they do: 'dove house offers a range of non-medical therapies to support you through the challenges of living with a life threatening illness. We aim to promote emotional and spiritual wellbeing and have a strong focus on wellness. Our therapies are designed to support and enhance conventional treatment you may be receiving.' All services are free and range from Counselling-Medical and Family Support to Relaxation therapies and art and healing group. Programmes of care will be managed from the beginning in consultation and at the recommendation of the experienced clinical team.



Women had an opportunity to discuss various issues with Patricia over another delicious, afternoon tea. In August women had to brave a horrible winter's day with strong wind, rain, hail and thunder. But as always though, the atmosphere at the meeting was lovely and warm. Every August we try and do our bit to help the Cancer Society by packing daffodils. This is to show our appreciation of being allowed to use the Support Room at Domain Lodge for our Breast Friends meetings. We worked hard for 1hr 20mins and packed 186 bags for distribution. In September our guest speaker Ros Broome (pictured) talked about the benefits of correct breathing and delivered her talk with so much passion and enthusiasm, everyone was keen to participate in the breathing and relaxation techniques. Ros arrived at our meeting like a Santa Claus bearing a number of huge bags, which contained mats and pillows for those who wanted to try their exercises on the floor. There was a pillow for one's head and two pillows per person to support the knees. She uses evidence-based methods from physiotherapy to teach people how to reach a state of calm, through normal breathing. We were told that doing this is not 'doing nothing' but 'doing something' to really help us to reach a state of calmness and improve our health and well being.



Hibiscus Coast (from Dianne Murray)

In July we welcomed two new ladies and two who hadn't attended for some months due to illness and family reasons. The guest speakers, Gemma (pictured) and Emma, from the Health and Disability Advocacy Service gave an informal talk on what the Service provides and how they can help. In August a small group braved the weather to get together and we enjoyed talking and catching up. Everyone present was well and happy which is a great place to be. In September ten women enjoyed listening to Linda Shaw from the BCS Committee speaking about the upcoming strategy day and our second guest was Sue Judd speaking about mammography which generated a discussion on digital scans, biopsies and ultrasounds. Mercy Radiology has opened a clinic in Silverdale which will be convenient for us here on the Coast.



East Auckland (from Jennifer Woodroffe)

Wynne, one of our members, spoke to us about U3A in July. U3A is the shortened name for 'University of the 3rd Age' and anyone, male or female 55+ can join. They have a low yearly subscription and there is one central group in the East, and smaller groups have split off that forming the 'university'. The groups meet in someone's home and topics of interest include Musical Appreciation, Travel, Books, Early American History, World War 2, Classic Movies, just to name a few. It is a good way to meet people. Wynne said she has lived in Howick for 34 years and when she came there she knew no-one, but through U3A she now does. August saw our annual 'trip to the Movies' and we always get a very good 'deal' from Hoyts. This year we saw "We are the Millers". Even though our ladies were told beforehand that they would need to have 'open minds' we all had a great time. In September our guest Beryl taught us how to make a really neat Xmas tree decoration from felt. Most ladies chose green and red together. The result was a little heart shaped latticed craft in which a small gift can be put, usually for on the tree. Lots of chatter and finished off with supper which included a nice ginger loaf from New World!

Breast Friends – News from our Support Groups

West Auckland (from Marie Goudge)

There is a danger that because we attend a support group for those who have had a breast cancer diagnosis we will begin to define ourselves and others by the illness, CANCER, and not by the real people that we are. Our breast cancer diagnosis is a significant incident in our life; it may make us evaluate what is really important to us; it may have a bearing on future decisions but each of us has a greater depth worth celebrating and sharing. At our meeting in August the women in the West learned about the special interest and considerable creativity of one of our members who is a felt maker. Shirley has a few sheep that supply her with the raw wool from which she makes the felt. After cleaning and dyeing the wool Shirley adds water and with experienced fingers moulds the strands of wool into felt. When she is satisfied with the texture and shape Shirley leaves the felt to dry. The women were amazed at the beautiful garments that our friend had made. Now it was time for each of us to try our hand at this craft. "Soap on a rope", said Shirley. "That should be quick and easy." Each woman took a cake of soap and a crocheted string and wound the wool around the soap so that the string was firmly attached and the soap well covered. Some used several shades of wool. The covered soap was now wrapped in a mesh cloth and dipped in water. Massaging the wool covered soap through the mesh caused the wool fibre to knit together. Finally the mesh was removed and there was the soap on a rope ready for drying. "Hang the rope over your garden tap," said Shirley. "You can now wash your hands after gardening before you go inside." Thank you, Shirley, for sharing your gift and giving us so much pleasure. Any advance on \$626.50? Sold! To the West Auckland Breast Friends! What bargains? What quality? What generosity and what fun? The women of the West held their annual auction at their September meeting. This has become a highlight of the yearly activities of the group. Perhaps the gesture of giving has a place in the healing process. Maybe the women are expressing their gratitude for the support they have received. Whatever the motivation the auction creates an atmosphere of wellbeing and laughter. This week family members will be well fed on the goodies purchased, more time will be spent in the bathroom trying out new toiletries, some will relax while reading novels and the energetic type will christen their newly acquired gardening tools. Yes, the auction provided for all and every interest!! The \$626.50 raised will go towards providing an information booklet for each woman who attends a Breast Cancer Support group – when and where the groups meet and useful contact numbers.



North Shore (from Wendy Choi)

Members gathered for a mid-winter lunch at Aubergine in Takapuna in July and In August we had an informal morning tea at The Pump House in Takapuna facilitated by Fiona Collins. A discussion topic was 'sleep and lack of it' and women shared suggestions for insomnia: tart cherry juice, Vitamin D, 5HTP (from a health food shop), glass of milk, sleep drops, lavender, and ginger. We also talked about the need for support for partners and caregivers. In September we held a general discussion group at the Senior Citizen's Rooms in Takapuna and for October Coordinator Geraldine will host our Pink International Dinner, a much-anticipated social gathering on our Group Calendar.



Auckland South (from Jill Mellow)

We had a lovely evening in July even though it was so chilly outside, sharing a variety of tasty dishes over good conversation and in August our guest was Elise Boyd who is training to be a Radiographer. She spoke about her role at Middlemore Hospital and later that evening our own bosom buddy Jackie Coutts spoke to us via Skype about the protests in Cairo. Jackie has been living in Cairo since early 2013 and showed us footage taken from near their Hotel in Nasr City. Our lovely daughter-in-law's mother Joan and her Breast Cancer Support Group called Wings of Hope have just celebrated their first year this month. This group is based in Johannesburg and Joan is the co-ordinator for the group.

Chemo Brain: Helping Patients Clear the Fog

Reproduced from an online article written by Oncology Nurse Carole McCue, RN, MS, CNE

“Honey, have you seen my car keys?” This unfortunately has happened to me more frequently than I would like to admit. Since my chemotherapy treatment, I have noticed my memory skills are not up to par. This mental fog is not my imagination. It is referred to as "chemo brain." According to the American Cancer Society, between 15 and 70 percent of patients who receive chemotherapy may experience chemo brain. It has been described as memory lapses, difficulty remembering details, and inability to multitask as one once did before treatment. From a personal perspective, difficulty with recent memory, especially numbers and misplacing objects, has become a problem. Other patients have described the inability to think as fast as they once did, difficulty remembering steps of a task once easily performed, confusing dates and appointments, or fumbling for the right word or phrase. The above symptoms can be frustrating and embarrassing, and patients may not readily admit to their presence. As nurses, we need to be open and sensitive to subtle clues or comments made by the patient. We can suggest the following strategies as part of our patient education:



Exercise. Even five minutes of mild activity can improve mental function.

Rely on memory aides. Use a notebook; take advantage of a computer-based calendar. Learn the features of your Smartphone such as built-in alerts that can help you stay on track.

Set up your work environment to boost concentration. Clear everything off your desk except what you are working on. Set up a to-do list as a priority list of tasks to be accomplished.

Rehearse to remember. If you read something out loud, such as names or facts, you are less likely to forget.

Get into a routine. Place keys, files, and other items in the same place day after day. It will reduce the “where is it?” stress. At home, designate a “launching pad” where we put everything we may need to take to work the next day. I have discovered a corner in my kitchen for this purpose. It reduces my early morning stress and allows me to focus and concentrate.

Take frequent breaks. Divide tasks into manageable portions and take a break each time one part is completed.

Be aware of your stress level and work to lower it. Excess stress by itself can impair performance and thinking skills. Learn quick rescue techniques to control stress, such as deep breathing.

Maintain a regular schedule, as fatigue can affect performance.

My favourite strategy is the use of humour when possible. Try not to take yourself so seriously. Laughter releases tension and will allow you time to refocus on the task.

References: *The American Cancer Society, Chemo Brain; Rodin, G. (2012) Accumulating Evidence for the Effect of Chemotherapy on Cognition. Journal of Clinical Oncology. Volume 30. Number 29.*



Supporting BCS

BCS gratefully acknowledges the support of our members and donors. It is through your generosity that we are able to provide our support services to women experiencing a diagnosis of breast cancer. Would you like to become a member of Breast Cancer Support or make a donation? Please complete this form below and post back to us at Breast Cancer Support, PO Box 10150, Dominion Road, Auckland 1446, or call us on 0800BreaCanSupport (0800 273 222) for more information. Thank you!

Name.....
 Phone(0)..... Mob.....Email

My membership/donation is enclosed:

Individual membership (\$20) Group (\$30) Unwaged (\$15) Joint (\$30) I enclose a donation of \$.....

I am a breast cancer survivor I would like to know more about helping BCS as a Volunteer — please contact me

For further information about BCS, please call us on 0800 273 222 or email support@breastcancersupport.co.nz.

Donations over \$5 are tax deductible.