



We hope you have been making the most of the glorious sunny days and long evenings. We've been very fortunate to have such a wonderful summer in the Waikato.

For those of you who have made a New Year's resolution to get fitter, exercise is one of the best things you can do for your health. Regular exercise reduces the risk of being diagnosed with many health conditions, including breast cancer. Exercise also helps improve mental wellbeing. It can help to have a goal so perhaps consider entering a team of three or four for the relay part of this year's Kirikiriroa marathon. This affordable local marathon will be held along the Waikato River tracks on 7 June this year. If you are keen, you may want to do the full 42 kilometres! We are grateful to the Kirikiriroa marathon committee who organise this event - they have made a donation to the Breast Cancer Research Trust for a number of years.

Another fun event to get you moving is the Hamilton Pink Walk & Run to be held in October. Other Waikato Pink Walks will be held over breast cancer awareness month in October - details of dates and locations will be available later in the year.

Thank you very much to those who support our cause by volunteering, donating, shopping in the Op Shop for Breast Cancer, or taking part in fundraising events! We really appreciate this.

Ngā mihi nui

The BCRT team - Jenni, Hina, Cindy, Jane, Kimberley, Danielle & Ian

March is Lymphoedema Awareness Month

This month is dedicated to raising awareness and supporting people living with lymphoedema. Lymphoedema is an abnormal build-up of fluid, commonly in the arms or legs, due to the lymphatic system's inability to move fluid adequately throughout the body. This can occur when the lymphatic

drainage system is damaged, for example, as a result of surgery or radiation treatment. Lymphoedema is rare, but can be diagnosed at any time following axillary (armpit) lymph node surgery or radiation treatment for breast cancer.

Lymphoedema can be a disabling condition causing discomfort and impacting upon the function and cosmetic appearance of the affected arm. Breast cancer survivors with arm lymphoedema have been found to experience poorer quality of life and more psychological distress than those without lymphoedema.

It is important that a breast cancer specialist, nurse or GP makes this diagnosis. The sooner a diagnosis is made and people start treatment, the better the outcome. Referral to a specialised lymphoedema therapist can make all the difference. With early detection, the right education, treatment and support, this condition is manageable, and people can lead normal lives.

Results of the Selective Use of Postoperative Radiotherapy After Mastectomy (SUPREMO) trial

Patients with early breast cancer with spread of cancer to the axilla (armpit) lymph nodes and/or have a large tumour size may be offered chest wall radiotherapy after mastectomy. This has been shown to improve outcomes in selected patients. This treatment comes with long- and short-term side effects and a cost to the health care system.

The SUPREMO trial aimed to find out if some patients could be spared radiotherapy without any detriment to their long-term outcomes. Eligible patients were randomly assigned after their mastectomy to receive either chest wall radiotherapy or no radiotherapy and were followed up for an average of 10 years. The trial found equivalent overall survival in both groups, without any differences according to lymph node involvement or oestrogen receptor status. There was a very small 1.4% increase in chest wall cancer recurrence in the patients who did not receive radiotherapy, but this did not translate into any difference in regional or metastatic recurrence (spread of cancer to other parts of the body).

These findings suggest that selected patients with a low axillary nodal involvement can safely avoid radiotherapy after mastectomy.

Waikato Hospital was a site for this international clinical trial coordinated by the Scottish Clinical Trials Research Unit in Edinburgh.

Early detection through breast screening saves lives

A recent article titled “Challenges and opportunities for Aotearoa New Zealand’s breast screening programme” was published in the Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand. Lead author is Ross Lawrenson (Professor, Division of Health, University of Waikato, Hamilton) and other authors included Ian Campbell (BCRT Chair) and Adam Stewart (Breast Surgeon, Health NZ Waikato and Clinical Director, Breast Screen Aotearoa).

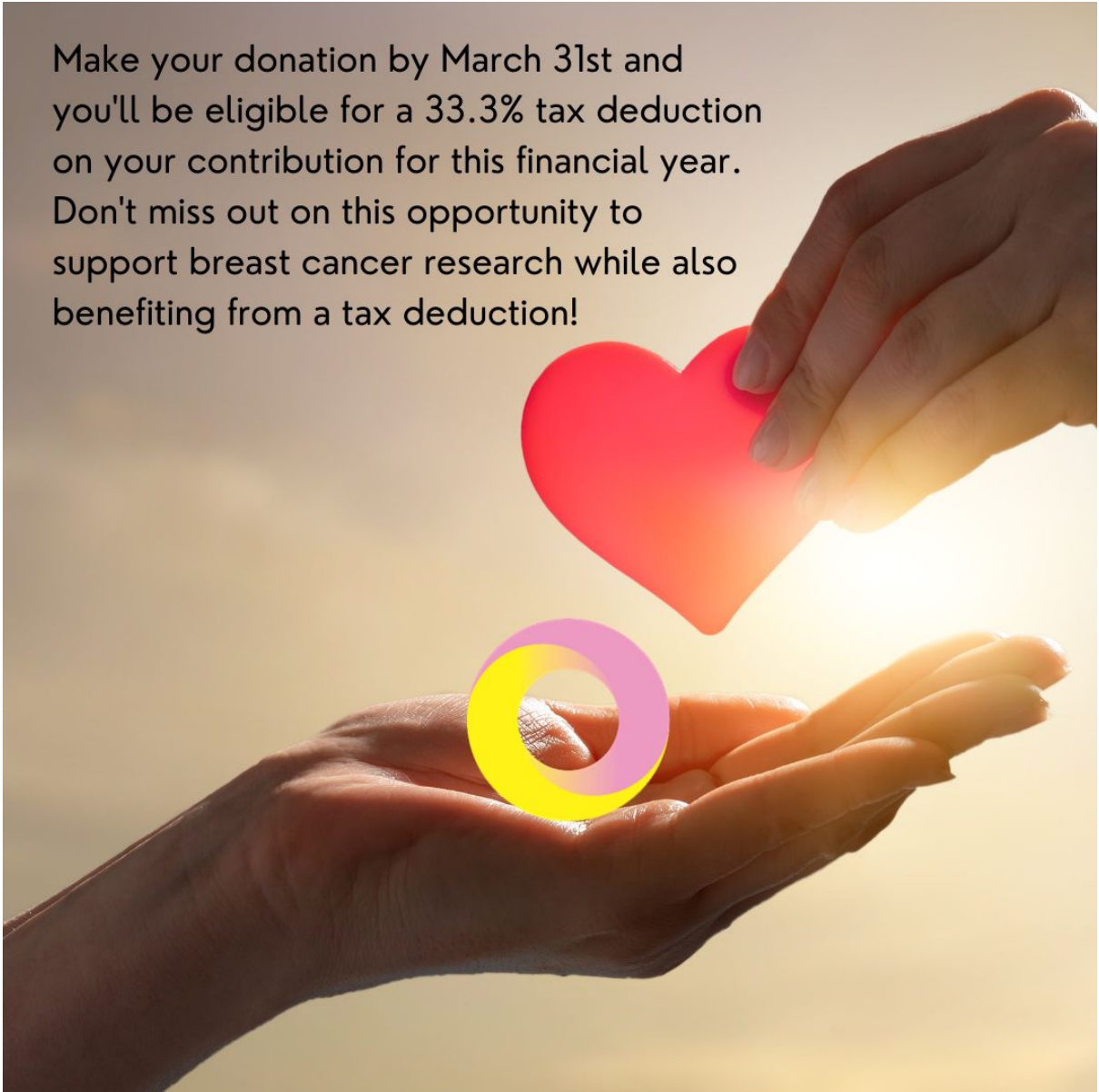
More than 3500 women are diagnosed with breast cancer each year in our country, and 45% of these women will be diagnosed through BreastScreen Aotearoa or through private sector screening. Those diagnosed through breast screening have better outcomes, including Māori and Pacific women.

With new technology, it is possible to increase the numbers of women diagnosed through early systematic screening and thus reduce overall death rate from breast cancer. Currently 600-700 women lose their lives to breast cancer annually.

This article outlines potential opportunities, including widening the screening age group. Other opportunities include advances in screening mammography technology, the importance of grading breast density (density is a risk factor for breast cancer) and the use of personalised screening. There are potential uses of artificial intelligence in assessing risk of breast cancer and improving the accuracy of breast cancer diagnosis with mammography.

[CLICK HERE for more information](#)

Make your donation by March 31st and you'll be eligible for a 33.3% tax deduction on your contribution for this financial year. Don't miss out on this opportunity to support breast cancer research while also benefiting from a tax deduction!



Harcourts Riverlands takes the lead for the next Pink Walk in Huntly

For the past 18 years, the Huntly Ladies Allsortz have been the driving force behind the Pink Walk Huntly. In the spirit of community, Harcourts Riverlands has stepped forward to organise the next Pink Walk in Huntly.

And here's the big news: the Pink Walk Huntly is now the Pink Walk North Waikato. Towns around Huntly are invited to join in the fun and support the cause for breast cancer research. And speaking of new beginnings, there is a new logo..

Harcourts Riverlands' involvement with the Trust is not new. For many years, they have fund-raised through a popular bake sale and sausage sizzle. The community has always supported these events and this year will be no different.

"Taking on the organisation of the Pink Walk North Waikato is a natural extension of our ongoing support for the Breast Cancer Research Trust," said Dallas Hodge, Managing Director of Harcourts Riverlands. "We are honoured to contribute to such a meaningful cause and look forward to making this year's event the most memorable yet."

The upcoming Pink Walk North Waikato promises to be a fantastic event with Harcourts Riverlands at the helm. More details about the Pink Walk in North Waikato will be available soon so mark your calendars for October. Together, we can make a difference.



Feeling inspired to make a real difference in 2025?

We're brimming with fundraising ideas that will support vital breast cancer research and bring hope to our communities:

Espress(o) Your Support: Host a coffee, brunch, or bake sale. Coffee, cake, and good company – what's not to love?

Pink Walks: Organise a stroll in your local park. All you need is some community spirit and a dash of pink!

BrEaST Friends: Gather your friends and raise funds and awareness.

Boobie Book Club: Combine your love for books and fundraising. Start a book club where proceeds from book sales or club fees go to the Trust!

Go The Extra Mile: Participate in a sports event, be it a run, marathon, or obstacle race, and use it as a platform to raise funds.

Corporate Partnerships: Nominate the Breast Cancer Research Trust as your company's 'Charity of the Year' or organise an event in your workplace.

Every action counts when it comes to improving outcomes for breast cancer patients. Get involved and help us make a significant difference! Ready to take the next step?

[Click here to get in touch with us today to book your fundraiser!](#)

Celebrating International Women's Day

On International Women's Day on 8 March, we honour the strength, resilience, and compassion of women everywhere.

At the Breast Cancer Research Trust, we are particularly inspired by the courage of women who have faced breast cancer.

The lead-up to International Women's Day is a perfect time to reflect on the progress we've made in the fight against breast cancer. Your donations and support make a significant impact for women diagnosed with breast cancer.

