



Important updates on our Cancer Navigation Services

Our dedicated cancer navigators team are here to help everyone in your community affected by cancer. This year we have some exciting plans in place to improve the way in which we engage and reach those who need us, and to ensure that our services are easily accessible to everyone within our region.

Supportive care forms the heart and soul of the work of the Cancer Society. With **1 in 3 New Zealanders** affected by cancer and the rate of cancer diagnoses set to double in the next ten years; our cancer navigation services are needed more than ever.

Our dedicated team of cancer navigators deliver a wide range of support services including one-on-one emotional and practical support in navigating the healthcare system, information, advice, and resources specific to the cancer journey.

We also assist in connecting whānau with additional support groups and workshops, counselling services, peer to peer support, rehabilitation, and nutritional services.

A key focus for 2024 is to build on our existing framework to improve the way we deliver our supportive care services, ensuring that we reach a greater number of our community, so that no one has to face cancer alone.

Expanding our cancer support footprint

With an increased need for cancer navigation services in the community and ongoing inequities in access to cancer care and support, we have pivoted to change the way we operate. Over the last two months we have been working alongside local community groups and the council to set up a number of new, accessible community clinics within our Southern region.

The first Twizel clinic, run by **Monica Scannell** and **Sharon Tindle** from the Timaru Centre, was held on the 18th of April and operated out of Heartland Services in Twizel. Feedback from locals and Cancer Society volunteers was overwhelmingly positive.


This year, your support will help us deliver three important supportive care initiatives:

1. Increasing our presence in the community

We recognise that accessing cancer support can be particularly challenging for some, especially for those residing in rural areas. We are aiming to make our services more accessible, by taking our one-on-one support out into the community.
Read more about this in the featured article below.

2. Piloting a NEW online booking system

A purpose-built service which will allow our clients to connect with our cancer navigators, at a time that suits them best.



3. Setting up Whānau Māori and Young Adult advisory groups

New Zealand has seen a staggering **increase of 75%** over the last ten years in cancer diagnoses in young adults (source: BMJ Oncology). We are also acutely aware of the current inequities in the Māori community with **Māori being 30%** more likely than non-Māori to develop cancer in their lifetime and **60% more likely** to die from their cancer. In response to this we will be creating advisory groups to help us steer our strategic planning, prevention and advocacy work to ensure we prioritise initiatives that will directly address these issues.

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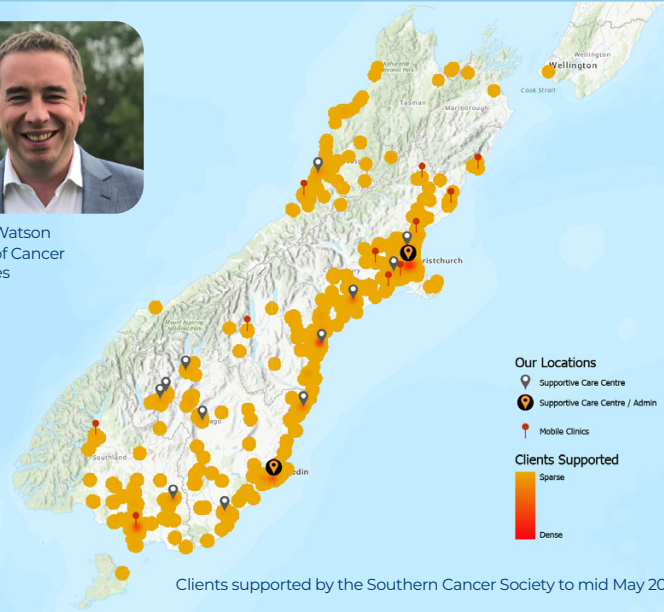
Cancer Society's Canterbury West Coast and Otago Southland, Head of Cancer Services, **Craig Watson** says 'Finding ways to provide greater access to our support services is a big focus for us this year, and we're excited to be able to bring our face-to-face cancer navigation services into the community. It's such a key part of what we do, and something that is always valued by those we support.'

The Cancer Society will be aiming to secure 30 regular clinic locations by the end of the year covering the Southern region, from Kāikoura to Te Anau and everything in between.

In addition to the new regular community clinics held across the region, the Cancer Society cancer navigation team will continue to make home visits as required, and continue to provide the full range of supportive care services that have always been on offer.



Craig Watson
Head of Cancer Services



Meet our team



Introducing **Sarah Hintz**, one of our four cancer navigators based in Christchurch.

What's your background and how long have you been with the Cancer Society?

My qualifications are in health sciences with a community health specialisation, and I've been working for the Cancer Society for three years.

What are the key responsibilities of your role?

As a cancer navigator my role is to support people affected by cancer throughout their cancer journey. This includes emotional support such as being the listening ear whenever it's needed, or practical advice in helping to understand the ins and outs of their treatment and various aspects of the healthcare system.

Can you outline what a typical day looks like for you?

No two days are ever the same – that's part of why I love my job! Often I'll be liaising with health providers regarding people's care and treatment and working through various types of applications on their behalf. I might also be sorting referrals for counselling services and some of our wrap around services or connecting them with our support groups.

We have a strong presence in the community through our centres, community clinics and home visits, so on most days I'll be heading out to meet face to face with a client in one of these locations. I'll generally take with me a bunch of resources that may be helpful for them and some delicious baking provided by our lovely volunteers.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

The families we help are some of the most resilient and inspiring people you could ever hope to meet. I am constantly learning so much from them. Each day I feel lucky to have been part of their journey and grateful that I've been able to help them in some way.

What are some of the biggest challenges of your role?

The fact that the rate of cancer diagnosis in New Zealand is increasing so significantly. In the three years I've been here I've noticed a marked increase in the demand for our services, but at the same time it's essential that we maintain a really high level of care and support for everyone.

How does your work make a difference within the community?

Our support services make a huge difference by helping people to navigate their cancer journey in the best way possible, alleviating some of the burden on them as well as their personal network. We rely entirely on the financial support from donors to maintain these vital services, so I'd really like to say a big thank you to all our amazing supporters who enable us to be out in the community every day making a difference in the lives of those who need us.

Your local Cancer Society Accommodation

Daffodil House Dunedin
283 Great King Street, Dunedin North 9016
P: 03 477 7447 E: info@cansoc.org.nz

Canterbury Cancer Centre
74 Langdons Road, Papanui, Christchurch 8053
P: 03 379 5835 E: contact@cancerwc.org.nz

