



Newsletter May 2011



Beat Bowel Cancer
A O T E A R O A

A word from our Chair...

Next month, Beat Bowel Cancer Aotearoa will mark its one-year anniversary. June will also see our first **Bowel Cancer Awareness week 6 - 12 June.**

This will be an opportunity for all of us to raise awareness about bowel cancer in our communities, and to broaden the network of charity friends. For our first Awareness week we are delighted to have been joined by some prominent New Zealanders who are going to be speaking about their experiences of bowel cancer – so keep an eye out for these people in the media. We will be posting news items to our website as the week progresses: www.beatbowelcancer.org.nz

Dr Mick Tarry has been raising donations and awareness through his ultra-marathon runs. So far Mick (from Ashburton) has raised over \$3500 for the charity, which is wonderful. The charity is so grateful to Mick for the miles he has run to help raise bowel cancer awareness.



Recently, we published our **2015 Call to Action** (this can be seen on our website) which outlines 10 key areas for action to reduce the impact of bowel cancer in New Zealand. These range from calls for comprehensive national guidelines and standards to which health providers are held accountable through to the need for a government-funded national screening programme to be implemented by 2015, and for systematic and regular follow-up for all bowel cancer patients. Sadly, systems for detection, diagnosis and follow-up are not standardised throughout New Zealand and we believe that care should not depend on where you live.

Our 2015 Call to Action has been given to all MPs, the Ministry of Health and various NGOs. Our **'Don't Sit on Your Symptoms'** brochures are now widely distributed throughout pharmacies and GP practices.



We have produced a very eye-catching poster: **'Don't Hide Your Symptoms Behind Closed Doors'**.

These are ideal for placing behind office doors, toilet doors and all manner of work or community buildings. We would be most grateful if you could post these in your workplace or Community Group buildings during Awareness week.

It is key that we raise the level of awareness about bowel cancer. Currently, 100 New Zealanders are dying from this disease each month – more than for breast and prostate cancers combined.

Don't hide your symptoms behind closed doors

Bowel cancer is New Zealand's most common cancer and second biggest cancer killer, BUT up to 75% of cases can be cured if they are diagnosed and treated early.

If you experience any of the following, don't let embarrassment get between you and a visit to your doctor.

- Persistent change in bowel habits over several weeks
 - Bleeding from the bottom
- Abdominal pain especially if severe
- A lump in your tummy

Get your symptoms checked early, avoid being one of the 100 Kiwis who die from Bowel Cancer every month and join the 130 who are cured!

www.beatbowelcancer.org.nz

Early detection improves peoples' chance of surviving bowel cancer. Indeed, bowel cancer is detectable, treatable and beatable – and Awareness week gives us a platform to help get this message out there.

Please become a part of Awareness week by fund-raising, placing posters around buildings where possible – and just talking about bowel cancer with your friends and families.

Sarah Derrett

PS... To request posters or brochures:

Email: info@beatbowelcancer.org.nz or

Write to: BBKA, PO Box 6405, Dunedin North, DUNEDIN 9059

We will post them out to you. Available in A3 and A4 sizes.

Or, download a pdf copy of the poster from the website, if you like.

Bowel Cancer Awareness Week 6 - 12 June (see page 3)

BowelScreen Aotearoa™ launched



On April 8th in Wellington, Beat Bowel Cancer Aotearoa was excited to be involved in the launch of BowelScreen Aotearoa™

BowelScreen Aotearoa™ is a collaborative initiative between Beat Bowel Cancer Aotearoa, Bowel Cancer Australia and Pharmacybrands Ltd (PBL), with the support of the makers Enterix, to introduce within New Zealand for the first time the opportunity to purchase bowel screening kits across the counter at PBL pharmacies.

Bowel screening is designed to discover minute traces of blood in bowel motions, a possible sign of very early stage bowel cancer, before there are any obvious symptoms. If detected at this early stage, bowel cancer is a relatively simple cancer to treat and cure. **Bowel screening is recommended every 2 years for people aged 50–74, who have no obvious symptoms or family history of bowel cancer.**

The kit can be purchased for \$60 at one of the participating pharmacies (Amcal, Care, Unichem, Life and Radius). The test is simple to use. It entails taking samples of the toilet water closely surrounding two separate

bowel motions and then painting the water onto collection pads, using brushes supplied in the kit. The kit is then posted to Australia for processing in a reply paid envelope, along with the person's details and details of their GP. Once the test is processed the results will be sent to both the person and their GP in New Zealand.

The launch of the test kits was greeted with little enthusiasm by the Ministry of Health. John Childs, the Director of the Ministry of Health Cancer Programmes, pointed out that the current health system provided an inadequate diagnostic follow up to a positive test. New Zealand Medical Association Chair Peter Foley described it as a 'piecemeal' approach to healthcare.

BBCA promotes the introduction of a national bowel cancer screening programme sooner rather than later but, in the absence of a national screening programme, welcomes this initiative.

It is now possible for people in the recommended age group, with no symptoms or family history of bowel cancer and who live outside the proposed Waitemata DHB bowel screen pilot area, to have the choice to screen, by buying a BowelScreen Aotearoa bowel screen test kit over the counter at participating PBL chemist shops.

Mick's last dash for BBCCA...

Ashburton GP, Dr Mick Tarry has completed the final leg of his fundraising marathons for BBCCA. Since October 2010, Mick has completed three ultramarathons, including the Abel Tasman Coastal Classic, The Molesworth Run and the Tarawera Ultra Marathon. On the 14th of May, Mick crossed the ditch to compete in the 100km North Face Blue Mountains Ultramarathon and managed it in **18hr, 39minutes and 56 seconds!** Mick has run the almost-incomprehensible distance of **3286km** and spent **376 hours on his feet** since he decided to devote his new 'mid-life crisis' activity to raising money for BBCCA after his sister was diagnosed with bowel cancer.

To see breathtaking photos and read about the amazing journey Mick has undertaken for BBCCA, visit <http://mickrunningforbbcca.blogspot.com>

You can make a donation to BBCCA in recognition of Mick's achievements at any Kiwibank branch

A/c no: 38-9010-0509792-00

Reference: BBCCA TARRY



Bottoms Up for Bowel Cancer Awareness Party!

As part of Bowel Cancer Awareness week there will be a bowel cancer awareness-raising party in Estadio's Bar of Wellington on the 4th of June.

The party will be held in conjunction with BBBCA member, Claire Wilson's 30th birthday party.

Local Wellington band, **Gold Medal Famous**, will playing a set with DJs to follow. So bring your dancing shoes and get ready to booty shake!

When – Saturday the 4th of June

Where – MambaSamba Room, Estadio's Bar, 17–19 Blair St, Wellington

What time – 7 pm onwards

What to bring – donations will be gladly accepted for BBBCA

Who – all BBBCA members and their whānau



DONATIONS:

Making a donation is a really valuable way to help us raise awareness and plan future activities.

You can make a donation at any **Kiwibank** branch, by visiting our website or by making a bank transfer to our bank account:

Beat Bowel Cancer Aotearoa
A/c no: **38-9010-0509792-00**
Reference: **BBCA DON.**

If you would like to make a monthly or quarterly payment, please email us.



Beat Bowel Cancer
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CALLING ALL FRIENDS AND FAMILY OF BBBCA!

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Bowel Cancer Awareness week is rapidly approaching and we need your help.

During the month of June, all Pharmacybrands pharmacies **Unichem, Amcal, Care, Life and Radius** are providing the opportunity for customers to donate to Beat Bowel Cancer Aotearoa by adding a **donation with all purchases at the point of sale**

Please encourage friends and family to drop into these pharmacies and remind the staff to add a donation to the cost of their purchases. The donations will go to BBBCA to help raise bowel cancer awareness and save lives.

1 in 18 New Zealanders will develop bowel cancer in their lifetime and 100 people die each month ...that's more than for breast and prostate cancer combined.

We know that early diagnosis and treatment saves lives.

Lets beat bowel cancer –
it's **detectable, treatable and beatable!**

For more information please contact Christy Rolfe at
rolfes@slingshot.co.nz

Beat Bowel Cancer Aotearoa Inc.

PO Box 6405, Dunedin North, Dunedin 9059, New Zealand

Email: info@beatbowelcancer.org.nz | Website: www.beatbowelcancer.org.nz