Melanoma New Zealand

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Impact & Performance Report 2021-22

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MELANOMA NEW ZEALAND – ABOUT THE ORGANISATION

Founded in 2004, Melanoma New Zealand has a clear vision for the country to have no deaths from melanoma. It aims to achieve this through its mission of championing melanoma prevention, early detection and treatment of melanoma for all New Zealanders.

It does this by:

- addressing issues of access and removing barriers to quality services
- driving public awareness of the disease through effective campaigns
- advocating for improved melanoma outcomes for New Zealanders
- being financially sustainable to enable it to advance the cause
- partnering strategically to amplify effectiveness
- undertaking research to inform the organisation's work.

The organisation's key focus is to operate, improve and extend its services and implement new initiatives, based on sound evidence and research.

A national organisation with its office in Auckland, Melanoma New Zealand has an executive team of seven led by Chief Executive Andrea Newland and is governed by a nine-strong Board of Trustees chaired by Johnathan Eele.

Johnathan Eele

Chair

CHAIR'S REPORT

Looking back on the financial year in focus, 2021-22 stands out as a year of real consolidation as Melanoma New Zealand evolved and matured, with new initiatives coming to fruition.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been all-encompassing for the last two years and remains a lingering threat. Fortunately, it is not as formidable as it was during the first year and we seemed to have adapted to living with the virus and returned to a degree of normality.

It has been enormously heartening for our Board to see the progress of the new initiatives the team has implemented, and the considerable impact these are having to deliver on our organisation's objectives.

In particular, our Spot Check Van has more than proven its worth in a short space of time. In its first year alone, we have managed to do 3,041 spot checks at community spot check visits and large-scale national events. From these checks, we have picked up 385 suspicious lesions, including 36 potential melanomas which have been referred on for further investigation.

We can see the potential of having more than one van in the future to enable us to reach even more New Zealanders.

The year also saw us advance our online education programme, with nearly 27,000 course links provided to workplaces throughout New Zealand. We have also provided 28 educational and awareness forums across New Zealand during van visit presentations and fundraising events. Our team has grown and now has the extra capacity it needs to deliver more services in support of our goals.

Melanoma New Zealand benefits hugely from the contributions and support of our corporate partners - FMG, The Warehouse, Ryman Healthcare, and Merck, Sharpe & Dohme. The partnership with these organisations is enhanced by having strategic objectives that align with our values.

Our work is also generously supported by our Founding Patrons, the Fife Foundation and Douglas Charitable Trust, both of which help us share our life-saving messages with New Zealanders, both financially and directly to their networks.

Our Board and executive team advocate for improvements to how the Government and the health system in New Zealand manage melanoma – both in terms of prevention and treatment. Drug therapy is an important part of that management, and Melanoma New Zealand made a submission in response to the Government's review of the Pharmaceutical Management Agency, Pharmac, particularly in terms of what we see as inequity of access to life-saving medicines and other system failings.

We took a close interest in the Government's Review of the Sunscreen (Product Safety Standards) Bill, given the essential role of effective sunscreens in preventing skin damage that can lead to melanoma, and made a submission to support better regulation in that area.

In the last year, we have initiated a large research project to analyse the melanoma landscape and define its 'ecosystem' to assess the patient need within Aotearoa. The findings of this research will inform a Melanoma National Action Plan and define how we can make the biggest impact on countering this disease; work on this has commenced and will carry on into the 2022-23 financial year.

There is plenty to do, but this last year has seen enormous progress towards our goals. On behalf of the Board, I wish to wholeheartedly thank both our Founding Patrons – Fife Foundation and the Douglas Charitable Trust, our corporate supporters – FMG, The Warehouse, Ryman Healthcare and Merck, Sharpe & Dohme, and all those individuals and organisations who made donations or provided grants to Melanoma New Zealand. I would like to acknowledge our hard-working and dedicated Melanoma New Zealand team led by the tireless Andrea Newland, and my fellow Board trustees for their ongoing commitment and governance expertise. And finally, thank you to all our hard-working volunteers for doing the mahi to raise awareness of the disease and carry out those all-important spot checks to help detect melanoma at an early stage.

The contribution you all make is deeply appreciated.

Johnathan Eele
Chair

"It has been enormously heartening for our Board to see the progress of the new initiatives the team has implemented, and the considerable impact these are having to deliver on our organisation's objectives."

Johnathan Eele

Andrea Newland

Chief Executive

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

The Melanoma New Zealand team had a busy and rewarding year. It is testimony to the dedication and skill of all involved that we were able to make significant progress in a number of areas, despite the distractions of the ongoing pandemic.

A standout "hero" of the year was Melanoma New Zealand's Spot Check Van which we'd launched towards the end of the previous financial year. COVID-19 restrictions aside, the deployment of the van was a big success, and the potential it is already demonstrating for nationwide community engagement is enormous.

Having the Spot Check Van was made possible through the extraordinary generosity of Ryman Healthcare, which chose Melanoma New Zealand as its annual charity partner for 2020-21. During the partnership year, Ryman entered fully into the spirit of the cause by supporting well-received educational sessions by Melanoma New Zealand staff to all 38 retirement villages, hosting Spot Check Van visits to many of their villages and construction sites and holding a large number of fundraising activities that were organised by Ryman's amazing staff and residents.

Our exclusive rural partner, FMG, has provided invaluable support, helping to share Melanoma New Zealand's key prevention and early detection messages, education, and advice through its strong and far-reaching connections into rural communities.

Working alongside FMG at various rural events, including Fieldays 2021 at Mystery Creek, has reinforced the importance of having conversations at the 'coalface'. We are so grateful to FMG for facilitating these opportunities with rural New Zealanders and helping to save lives.

Working closely with another wonderful partner, The Warehouse, we have been fortunate to have the use of many of their stores' carparks as a base for our van to provide free spot checks in the community. The Warehouse also helped to widely promote vital sunsmart educational messaging and sold sunscreen, reusable tote bags and UV wristbands in their stores to support our fundraising.

New to the Melanoma New Zealand family this past year was the Douglas Charitable Trust, joining the Fife Foundation as our Founding Patron. We are very grateful to both of our generous Patrons for their support.

Our partners and patrons not only support our ongoing day-to-day work but also help to position us strategically to have an even greater impact. To that end, in 2021, Melanoma New Zealand commissioned a comprehensive analysis of the melanoma landscape to determine where to further invest our time and resources to best achieve our mission.

There are a host of other thank-you's for this year:

• Merck, Sharpe & Dohme for its educational scholarship supporting Melanoma New Zealand's online education course

• Our major grantors: Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS), Aotearoa Gaming Trust, Lottery National Community, Pub Charity and Te Hiringa Hauora – Health Promotion Agency.

• The estate of Carol Ann Stuart James, which followed up its very generous bequest in 2020-21 with a further significant endowment.

• Our pro bono supporters: Giltrap Group, Soar Printing, Shade Systems, Simpson Grierson, Rainger & Rolfe, National Mini Storage, Pure Productions and Infomatrix.

• Pathfinder Asset Management for its generous annual donation, which continues to grow every time another person joins Pathfinder's KiwiSaver Plan and selects our charity.

• All those organisations and individuals who also fundraised for us, in particular, melanoma patient Hazel Harrison who raised more than $4,500 through her gruelling six-day ultramarathon across the Sahara Desert. Deb Moncur, who biked the Te Araroa trail (3,000km), raising $19,400 in memory of her husband David, who died of melanoma, and melanoma survivor Chris Flannery who, together with his wife Nicola, staged the Cockies & Tradies Charity Golf Tournament in Alexandra, which raised over $70,000.

• Our dedicated Board who supports and guide us with their expertise, led by Chair Johnathan Eele and his fellow trustees, including recently retired Deputy Chair Paul Head, the Hon. Amy Adams, Mr Richard Martin, Dr Rosalie Stephens, Dr Sonja Bodley, Don Mackay, Amanda Johnston and Peter Bernhardt.

• Our superb team of staff and volunteers who work skilfully, tirelessly and enthusiastically for the cause. Without their ongoing commitment and efforts to reach our communities, New Zealanders would miss out.

• Our brilliant Ambassadors – Josh Emett, Adine Wilson and Blair Tuke (who stepped down in 2021), and new Ambassadors – husband-and-wife team, legendary Blackcap Martin Guptill and The Hits radio host and Sky broadcaster Laura McGoldrick.

• And finally, a heartfelt thank you to all those patients and their families who so willingly shared their stories and opened up their hearts to help us try to make a difference by championing a better future that includes melanoma prevention, detection and patient care for all New Zealanders.

Andrea Newland
Chief Executive

THE YEAR IN FOCUS

• 2021-2022 was a year of consolidation even with COVID-19 still in our midst.

The year saw many achievements and progress on a number of fronts, including a successful year of lifesaving spot checks made in our Melanoma New Zealand Spot Check Van.

• Generously funded by Ryman Healthcare and launched in February 2021, our Spot Check Van chalked up more than 3,000 individual spot checks over the year, identifying 385 suspicious lesions - 36 of those characteristic of melanoma, despite lockdown halting the van's use for almost five months. With Nurse Educator, Gill Rolfe at the van's helm, the mobile education unit provided valuable advice and take-home resources on melanoma prevention and detection to rural and urban communities.

• One notable destination on the Spot Check Van's itinerary was Fieldays at Mystery Creek from 16-19 June 2021, which drew more than 130,000 visitors. Supported by funding from Te Hiringa Hauora/Health Promotion Agency, with great support from FMG, the Melanoma New Zealand stand was located in a prime position outside the Health & Wellbeing Hub, providing greater visibility and engagement than in previous years and helped us create a connection with the full complement of Fieldays' visitors. While there, the van team checked 673 patients, finding 71 suspicious lesions, including 10 possible melanomas. Visitors also engaged in a wellbeing survey and were offered information on being sunsmart and how to check their skin (including the A-G guide to melanoma). An additional drawcard was a UV camera which shows sun damage – and illustrates the power of protecting your skin from the sun's harsh UV rays.

• Our newest partnership with FMG who came on board as our exclusive rural partner early in the financial year, was bolstered by FMG staff volunteering on Melanoma New Zealand's Fieldays stand, highlighting their connection to us with the rural population. They embraced the melanoma cause on their own busy stand by also demonstrating sun damage under the lights of the UV camera and providing visitors with referral cards to our Melanoma New Zealand Spot Check Van.

• Melanoma New Zealand made submissions on two important government initiatives in the first quarter of the financial year: in May, the organisation responded to the Sunscreen (Product Safety Standard) Bill, which seeks to improve the regulation of sunscreen products. Melanoma New Zealand agreed with the Bill's general statement that compliance with the standard should be mandatory, and that sunscreen be classified as a medicine rather than a cosmetic. We also urged that the Bill be considered an interim measure that expires when the more comprehensive Therapeutic Products Regulatory Scheme/Medicines Amendment Bill can be put into force. In July, a submission was delivered in response to the Government's Review of the Pharmaceutical Management Agency (Pharmac). In it, Melanoma New Zealand urged the Government to include funding in the Review and criticised poor equity of access for lifesaving melanoma medicines, Pharmac's disregard of evidence and expert clinical opinion on the effectiveness of melanoma drugs, inconsistency of criteria for consideration, slow and non-transparent decision-making and the inherent flaws in the current system for evaluating different health responses through the Quality-Assessed Life Years (QALY) methodology.

• Melanoma New Zealand participated in the notable Melanoma Summit on 12-13 February. The online event was a multi-disciplinary gathering to promote education and best practice around melanoma prevention, diagnosis and treatment and help facilitate communication and collaboration between health professionals working together to reduce the incidence and impact of the cancer in New Zealand. The Summit programme included an exciting array of leading speakers, including clinicians, nurses, patients and researchers; Melanoma New Zealand sponsored keynote speaker Professor David Whiteman, Senior Scientist and Deputy Director at QIMR Berghofer Medical Research, Queensland. The Summit also marked the launch of the Quality Statements to Guide Melanoma Diagnosis and Treatment, a document developed by the National Melanoma Working Group, with support from the Melanoma Network of New Zealand (MelNet) and Te Aho o Te Kahu, the Cancer Control Agency.

• Melanoma New Zealand joined the Global Melanoma Coalition, a patient advocacy organisation with a network of partners through 28 countries and a focus on raising awareness of the disease and patient resources, advocating for access to treatment, and collaboration and recruitment.

• Melanoma New Zealand was fortunate to benefit from many individual fundraising efforts to support the cause.

• For example, melanoma patient and survivor Hazel Harrison took part in the annual, gruelling Marathon des Sables in Morocco – a six-day, 250km run (staggered over 30 September to 11 October 2021). Admitting the race was "every bit as tough as I had anticipated," Hazel came 168th out of 672 starters – the 21st female out of 135. Her extraordinary effort raised $4,500 for Melanoma New Zealand.

• Back in New Zealand on 15 October, melanoma patient Chris Flannery and his wife Nicola Jones organised the inaugural Cockies and Tradies Golf Tournament at Alexandra, which drew 200 golfers and raised more than $70,000 for Melanoma New Zealand. The golfers competed across two courses, Alexandra and Omakau. Activities included players paying kiwi golfing great Greg Turner to play shots for them and free skin cancer spot checks in the clubhouse. Melanoma New Zealand Trustee Hon. Amy Adams was also auctioned as a caddy for a participant.

• In February, Deb Moncur courageously biked the 3,000-kilometre Te Araroa trail, which runs from Cape Reinga to Bluff (3,000km), to raise $19,400 for our organisation and Hospice West Auckland. She undertook the mission to help raise awareness and support our work in honour of her husband and soul mate David, who died after a three-year battle with metastatic melanoma.

• Sadly, in November, melanoma patient Pete Waters passed away. Pete bravely shared his personal story with our audiences in 2020 (Melanoma Stories: Pete Waters - Youtube). Our love and thoughts are with Pete's wife Alicia, his children Buster, Moe and Frankie and his extended family and friends.

• The Spot Check Van completed a notable tour of the upper North Island in conjunction with The Warehouse. Free checks were carried out in The Warehouse store carparks at Thames, Dargaville, Hastings, New Lynn, Tauranga, Whakatāne, Gisborne, Tokoroa, Morrinsville, Whangārei and Kaikohe. The van also visited The Warehouse's head office in Auckland. Throughout the year, The Warehouse stores also sold a number of items to raise money for Melanoma New Zealand, including sunscreen and reusable tote bags especially designed for Melanoma New Zealand by New Zealand-based Japanese pop artist Jun Arita.

• An upsurge in requests for our online workplace education course saw link distribution increase to 26,814 this financial year, from 7,050 the year prior. The programme, kindly sponsored by Merck, Sharpe & Dohme, is an easy-to-follow programme specifically designed for New Zealand organisations. The nine-step lesson plan takes just 45 minutes to complete and educates staff about sun safety, melanoma prevention and early detection. It also empowers people to feel confident checking their own skin and highlights the message that if melanoma is recognised and treated early enough, it is almost always curable.

• As New Zealand moved to daylight saving in October, we focused on our annual Get Spotted campaign to highlight the importance of prevention and early detection. We had a record 155 schools across the country register this year to participate in various activities. Several got seriously creative, hosting virtual treasure hunts and other events that educated their students about sun safety and kept everyone entertained during the lockdown. Our colouring competition, in particular, was a welcome activity for children and parents alike, isolating at home. Wharenui School in Christchurch won the Get Spotted Schools competition and a Shade Systems StarShade shade sail valued at nearly $10,000. Our online education course was provided free to more than 2,000 teachers to educate themselves and students about melanoma prevention and early detection.

• Businesses and organisations also got on board and individuals participated in activities like shaving their heads to raise funds and also donated proceeds from their own fundraisers. For example, Eve Clarke walked up Mt Maunganui every second day and ran around the mountain every other day for 30 days, during October and November, in memory of her dear friend Kier Wilkinson who sadly passed away from melanoma at just 51 years old.

• After seeing what New Zealand can do when we put our collective 'hearts, minds and budgets' into dealing with a killer disease, we joined with the nine other members of CANGO (the Alliance of Cancer NGOs) to call on the Prime Minister to adopt the same 'zero tolerance' principled approach to cancer deaths that the Government applied to deaths from COVID-19.

MELANOMA IN NEW ZEALAND –A SNAPSHOT

·Skin cancers (including melanoma) are by far the most common cancer in New Zealand.

·Most skin cancers are caused by too much UV radiation, either from the sun or artificial sources – such as sunbeds.

·New Zealand has the worst rate of melanoma in the world – around 10 times the global average.

·Annually, more than 6,000 people are diagnosed with in situ or advanced melanoma in New Zealand.

·Melanomas are less common than other skin cancers but are responsible for the most deaths from skin cancer – around 300 a year.
·More people die from skin cancer in New Zealand than die on our roads.

·The melanoma death rate for men is nearly double that of women.

·The estimated cost of melanoma to New Zealand for new patients was $51.2 million for 2021.

·The projected cost of melanoma to New Zealand for new patients in 2025 is $70.7 million.

·The overall healthcare treatment costs of melanoma and keratinocytic cancer patients in New Zealand have been estimated at $180 million per year.
·New Zealand's growing and ageing population is contributing to an increased overall incidence of skin cancers.

·But the good news is that melanoma can be preventable, and if caught and treated early enough it is almost always curable.

SPOT CHECK VAN –THE FACTS

From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, Melanoma New Zealand's Spot Check Van:

·Carried out 31 community site visits travelling to Whangārei, Whangaparāoa, Thames, Coromandel, Cooks Beach, Napier, Hastings, Havelock North, Invercargill, Hamilton, Cambridge, Alexandra, Taupō, Taihape, Te Puke, Tauranga, Whakatāne, Gisborne, Tokoroa, Morrinsville, Mt Maunganui, Auckland, Mystery Creek Fieldays 2021, the National Health & Safety Show, and several community site visits at The Warehouse locations, including their head office in Auckland

·Provided 3041 spot checks and identified 385 suspicious lesions, of which 36 were suspected melanomas and were referred on for further evaluation.

·Travelled over 13,000 kilometres

·Our Melanoma Nurse Educator Gill Rolfe visited eight workplaces to provide staff education and spot checks.

·Visited Ryman Healthcare villages to share information and do spot checks throughout the North Island in the van. Gill also flew to the South Island to visit the Dunedin, Alexandra and Invercargill villages, much to the appreciation of the staff and residents

·Supplied each visitor with valuable education, empowering them to know what to look for when checking their own skin.

"I can say without reservation that my spot check on the van that day has saved my life. I know it's wrong, but I probably wouldn't have got around to seeing my GP until I was sick with something else, as life is so busy, and there is always a reason to put off making an appointment. The van was just so easy and accessible for me. All I had to do was line-up. Waiting weeks or months longer to get that mole on my arm checked out could have had devastating consequences; melanoma is cancer, and it can kill you." *Sarah Dixon*

PERSPECTIVES
The patients

Chris Flannery

Like many Kiwis, much of Chris Flannery's upbringing was spent outdoors helping out on the farm and playing sports, including representative rugby and cricket in Central Otago.

In late 2019, Chris was diagnosed with stage 4 metastatic melanoma diagnosis.

"I'll never forget having to tell my kids the news, then later that evening we were busy organising their school and sport pickups. Life as we knew it had changed — but we had to continue.

"I was initially told my tumours were inoperable but thanks to a combination of immunotherapy drug Keytruda™ and radiotherapy — and the diligence of my oncologist — I've been able to have the tumours in my lymph nodes removed. My treatment has been a game-changer for me.

"I wasn't able to work for the best part of 18 months during my treatment. I was used to running a business as a plumber and being busy and active with sport and I really missed the social connection that work gave me. It was challenging not working and being relatively immobile at times because of my treatment."

Chris and his wife Nicola used the time he was out of circulation to organise the Cockies & Tradies Charity Golf Tournament in his hometown of Alexandra.

"We were keen to do something to connect back with the local community after not being able to work for so long and to raise awareness about the risks of melanoma – while also raising some money to support the work of Melanoma New Zealand."

The tournament sold out in just one week and drew 200 golfers together in mid-October last year to raise more than $70,000 for Melanoma New Zealand.

"We all need to work together as a community to raise awareness of this disease — and the dangers associated with the sun. I really enjoyed organising the tournament — it was something positive I could do that hopefully made a difference. Plus, I got to play some great golf at the same time," said Chris, who hopes to make it an annual event and potentially share it around different towns.

Deb Moncur

In 2016, Deb Moncur's husband David passed away at 53 after a three-year battle with stage 4 metastatic melanoma.

Not a day goes by that she doesn't think about him, and the gap left in her and their two children's lives. In 2021, she decided to do something to both honour his memory and raise funds and awareness for Melanoma New Zealand and West Auckland Hospice.

After training for months, she spent more than a month cycling the 3,000km Te Araroa Trail, raising $19,400 for the two causes.

"I never thought I'd be a widow at 49. David was my soulmate. He was an engineer and spent a huge amount of time enjoying the outdoors – fishing, snow skiing and water sports. He was also incredibly fair-skinned, so burnt very easily.

"His melanoma showed up as a lump in his neck; we never actually found out where the primary site was. It was a huge shock to be told it was stage 4 cancer and terminal. Without an operation, radiotherapy and trial drugs, we were told there was no chance of him even living six months.

"He initially had a full dissection of the lump from his ear to his shoulder, including the removal of 14 lymph nodes. But the cancer grew back, so they had to remove his shoulder muscle. He lost all his nerve sensation there and had huge and painful scarring. We exhausted every treatment option, including Keytruda™, which we had to fund as it wasn't paid for then, and it was literally a constant battle for three years.

"Towards the end, we were renovating our home, and he was on a lot of pain medication but was determined to finish the renovations, working with our son, who's a builder. Two days after they finished, he went to bed and said he wouldn't be getting up again – and he passed away two days later.

"I've learned that there is life and joy after tragedy and wanted to share our family's story in the hope it might help prevent someone else from going through what we did. We are just so careful with our skin and are super-conscious of covering up outside, using sunscreen and getting regular skin checks.

"I'm horrified when I see young people sunbathing on the beach, getting a tan. Tanning isn't lovely – they're damaging their skin and could get melanoma."

Lauren Young

Diagnosed with melanoma in late 2020, 21-year-old Lauren Young says she initially wasn't that fazed by the news.

The horse-stud hand had noticed a mole on her leg getting bigger, itching and bleeding and said she wasn't really aware of melanoma or that it could be life-threatening.

"I was more embarrassed by the mole than worried about it. But I had it removed when a skin specialist friend said I should and ended up with a big scar. A week later when the results of the biopsy came back the specialist asked if we could meet mum and dad there.

"She told us it was a stage 3 melanoma. I was in denial. I really didn't think it was an issue – I thought it was just something that was taken off and that was the end of it. But then we learnt that it had spread to one of my lymph nodes."

Lauren said she was offered some fairly drastic surgical options including a complete groin dissection and removal of all the lymph nodes that could potentially leave her with lifelong complications and wouldn't necessarily improve the chances of overall survival.

"We looked at immunotherapy treatments like Keytruda™ which isn't funded for stage 3 melanoma. The scary thing is stage 3 melanoma has a high chance of coming back and spreading to other parts of my body and Keytruda can potentially reduce the chances of that happening, but it is very expensive.

Lauren really struggled with the decision to get Keytruda or not. She said at times she felt that it might be a relief if it went to stage 4 so she could get the drug funded and save her parents the cost. "I really didn't want to put them through such a massive financial burden, but they have been incredible, reassuring me that they will do anything to give me the best chance of living. It does seem ironic that New Zealand has the worst rate of melanoma in the world, yet a drug that could save the lives of people like me with stage 3 melanoma isn't easily accessible.

"People's reaction to my diagnosis initially was confronting. Some brushed it off because there is still a huge misunderstanding about how deadly it can be and that it strikes young people too. But I also received incredible support from so many people, reaching out by message, donating or sharing my story – I can't thank them enough. Hopefully, sharing my story has raised awareness about melanoma and can potentially help others – that would make it all worthwhile.

"My advice to people my age is that melanoma is serious – and can happen to you. So, make sure you are aware of your skin and listen to your instincts – get doctors to take your concerns seriously and check your spots properly."

Sir Stephen Hansen

Sir Stephen Hansen has faced some formidable challenges over the years, guiding the All Blacks to two Rugby World Cup victories in 2011 (under Sir Graham Henry) and 2015 (as Head Coach).

Less well-known is that the tough, straight-shooting 62-year-old former police detective has fought off his own health challenges by defying melanoma on three separate occasions.

“I grew up on a farm and can’t recall much awareness about the dangers of the sun. I’d be outside with my shirt off and definitely didn’t think about sunscreen – and got my share of sunburn.

“I found my first melanoma in the 1980s. Drying my back one day, I noticed it looked a bit different. My sister is a nurse, and she told me to get it checked out, which I did – and it was an early-stage melanoma. Since then, I’ve made sure I really know my skin – and get any changes checked out quickly.

“Even so, my second melanoma was on my calf in 2005, and by the time I had it removed, it had spread a bit and was in a lymph node. The node was removed, and they took a hunk out of my leg. Thankfully, they got all the cancer, and I’ve been okay. It was certainly a bit of a shock, though, at the time.

“Then, last year, the doctors diagnosed a third melanoma on my leg, which was fortunately found and treated early. I go to my specialist every three months and regularly get bits chopped out and tested. Having had a number of them makes me a higher risk of getting more, but it doesn’t stop me living my life or losing any sleep. My wife Tash and I live in sunny Wanaka, and I make sure I cover up and use sunscreen. I do check my moles a lot, though.

“A good friend of mine sadly passed away in early 2022 from a melanoma on his head. Melanoma can happen to anyone, anywhere – it doesn’t matter what colour skin you have, we can all get it.

“Being aware of your skin and getting anything unusual checked out is so important. If you catch melanoma early, the worst you’ll get is a scar, and you’ll most likely be fine. But if it’s detected late and has had a chance to spread, the consequences can be awful.”

PERSPECTIVES
Professionals

Mr Richard Martin

Cutaneous Surgical
Oncologist / Melanoma
New Zealand Board Trustee

"Reflecting on a year that was dominated medically by the COVID-19 pandemic, it was heartening to see that research and development gains are still being made in melanoma treatment. The biggest area of gain is with adjuvant (follow-up) treatment after the surgical removal of melanoma: studies show a 50% reduction in recurrence of stage 3 and 4 resected melanoma from the new treatment options available, and this was followed by evidence of a similar reduction in recurrence of high-risk primary (T2B/C) melanoma.

"We're also seeing some very interesting and exciting developments in the use of Artificial Intelligence in the diagnosis of melanoma; early detection and action is undoubtedly a big factor in successfully treating melanoma and anything that can support skin specialists, surgeons, and patients in diagnosing earlier will be welcomed.

"Here in New Zealand, we still face some significant challenges to being able to deliver effective new treatments for our patients. These are principally related to the new medicines available: the highly promising BRAF/MEK inhibitor drugs are not funded for stage 4 or inoperable melanoma – but are overseas, while adjuvant treatment with immunotherapy medicines like Keytruda™ is also not funded, though patients in many developed countries including Australia, Canada and the UK are able to access the drugs free.

"This makes for very challenging conversations with patients over the cost of drug treatments that could potentially save their lives; those who can't afford the treatments invariably have worse outcomes. One of my young patients is heading to Brisbane with his mother for treatment as she has a Medicare card and can get the drug for free in Australia.

"Looking to the year ahead, we will continue to elevate the importance of checking your skin for melanoma and seek more equitable funding of the medicines that have been shown to save lives."

Mr Richard Martin joined the Melanoma New Zealand Board in 2010. He is a General Surgeon specialising in melanoma and other advanced skin cancers.

Hon. Amy Adams

Former MP and National Cabinet Minister / Melanoma New Zealand Board Trustee

The Hon. Amy Adams joined Melanoma New Zealand's Board of Trustees in 2020. She entered Parliament as MP for Selwyn in 2008 and served four terms before retiring from politics in 2020. She joined the National Government Cabinet as Minister for Internal Affairs in 2011 and served for two terms, her portfolio included Minister of Justice, Minister for the Environment and Minister of Communications. In 2021 she was invited to join the establishment Board of Health New Zealand, which replaced the District Health Boards in 2022. She is also Chancellor of the University of Canterbury.

"My motivation to join the Melanoma New Zealand Board was driven by two things: I left politics to be able to spend more time with my family, but I still wanted to use my skills to make a meaningful difference in our society; I had also lost my mother through skin cancer so had a strong personal connection with the cause.

"I felt I could make an impact in the governance area, with my experience and understanding of the public system, and saw a definite opportunity for New Zealand as a country to do better in the melanoma space. We know what a terrible toll the cancer takes on New Zealanders, but Melanoma New Zealand is well-positioned to pursue the opportunities to significantly reduce the incidence and effects of melanoma through awareness-raising, education and advocacy.

"As an organisation, Melanoma New Zealand has the resources and a very passionate and skilled Board and management team to really move the dial on the cancer – and there is huge potential to make a lasting impact.

"Our job is to reach out to the public; telling melanoma stories is very powerful. Melanoma New Zealand plays a central role in getting the messages around prevention and early detection out there – but there's a lot more we can do. We can never rest easy and assume everyone's got the message.

"On the treatment side, there have been some major advances, particularly with anti-cancer drugs, but it's a real battle for funding for those in our health system. Melanoma competes with many other cancers for funding, let alone life-saving medicines in other disease areas. We have to take care that we don't just focus on financing preventative measures – the fence at the top of the cliff; we also need to support the people who have missed out because of inequities in the system – who need attention for their cancer right now.

"That's where the health reforms will hopefully reduce and ultimately remove any health inequities relating to geographic location, ethnicity, age or gender. But even if we do achieve a system of equal treatment, funding may still be an issue.

"Melanoma is one of New Zealand's most significant causes of cancer deaths and having access to effective treatment for it is crucial for all New Zealanders. So, the challenge for us is to ensure melanoma remains well-positioned, and that we present an evidenced and researched case for any funding increases we're seeking. We need to have a well-argued and realistic case, but also understand that we are part of a network of need with many other health issues the funding bucket has to cover."

OUR PARTNERS

FMG
Advice & Insurance

Our farmers and growers are regularly exposed to harsh sun and are among the most at-risk sectors of developing melanoma in the country, so we feel it's important to provide them access to lifesaving information to protect themselves. We're proud to partner with Melanoma New Zealand and connect them to rural communities across the country. Together we aim to support our clients and the rural communities who struggle to find time to prioritise themselves and get access to health appointments.

Glenn Croasdale
Chief Client Officer, FMG

RYMAN HEALTHCARE

"Ryman Healthcare was delighted to donate a record amount of $535,000 to charity partner Melanoma New Zealand after a huge year of fundraising around the country. It was an absolute pleasure to support Melanoma New Zealand. Seeing the van on the road and knowing the difference it has made to so many people, including our staff and residents, means a lot. We can't thank Melanoma New Zealand enough for what they do for people."

Cheyne Chalmers, Ryman Healthcare CEO — New Zealand

MSD

"Merck Sharp & Dohme New Zealand Limited (MSD) is proud to be Melanoma New Zealand's exclusive Workplace Education Partner for its online workplace education programme. Melanoma New Zealand recognised an online tool could be an effective way of reaching New Zealand workplaces during Covid. We know that New Zealand has one of the world's highest incidences of melanoma and it doesn't stop whether its summer or winter, COVID or no COVID.

The tool was designed to teach new Zealanders about the risks of melanoma, the importance of early detection and how to prevent it. Ultimately it is aimed at saving lives.

The Melanoma New Zealand van also came to skin check and educate our own staff which served as a timely reminder of the importance of skin checks and made us feel more empowered and educated about what to look for when checking our own skin.

We are delighted to partner with Melanoma New Zealand and support their important work which impacts the lives of so many New Zealanders."

Vanessa Gascoigne
— MSD New Zealand Director

thewarehouse

"It has been another great year partnering with Melanoma New Zealand. We're incredibly proud to support the work they do in educating Kiwis about sun safety and prevention and early detection of melanoma. Together this year, we hosted the Melanoma Spot Check Van at ten The Warehouse stores, offering free spot checks to customers and our team members. We also provided Melanoma New Zealand's sun safety programme to our team of 12,000 and helped to raise over $50,000 for Melanoma New Zealand through the sale of our reusable tote bags at checkout."

Sarah Crisford, Community Lead — The Warehouse

FOUNDING PATRONS

We are enormously grateful for the generosity of our founding patrons, the Fife Foundation and The Douglas Charitable Trust who support us to reach more people around the country with our life saving messages about preventing melanoma, early detection, and ultimately turning around New Zealand's terrible statistics.

FIFE FOUNDATION

"As a Founding Patron of Melanoma New Zealand, the Fife Foundation has seen first-hand the vital work the organisation does to support patients and educate New Zealanders about melanoma prevention and early detection. After the death of my beloved father from melanoma, I truly understand how this disease impacts a family. Witnessing the advocacy and support the team provides to others on their melanoma journey makes me proud to be able to help them take action against this dreadful disease."

Gina Satterthwaite, Fife Foundation Founder and Melanoma New Zealand Founding Patron

douglas charitable trust

"In 2021, the Douglas Charitable Trust joined Melanoma New Zealand as a Founding Patron to give back to the community in which we live. The vital work Melanoma New Zealand does to educate New Zealanders about this disease and prevent people from dying is fundamental to reducing New Zealand's dire current statistics, and we feel privileged to be supporting the organisation."

Jeff Douglas, Douglas Charitable Trust and Melanoma New Zealand Founding Patron

CONTACT INFORMATION

info@melanoma.org.nz

09 449 2342
Freephone 0800 4 MELANOMA (0800 463 526)

@melanoma _ nz

@MelanomaFoundationNZ

@Melanoma _ NZ

nz.linkedin.com/company/melanoma-new-zealand

melanoma.org.nz

PERFORMANCE REPORT & INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Please click go to the link below for the full audited accounts of Melanoma New Zealand.

https://melanoma.org.nz/performance-report-2022/

Melanoma New Zealand would like to warmly acknowledge and thank the team at Rainger & Rolfe and communications expert (and melanoma patient) Ron Murray for their generous contributions of time and talent in, respectively, designing and writing this Impact & Performance Report.

Fieldays
Health and
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Melanoma
New Zealand

Free
spot
checks
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Save your life.

Check your skin.
Save your life.

for the good of the country.
TOGETHER

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