

Support Services

SOCIAL WORKER

A social worker is available to provide:

- *Support and advocacy; financial information; patient and family support and counselling; crisis intervention; links with community services locally and in other regions.*

CONTACT: By telling the radiation therapist or nurse you would like to see a social worker.

MAORI HEALTH UNIT

The Maori Health Unit is accessible for people of all cultures. They provide:

- *Marae style accommodation for whanau of patients who live outside the MidCentral DHB catchment area.*

CONTACT: By telling the radiation therapist or nurse you would like to use the Maori Health Unit service, or contact them directly on (06) 350 8210.

PSYCHO-ONCOLOGY

The Psycho-Oncology staff can help people improve their coping abilities by using psychological techniques to:

- *Make decisions & solve problems; manage stress levels; reduce symptoms like pain, anticipatory nausea & panic attacks; recognise & address any fears, anxiety or depression they might be experiencing; improve relationship skills; build support networks; improve self-esteem & self-image; acquire information or decrease information overload; assist with meaning, purpose, wairua, & spiritual concerns*

CONTACT: By telling the radiation therapist or nurse you would like to speak to a psychologist, or by attending the 2-hour workshop, "Skills for the Journey". Times for these workshops are posted around the department.

CANCER SUPPORT NURSES

These nurses provide:

- *A free service in the community delivering education, support, and co-ordination of care to both individuals and their family/whanau who have been diagnosed with, or at high risk of cancer.*

CONTACT: Through your GP, radiation oncologist, or radiation therapist, or through your local Cancer Society.

NURSING TEAM

The Radiation Oncology Department has registered nurses who specialise in the care of patients receiving radiation therapy. On the day of your CT scan, you will meet with these nurses and their goal is to provide care and support during the course of your treatment. They can help with:

- *Education; side effect management; access to other health professionals; discharge planning.*

CONTACT: By telling the radiation therapist or receptionist you would like to see a registered nurse, or by contacting them directly on (06) 350 8438.

DIETITIAN

A dietitian is available, where necessary to offer advice on:

- *Healthy eating; weight maintenance; nausea; poor appetite; sore mouth & swallowing difficulties; taste changes; constipation, diarrhoea & light diets; management of PEG; nutritional drink supplements.*

CONTACT: By telling the radiation therapist or nurse you would like to see a dietitian. The dietitian's clinic is run on a Thursday in the Radiation Oncology Department.



CANCER SOCIETY

The Cancer Society of New Zealand, Manawatu Centre Inc, is located at Addis House, 135 Ruahine Street, Palmerston North. It offers information and support programmes such as:

- *Yoga; massage; Look Good Feel Better programme; volunteer driver; a "Living with Cancer" course; meditation courses; home & hospital visiting services; Cancer Connect – a telephone peer support programme; breast prosthesis fitting; breast cancer support group; lymphoedema support group; a men's support group.*

CONTACT: The Cancer Society is located throughout NZ. To locate the Cancer Society closest to you, call their support and information line 0800 CANCER (226 237). For privacy reasons, the Cancer Society cannot contact you, so they ask you to make first contact.

RESOURCE ROOM

In association with the Manawatu Cancer Society, the Regional Cancer Treatment Service has a patient and family/whanau resource room in the Radiation Oncology Department. You are welcome to access brochures, books, information folders, videos and internet/email facilities at any stage of your planning and treatment.



PATIENT EDUCATION SESSIONS

Regular patient education sessions are run at the Cancer Society, Addis House to give an overview of radiation therapy and support services available. It is a good opportunity to ask questions and learn more about radiation therapy. All are welcome to attend this informal session. Posters are placed throughout the department with the dates of upcoming sessions.