

SPRING 2025

Lifeblood

The difference *you* make



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 leukaemia &
blood cancer
NEW ZEALAND
Vision to Cure. Mission to Care.

A message from the CEO



Together, we've achieved some incredible things – and this issue is proof.

When someone is told they have blood cancer, life can change in an instant. For many, it's a moment filled with shock, fear, and unanswered questions. But thanks to your support, they don't have to face that moment, or the journey that follows, alone. You help ensure there is always someone ready to listen, guide, and walk beside them.

As we mark Blood Cancer Awareness Month this September, we're reminded that 1 in 18 New Zealanders will be diagnosed with a blood cancer in their lifetime. Behind each number is a person and a chain of loved ones whose lives are deeply affected. By raising awareness of blood cancers, their symptoms, and encouraging earlier diagnosis, more people can access the care and support they need sooner.

Your generosity also supports every visit, call, and support group that brings comfort and connection for patients. It fuels research, offering hope for better treatments and brighter futures. And it strengthens our advocacy, giving patients and whānau a stronger voice, influencing decision-makers, and helping improve access to care.

LBC receives no government funding, so every impact begins with you. I hope this issue gives you a deeper appreciation of the difference you make for Kiwis living with blood cancer. Thank you for standing with us as we stand beside patients.

With gratitude,

Tim Edmonds
LBC Chief Executive

Your impact

April 2024 to March 2025

1,689

new support referrals – patients and whānau reached when they needed us most



386

support groups held, both online and in-person, creating connection and community



\$530,783

invested in research to bring new hope and better treatments



Every patient and whānau supported, every group brought together, and every dollar of funding invested in research is made possible by generous supporters like you.

Jade's shock diagnosis

And the support that helped her through

In 2022, Jade was stepping into a new chapter of her life. At 23, she'd just graduated from university, landed her first full-time job, and was busy planning her wedding to her fiancé, Craig. Life was full of excitement and promise – until a lump in her neck changed everything.

Her GP ordered some scans and a biopsy, reassuring her it was unlikely to be anything serious. But just days before her wedding, Jade received the devastating news: she had Hodgkin lymphoma, a type of blood cancer.

"It was a huge shock," she says. "Getting that phone call was really, really distressing."

Returning from her honeymoon, Jade's world looked completely different. What followed was a rollercoaster of treatment, remission, and relapse – three diagnoses in three years. Jade underwent countless rounds of gruelling chemotherapy, immunotherapy, two stem cell transplants, and months of brutal side effects.

Throughout it all, she leaned on her husband, her faith, and – thanks to kind people like you – care and support from LBC.

"Nicki from LBC has been with me from the very start," says Jade. "She's been awesome. She'd call regularly to check in, especially when I couldn't see people because I was immunocompromised. That meant a lot."

Thanks to support from generous donors like you, Jade could access LBC's wrap-around care every step of the way – from hospital visits during long periods of isolation, to practical help like fuel vouchers when she needed to travel for treatment. Jade also found much-needed community through LBC's young adults group in Wellington.



Today, Jade is in remission and works at the Malaghan Institute – an organisation dedicated to advancing cancer research. Her husband, Craig, works for Fire and Emergency New Zealand, and took part in LBC's Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge this year – raising over \$9,000 for others like Jade.

Now eight months post-transplant, Jade is hopeful.

She's looking forward to just being a "normal" 27-year-old – working, travelling, and spending time with loved ones.

It's compassionate people like you who make stories like this possible. Your support gave Jade strength, connection, and hope through even the darkest days. Thank you for being part of her journey.



If you or someone you know with blood cancer needs support, please get in touch - we are here to help.



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www.leukaemia.org.nz



Brighter days for Tommy

- all thanks to you

Do you remember Tommy, the brave little boy we introduced you to earlier this year?

Just after his second birthday, Tommy was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL). It was a terrifying time for his whānau – but they didn't have to face it alone. Your generosity meant that help was there from day one.

Your support meant Tim from our Support Services team could walk alongside Tommy's family through the toughest days. When things felt overwhelming, Tommy's mum, Tiffany, could simply pick up the phone and hear a calm, reassuring voice on the other end.

When money was tight, you helped provide emergency assistance – putting food on the table and petrol in the car. And you gave Tommy's big sister, Charley, a safe place in LBC's Kids' Club, where she could make sense of it all with the help of a play therapist and new friends who truly understood what she was going through.

Now, we have good news to share: Tommy is thriving. His immune system is stronger. He's started kindy. He's back on the playground – just being a normal kid again. And recently, he enjoyed a magical trip to the snow with his family.

After more than two years of treatment, Tommy has finished his final round of chemotherapy. His doctors say he's responded well. While Tiffany admits that the fear of relapse still lingers, she draws strength from knowing that LBC is always there for her whānau.

This incredible journey is only possible because of you. Thank you for giving families like Tommy's the care, support, and hope they need during their toughest moments.

Tommy had a blast on his recent trip to the snow



Time to celebrate! Tommy took his last dose of chemo at a special family dinner



A mum's journey



When Emma felt a sudden pain in her side just before Christmas, she had no idea it would lead to a diagnosis that would turn her family's world upside down. But thanks to supporters like you, she didn't face it alone.

Last December, Emma – a mum of two from rural Canterbury – was deep in the Christmas rush on her family's lily farm when she felt a sharp pain in her side. At first, she wasn't too worried – but when it didn't go away, she thought she'd better get it checked out.

A scan revealed tumours throughout her abdomen and an enlarged spleen, and further tests confirmed the devastating news: Emma had advanced-stage follicular lymphoma, a type of blood cancer. She was terrified.

"I'd lost my brother to brain cancer seven years earlier," she says. "I couldn't believe it was happening to me too."

Telling her mum was one of the hardest moments. *"She'd already lost one of her children – all I could say was, 'I'm sorry.'"*

Emma began intensive chemotherapy in Christchurch, often travelling two hours each way for treatment. The side effects were tough – with days of nausea and vomiting after each round of chemo – and the emotional toll was just as difficult. But she wasn't facing it alone.

Thanks to the kindness of people like you, Kate from LBC's Support Services team was able to support Emma with visits at the hospital and regular phone calls. This connection made all the difference – especially in the beginning when things were really hard.

“It was so nice to talk to Kate. Because she's a nurse, I could ask her about all the things worrying me – and she gave me the reassurance I needed.”

Your support meant Emma also got the practical help she needed – like petrol vouchers for the long drives to hospital. And Emma's two daughters received support through LBC's Kids' Club, giving them a safe space to understand what was happening and connect with other kids going through something similar.

Emma is now beginning maintenance therapy and feeling hopeful for the future. This summer, she's planning a well-deserved holiday in her caravan – a chance to rest, recharge, and create special memories with her girls.

Emma's story is a powerful reminder of the difference that kind supporters like you can make for Kiwis facing blood cancer. Because of you, Emma and her whānau had the support they needed during their toughest moments – and now, they're looking ahead with strength,

hope, and the chance to enjoy brighter days together.



Emma and her girls, enjoying special moments together after a tough year

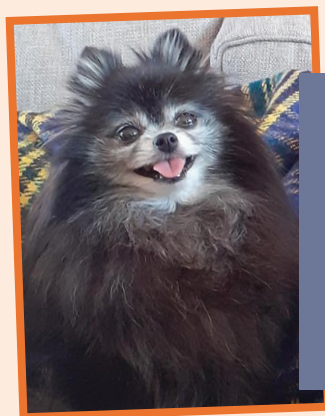


Celebrating the paw-some companions that walk beside us

When life is turned upside down by a blood cancer diagnosis, sometimes the best medicine has four legs and a wagging tail (or a twitchy nose and a loud purr).

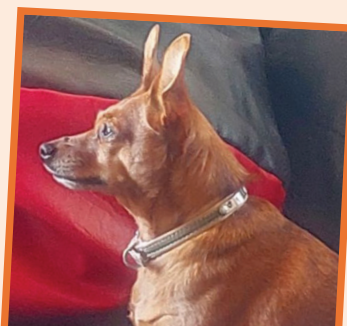
For many Kiwis going through blood cancer, pets are more than just cuddly companions – they're little lifesavers.

Whether it's a dog that seems to sense when extra cuddles are needed, a cat that refuses to leave its owner's side during treatment, or a bird whose songs brighten difficult days, these beloved animals have a special way of helping their humans through the hardest moments. Here, some of our incredible patients and their whānau share how their pets helped carry them through.



Nel

"Nel sticks closely by my side on my journey with chronic myeloid leukaemia. She brings so much joy to our family."



Ishta

"The kids and I adopted Ishta when my husband passed away. She keeps me strong and snuggles me extra when the tears flow."

Horsey



"During Jason's nearly 6-year fight with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, Horsey was always by his side. He even woke me one night when Jason's temperature had risen terribly and he needed to be taken to hospital."



Mondo

"When I'm home from treatment, my beautiful boy snuggles with me and follows me everywhere. He brightens my day!"

From crisis to community: how your kindness made the difference



When Aaliyah was diagnosed with leukaemia, her family's world changed overnight. Now, they're bringing their community together to give back.

When seven-year-old Aaliyah started waking in the night with sore legs, her parents assumed it was just growing pains. But within weeks, the pain had worsened – until one weekend, she was too unwell to eat or even walk.

Nikora, Aaliyah's dad, took her to the GP, who referred them to the emergency department in Dunedin. That's where her family received the devastating news: Aaliyah had leukaemia. Within 24 hours, she was airlifted from Dunedin to Christchurch for treatment.

In that moment of shock and fear, your support made sure help was waiting. Because of you, Kate from LBC was there – ready to listen, answer questions, and offer comfort and practical support when the family needed it most.

"She introduced us to the Monkey in My Chair programme, which Aaliyah and her classmates absolutely loved," says Emma, Aaliyah's mum.

"It was just amazing having someone with experience to talk us through everything."

Now, with Aaliyah back at school in between treatments, Emma and her family are giving back. They're hosting a local Shine for a Cure event in Balclutha to bring their community together, celebrate Aaliyah's courage, and raise vital funds for other families facing blood cancer. Emma started a Facebook event to spread the word – and within two days, 150 people were already interested.



88 We just want to show our appreciation and give a little bit back, because the support we've received has been overwhelming. 88

The event will feature a walk around the river reserve, food trucks, a Mr Whippy van, and even a bouncy castle. *"It's a chance for our town to come together, show support, and raise what we can,"* Emma says.

"It's our way of saying thank you for the incredible support we've received."

Help shine a light on blood cancer.

Join us in Auckland or Christchurch this September for a 5km lantern walk – or host your own!

Saturday,
20 September, 2025

**shine
FOR A CURE**

www.shineforacure.org.nz

Free to register





You can leave a legacy for the future

Including a gift to LBC in your Will is an easy and meaningful way to bring hope and support to Kiwis like Helen facing blood cancer.

In 2023, Helen was diagnosed with an aggressive form of lymphoma in her brain. The road ahead was overwhelming – intensive chemotherapy, time away from her job, a gruelling stem cell transplant, and huge pressure on her young family. But thanks to the compassion of people like you, Helen didn't have to face it alone.

Through LBC's Support Services team, Helen and her family received practical help with petrol and food vouchers, plus emotional support when they needed it most.

"LBC became part of our whānau," Helen says. "They were right there when we needed help. It made a huge difference."

Today, Helen is in remission – and deeply grateful for the people who stood beside her.

By choosing to leave a gift in your Will, you can ensure this support is there for others like Helen in the years to come. It's a way to extend your values and generosity beyond

your lifetime, creating lasting change for people affected by blood cancer.

A gift in your Will, no matter what the size, paves the way for LBC to create a better future for all New Zealanders – one where nobody faces blood cancer alone, and where one day our ultimate goal of finding a cure becomes a reality. Leaving even 1% of your estate could make a profound difference to people facing blood cancer – while still leaving 99% for your loved ones.

A lasting way to show your support



If you would like to create your own lasting legacy of hope for blood cancer patients and their families, you can get in touch with Kaci from our Gifts in Wills team at 027 363 7151 or visit our website www.lbcnz.link/wills to find out more.



Vision to Cure. Mission to Care.

If you would like to get in touch:

Call: 0800 15 10 15

Email: info@leukaemia.org.nz

Visit: www.leukaemia.org.nz

Mail: PO Box 99182, Newmarket, Auckland 1149

LBC has Support Services offices in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin