

A close-up photograph of a woman wearing a brown hijab and glasses. She is holding a large, teal-colored paper lantern with her right hand. The lantern has a ribbed texture. The woman is looking down at the lantern. The background is blurred.

Leukaemia & Blood Cancer New Zealand **2025 Annual Impact Report**

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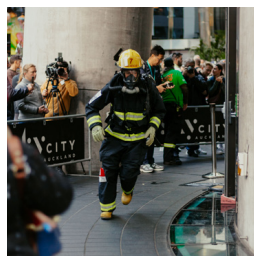
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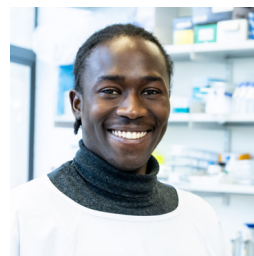
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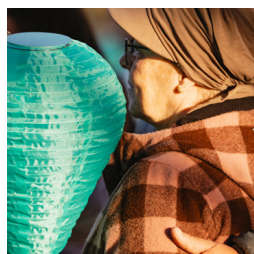
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Back cover
Ryman Living –
Nourish & Thrive



On the cover
One of our patients
attends Shine for a
Cure at Hagley Park,
Christchurch.

Executive Summary from the CEO & Board Chair

Our year in review

2024–25 marked the first step in our bold five-year strategy to improve outcomes for people living with blood cancer. Guided by our vision to cure and mission to care, we expanded patient support, strengthened our advocacy, and extended our investment in research; none of which would be possible without the generosity of our supporters.

Patient support

Our Support Services Team reached more patients and whanāu than ever, with 1,689 receiving personalised support and 386 support groups delivered across the country. Highlights included our Patient Forum held in Auckland, the Winter Workshop series featuring AML survivor Josh Komen, and new resources like our MDS booklet and immunotherapy factsheet. We also grew our Waikato team to better serve local communities in that region.

Advocacy

We raised our voice for patients, driving change on critical issues like stem cell transplant delays, faster medicine access, and national cancer services. Our upcoming State of the Nation report will highlight the current state of blood cancer care in New Zealand and a roadmap for the future with the goal of no lives needlessly lost to blood cancer.

Fundraising and sustainability

Strong fundraising kept our impact growing. The Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge hit a record year, Shave for a Cure turned 25 with incredible support

from Farmers, and our new Shine for a Cure events brought communities together in Auckland and Christchurch. We also expanded local engagement, grew regular giving, and partnered with Ryman Healthcare on their “Nourish and Thrive” campaign.

Research and innovation

We invested over \$530,000 in research, supporting students, travel grants for clinicians and researchers, and our first joint PhD scholarship with the Haematology Society of Australia and New Zealand. We supported patients as they took part in the Malaghan Institute’s ENABLE CAR T-cell trial and continued our partnership with the Leukaemia & Blood Cancer Research Unit at the University of Auckland to advance discoveries into personalised blood cancer care.

Looking ahead

We are in an exciting phase of our commitment to ensuring every New Zealander with blood cancer receives the best possible care, treatment, and hope for the future. Thanks to the generous support of our donors, partners, and community, we’ll keep pushing for change, delivering vital support services, and investing in life-saving research.



Tim Edmonds
Chief Executive Officer

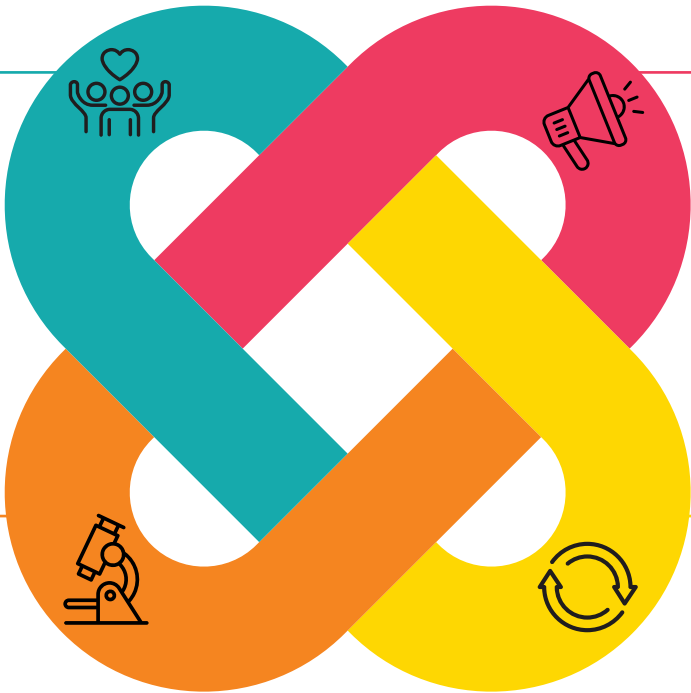


Pene Milne
Board Chair

Our objectives

Support

Deliver valued patient and family support services nationally.



Advocacy

Advocate for the best global standard of treatment for New Zealand patients.

Research & Innovation

Proactively drive research into the prevention, cure and care of blood cancers in New Zealand.

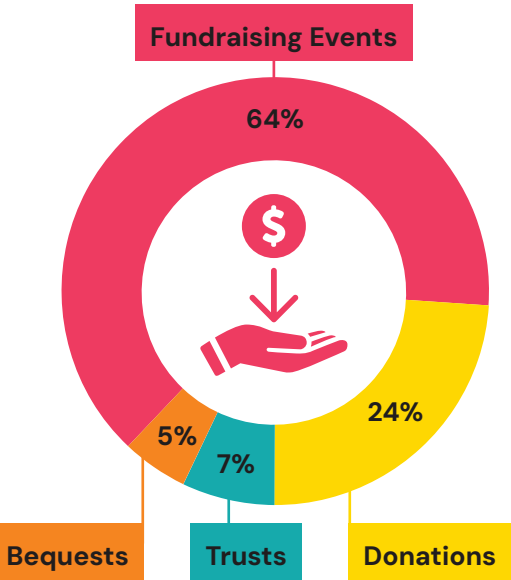
Fundraising & Sustainability

Your donations enable us to support those in need now and in the long-term.

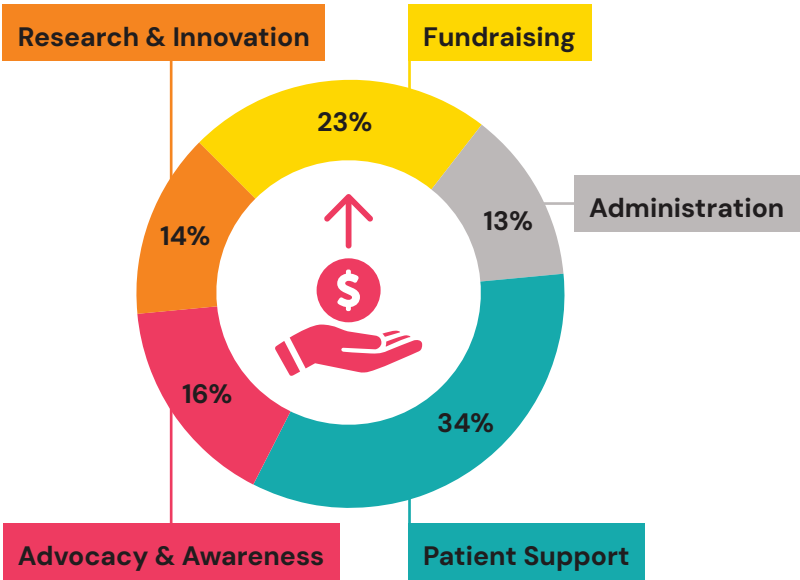
2024/2025 financial snapshot

For every \$1 we invested, we raised \$4.28

Income sources this year



How income was spent this year



2024 - 2025: financial year in numbers

1,689

Total number
of referrals

\$895,630

Total patient-related
support

386

Total number of
groups held (online & in-person)

2,162,200

Meta reach over
the year

\$530,783

Given to research

Thank you to all of our
wonderful partners



Support

In addition to the everyday psychosocial and practical support our team delivered across New Zealand, we were pleased to offer the following programmes:

Patient Forum

Our 2024 Blood Cancer Patient Forum in Auckland brought together patients, caregivers, and healthcare experts for a comprehensive event focused on education and support.

Keynote speaker Jehan Casinader explored "The Power of Stories," setting a tone of connection and shared experience, followed by a full day of sessions covering important aspects of blood cancer care. Participants chose from diverse concurrent sessions, including integrative oncology approaches, supportive care for specific cancers, exercise strategies, financial resilience, caregiver support, and practical workshops on reflexology and movement therapy. Expert-led discussions on immunotherapies, genetics, post-transplant care, and medication decision-making provided valuable insights. The forum concluded with a high-profile Pharmac panel discussion, fostering dialogue between patients and healthcare decision makers.

Throughout the event, attendees gained practical knowledge and support strategies while building connections with others on similar journeys. This successful initiative directly advances our mission to empower blood cancer patients with information, resources, and community support.

Winter Workshops

Our 2024 Winter Workshop series "One Breath at a Time" featured Josh Komen sharing his acute myeloid leukaemia

(AML), stem cell transplant and severe graft versus host disease (GvHD) journey with healthcare professionals across six New Zealand regions. Josh's testimony highlighted the vital difference between treating illness and caring for the whole person, emphasising how compassionate nursing care transformed his recovery. The workshops focused on breathing techniques Josh discovered during recovery, providing tools that healthcare providers can use to support both their own wellbeing and patients' mental health alongside medical treatment.

Primary Health Care Haematology Webinar Series

Our 2024 Primary Health Care Haematology Webinar Series successfully reached a diverse audience of healthcare professionals, including GPs, registrars, and district and practice nurses nationwide.

Presented by leading New Zealand haematologists, this RNZCGP-accredited series covered several essential topics. These included blood cancer fundamentals, active monitoring approaches, post-treatment care for stem cell transplant patients, and emergency management strategies for haematology patients in community settings, including rural areas.

Participant feedback indicated the series significantly enhanced primary care providers' confidence in managing haematological conditions. The knowledge gained will directly benefit patients through improved ongoing care and earlier diagnosis of blood cancers and related conditions. Ultimately, this will improve outcomes for patients in communities throughout New Zealand.



LBC staff at the 2024 Blood Cancer Patient Forum

Expanding support in the Waikato region

We are pleased to announce the expansion of our support services in the Waikato region with the appointment of Tina Stewart (below) as our new Support Services Coordinator. Based in our Hamilton office, Tina will focus on building our presence and enhancing patient support throughout the Bay of Plenty area. This strategic addition to our team enables our existing Waikato staff to strengthen their focus on patient needs across the Waikato, Lakes, and Tairāwhiti regions. By extending our geographical reach and deepening our local support networks, we're taking significant steps toward ensuring that no blood cancer patient in these communities has to face their journey alone.



Tina Stewart, LBC's new Support Services Coordinator in the Waikato region

Introduction to new resources

Several new and updated resources were developed this year to better support patients and healthcare professionals. These materials reflect our commitment to providing clear, accessible information on complex conditions and treatments.

- Our comprehensive Myelodysplastic Syndromes (MDS) booklet offers guidance for patients navigating this rare diagnosis.
- The new Immunotherapy and Cancer factsheet, produced in partnership with the Malaghan Institute of Medical Research, explains this innovative treatment approach and what patients can expect.
- Our detailed Overview of an Allogeneic Stem Cell Transplant resource walks patients through this important treatment option.
- The revised Haemochromatosis factsheet provides updated information on managing this inherited condition.

These resources have been developed with input from medical experts and patients to ensure they meet the highest standards of accuracy and accessibility.



Advocacy

Championing change in blood cancer care

In 2024/2025, LBC deepened its advocacy efforts through stronger political engagement, clearer evidence, and coordinated sector action to improve outcomes for people living with blood cancer.

Accelerating Government engagement

The collective strength of the blood cancer community continues to drive momentum in our political engagement. Backed by patients and haematologists across the country, LBC coordinated joint letters and open correspondence to the Prime Minister and Ministers, requesting urgent action on long-overdue blood cancer medicines. Our public commentary and media engagement helped maintain pressure and keep patient needs in focus.

We also led advocacy around stem cell transplant delays, following media reports of patients relapsing and dying while stuck on waitlists. Our efforts secured staffing investment, inclusion of transplant targets in the Government's health priorities, and ongoing discussions to address critical service gaps.

Building alliances

We continued to collaborate through the Blood Cancer Alliance, uniting patient organisations and haematologists to amplify the sector's voice on medicine access, stem cell transplant services, and national healthcare planning.

This year, LBC was appointed Chair of the Cancer Non-Governmental Organisations (CANGO) alliance, enabling us to influence national strategy and policy across the cancer sector.

We also worked in partnership with:

- Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia Advocates New Zealand
- Myeloma New Zealand
- Haematology Society of Australia and New Zealand
- Australasian Leukaemia & Lymphoma Group
- Te Aho o Te Kahu – Cancer Control Agency
- Health New Zealand – Te Whatu Ora



LBC Board Member Dr Rodger Tiedemann and CEO Tim Edmonds with Hon Simeon Brown, the Minister of Health

Cancer patients left waiting for months for bone marrow transplants

7:26 am on 27 February 2024



Ruth Hill, Reporter

ruth.hill@nzherald.co.nz

HEALTH / POLITICS

More pressure on government over cancer drugs pledge

Checkpoint, 5:09 pm on 6 June 2024

Share this



Blood cancer doctors urge Government: Don't break drug promise to our patients



Nicholas Jones

6 Jun, 2024 07:43 AM 4 mins to read

Save | Share

Policy and consultation submissions

We submitted to multiple Pharmac consultations, advocating for faster access to modern blood cancer therapies and calling for improvements to Pharmac's decision-making framework.

Pharmac submissions supported or led by LBC:

- Inotuzumab ozogamicin for acute lymphoblastic leukaemia
- Lenalidomide and pomalidomide for multiple myeloma
- Bendamustine for relapsed/refractory chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL)
- Pembrolizumab for relapsed/refractory Hodgkin lymphoma

State of the Nation

This year, we commenced work on a State of the Nation report – the first national snapshot of blood cancer care. Combining clinical input, patient experience, and national health data, the report is set to identify barriers to delivering the best global standard of care and define a roadmap for change. It will guide our future advocacy and serve as a foundation for reform.

The report is intended to influence conversations with government and policy leaders and provide a powerful tool for aligning the sector behind shared priorities. It will bring into focus the consequences of underinvestment and make clear recommendations for the changes required to deliver timely, high-quality care across New Zealand.

Looking ahead

In the year ahead, our focus is clear: secure greater investment in blood cancer treatments, address delays in access, and ensure the findings of State of the Nation translate into meaningful action. With the support of our partners, clinicians, and community, we will continue to hold decision-makers to account and push for a system that works for all people affected by blood cancer.

We will continue to combine patient-led advocacy, evidence-based policy submissions, and strategic alliances to achieve long-term change.



CEO Tim Edmonds and LBC Board Members with Hon Dr Shane Reti



Firefighter running around the dedication wall at the 2024 Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge

Sustainability & fundraising

Firefighters mark 20 years of climbing for a cause

In 2024, firefighters from across Aotearoa came together to celebrate a remarkable milestone – the 20th anniversary of the Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge.

This iconic event – LBC's largest annual fundraiser – sees firefighters race up Auckland's Sky Tower in full gear, all in the name of supporting people living with blood cancer. In the months leading up to the climb, brigades pour their hearts into training and fundraising in their local communities.

This year, their dedication paid off more than ever before – together, they raised a record-breaking total for LBC's work.

Proudly delivered in partnership with SkyCity and FireUp Events, the Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge has grown steadily over the years, inspiring thousands of firefighters to step up – and showing what's possible when communities rally together for a cause.



Taking on Christchurch's business potential

In late 2024, we welcomed Hannah Reed into a brand-new role as our Christchurch-based Business Development Manager.

We recognised the potential in the region for some time and realised that Cantabrians enjoy meeting a "local" when discussing business opportunities.

Hannah has a wealth of experience and has hit the ground running to raise awareness of LBC and increase participation in fundraising events.

One of our early activations was entering an LBC team in the inaugural Christchurch Southern Cross Round the Bays. It was a great way to bring LBC staff alongside local supporters. With all of us wearing our "Fundraising is our Super Power" T-shirts, we took on the 8.4km course.

We were delighted to meet the Dunsandel Firefighters at the finish line, also taking part and fundraising for LBC.



Creating a better future with Gathered Here

In 2024, LBC's partnership with Gathered Here – a trusted online Will-writing platform – became more established and achieved significant progress. Gathered Here makes it easier than ever for supporters to leave a lasting gift for future generations.

Supporters leaving a gift in their Will is one of the most powerful ways they can support New Zealanders living with blood cancer. These legacy gifts help ensure that LBC can continue to provide vital support services and fund life-saving research for years to come.

Through our new partnership, supporters can now write a legal Will online, free of charge, in just a few simple steps. Many are choosing to include a gift to LBC – a meaningful gesture that will one day have a profound impact.



Shine for a Cure lights up Auckland and Christchurch

Our newest fundraising event, Shine for a Cure, launched this year with two evening lantern walks in Auckland Domain and Christchurch's Hagley Park.

Unlike our more physically demanding challenges, Shine for a Cure was created to bring people together – to reflect, remember, and connect with others whose lives have been impacted by blood cancer.

Participants who raised \$100 or more received a silk lantern in one of three symbolic colours: gold to remember someone lost to blood cancer, white to support those affected, or teal to represent a personal journey.

As dusk fell, streams of light moved through the parks – a striking tribute to the many lives touched by blood cancer.

After a successful first year, we're excited to grow Shine for a Cure in both cities and encourage supporters across the country to host their own community walks.

Regular giving: A growing cornerstone of LBC's fundraising

As part of LBC's five-year Strategic Plan, launched in 2024, we're committed to growing fundraising income and ensuring long-term financial stability – so we can continue to support New Zealanders living with blood cancer, now and into the future.

A key part of this commitment is the investment in our regular giving programme. By becoming a regular giver, supporters can make ongoing contributions that fit their budget – while having a powerful, lasting impact over time.

These reliable donations help LBC plan ahead and invest confidently in support services and research.

Grants

Kids' Clubs continue to provide friendship and fun

For many years, LBC has run Kids' Club groups to support children aged between 5 and 12 who have a parent, grandparent or sibling with blood cancer. In a supportive environment, children learn a little about cancer and its treatments, and meet other children going through a similar experience.

In 2024, LBC once again successfully applied for a grant from the Clinton & Joy Whitley Fund, administered by Auckland Foundation. Their previous grant had allowed us to produce hoodies designed by the Kids' Club kids themselves, which they could wear at the sessions or whenever they liked.

This year, the Fund paid for new play resources and for the play therapists and psychologists who run our sessions around the country. Kids' Club has a profoundly positive impact on the children as they navigate the challenges of having a family member with blood cancer.

Grants give funding boost to Otago and Southland

LBC's annual grants programme seeks funding to support patients and families in all four corners of New Zealand. Applications are made to cover salaries, operational costs and financial assistance for patients.

Our work in the lower South is well supported by a range of southern regional trusts. Our grateful thanks go to the Central Lakes Trust, Community Trust South, Stewart Family Charitable Trust, Guy Anson Waddel Charitable Trust, Dunedin Casino Charitable Trust and the Southland Care & Welfare Trusts.

These grants have enabled our Southern Regional Manager to continue her vital work. She makes regular trips throughout the regions, travelling long distances, often in tough weather conditions, to hold support groups, visit local clinics and provide education to rural health professionals.



A Kids' Club session held in Wellington.

We gratefully thank the following trusts and foundations for their generous support:

A K Franks' Charitable Trust
ANZ Staff Foundation
Aotearoa Gaming Trust
BlueSky Community Trust Ltd
Central Lakes Trust
Chenery Memorial Trust
Christchurch Casinos Charitable Trust
Clinton & Joy Whitley Fund with Auckland Foundation
Community Trust South
David Ellison Charitable Trust
Dunedin Casino Charitable Trust
Eastern & Central Community Trust
Elsie Steele Trust
Ernest Hyam Davis and Ted & Mollie Carr Legacies
Estate of Gordon Lindsey Isaacs

Foodstuffs (South Island) Community Trust
Four Winds Foundation
Freemasons Foundation
Frimley Foundation
Gattung Foundation
Grassroots Trust
Guy Anson Waddel Charitable Trust
Helen Stewart Royle Charitable Trust
Higgins Bequest Trust
Hutt Mana Charitable Trust
Jack Jeffs Charitable Trust
Joyce Fisher Charitable Trust
Kingdom Foundation
Kiwi Gaming Foundation
LifeBlood Trust
Louisa & Patrick Emmett Murphy Foundation
Mainland Foundation
Maurice Paykel Charitable Trust
Milestone Foundation

New Zealand Post
Delivering for Good
Nikau Foundation's Teresa Freeman Endowment Fund
Peter & David Picot Charitable Trust
Pub Charity
Roy Owen Dixey Charitable Trust
South Canterbury Trusts
Southland Care & Welfare Trusts
Stewart Family Charitable Trust
Te Rourou One Aotearoa Foundation
The Leukaemia Research Trust
The Lion Foundation
The Trusts Community Foundation
TM Hosking Charitable Trust
Toi Foundation
Trillian Trust
Trust House Foundation
Trust Waikato
Z Energy





Research

LBC continues strategic research investments

Through our Medical and Scientific Committee, LBC continues to support haematological advancement in New Zealand. As well as our annual contestable research funding round, we also support other smaller grants that can make a bigger impact. We fund travel grants that enable health professionals to attend international conferences and bring cutting-edge research back home, and our annual Summer Studentships programme supports university students conducting blood disorder research projects.

These strategic investments ensure New Zealand stays at the forefront of haematological care and cultivates the next generation of researchers.

HSANZ partners with LBC for improved blood cancer treatments

We were delighted to award our first Leukaemia & Blood Cancer New Zealand and HSANZ PhD Scholarship in 2024 to Paul Owaci (above), who is currently working within the cancer immunotherapy programme at the Malaghan Institute of Medical Research.

Paul's project is focused on CAR T-cell therapy and seeks to explore alternative manufacturing processes and ways to re-engineer CAR T-cells that could help reduce "exhaustion" of the cells. He is also hoping to shorten the time it takes to manufacture the cells, allowing for treatment of more patients and earlier treatment of patients with aggressive disease. It might also be possible to make CAR T-cells that remain active for longer, thereby improving the therapy's effectiveness for blood cancers and other conditions.

LBC supports ENABLE ground-breaking trials



In mid-2024, the Malaghan Institute announced phase 2 of its ENABLE CAR T-cell trial – a ground-breaking clinical trial making a life-saving difference for patients

with B-cell non-Hodgkin lymphomas. Used overseas for different types of blood cancers, CAR T-cell therapy is not yet available as a funded treatment here in New Zealand.

Approximately 30 patients took part in the first phase, and the results were very impressive. The trial is now moving to phase 2 and doubling the number of patients who will be treated.

LBC is playing a small but significant part in these trials to ensure equity for patients who qualify for them. The NTA (National Travel Assistance) scheme provides some financial support for patients travelling to Wellington and staying for their CAR T-cell therapy, but there is often a shortfall. LBC has committed to covering the difference – and also supporting an accompanying caregiver – so that no one needs to miss out on potential curative treatment.

25 years of blood cancer research to be reviewed

Since we began recording research investment in 1998, LBC has been proactively supporting haematological

research. We have achieved this through various means, including travel grants, summer studentships, and larger contestable funding rounds for significant research projects. Additionally, we have made annual contributions to the Leukaemia & Blood Cancer Research Unit (LBCRU), which we helped establish in 2013, and have supported the Auckland Regional Biobank.

Over this time, we have invested more than \$6M.

In 2024, we began reviewing our support to identify the impact of our research dollars. This analysis is complex as the research undertaken is far-reaching. Impact can include the difference to a patient's cancer journey, but it can also mean the advancement in a researcher's career or the international collaboration that has occurred because of the initial work supported by an LBC grant.

Our results will enable LBC to plan more effectively for future research investment, ensuring the best return for all concerned.



Our annual contributions to the Leukaemia & Blood Cancer Research Unit (LBCRU) help fund vital work.

Ryman Living – Nourish & Thrive



LBC was thrilled to be chosen by Ryman Healthcare as its 2024 Charity Partner.

As part of our partnership, we had the opportunity to visit every Ryman Village in the country and tell our story to residents. We decided to focus our presentations on healthy eating and provide residents with a healthy treat.

And so began the mission to find local chefs throughout New Zealand for over 40 Ryman Villages. They needed to prepare and share something special – something delicious and good for you!

We were frankly blown away at the passion we found for local produce, wholesome cooking and the belief that nutrition is vital for both body and soul.

Our “nourish and thrive” presentations were very well received, from Whangarei to Invercargill. And at the same time, residents committed to fundraising for LBC with raffles, bake sales, sweepstakes and many other creative fundraisers taking place in Ryman Villages everywhere.

Funds raised in the villages were matched by the Ryman Head Office before a final presentation and confirmation of the total funds raised at a special event at the Murray Halberg Ryman Village in late October.

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