

## **Oncology - Medical**

### **Haere mai, welcome**

The Medical Oncology Service is part of the Canterbury Regional Cancer and Blood Service. It provides medical oncology services to patients in Canterbury, West Coast and South Canterbury.

### **Why specialise in Medical Oncology?**

Medical Oncology is a sub-specialty of Internal Medicine which manages a wide range of cancers with medication and supportive care. The field of cancer medicine is changing rapidly and the expanding research knowledge is increasingly being reflected in new treatments. Medical Oncology is a demanding but rewarding specialty and requires a special focus on patients and their families as they are guided along their cancer journey. Medical Oncology is suited to trainees with an interest in the humanistic aspects of medicine, a willingness to manage acutely unwell and vulnerable patients and requires strong communication skills and an empathetic approach.

### **Career prospects**

Medical Oncology is an area of medicine that is growing rapidly and expanding beyond the main Cancer Centres into provincial centres and as such, there is a need for more specialists in this area.

### **Medical kaimahi (staff) in Oncology**

There are fifteen Medical Oncologists, one Medical Oncology nurse practitioner twelve Radiation Oncologists, one Radiation Oncology nurse practitioner, ten Radiation Oncology Registrars, Six Medical Oncology Registrars and three Relief Registrars who cover outpatient and inpatient care. There are three House Officers who cover Medical Oncology and Radiation Oncology three months at a time and one Reliever who covers Medical Oncology, Radiation Oncology and Haematology. Palliative Care is closely aligned with Oncology and is staffed by seven Palliative Care Physicians, a nurse practitioner and a team of clinical nurse specialists.

### **All about our service**

The Oncology Service, Christchurch Hospital, incorporates the disciplines of Medical Oncology and Radiation Oncology. It is a busy unit and we offer a full range of outpatient and inpatient services for the non-surgical management of cancer. There is close liaison with the Department of Haematology which provides a full range of services including high dose chemotherapy and autologous and allogeneic bone marrow transplantation.

The service incorporates a multidisciplinary team approach with close liaisons with diagnostic and support services and nursing, medical and surgical colleagues.

A hybrid of visiting and telehealth Medical Oncology outpatient consultation services are provided to Timaru Hospital, Grey Hospital, and Ashburton Hospital, with chemotherapy being delivered at all of those sites.

Registrars working in Medical Oncology will have opportunities to work in outpatients, the inpatient ward and in an acute triage role.

### **Training in Oncology**

Oncology is accredited to train six Medical Oncology Registrars and ten Radiation Oncology Registrars. Teaching is held several times a week and registrars are encouraged to attend regular tumour specific multidisciplinary meetings which provide great learning opportunities.

Advanced training in Medical Oncology (after passing the Part I exam) is via the Royal Australasian College of Physicians and is currently a three year programme. A maximum of 24 months core training can be completed at one centre. Non-core training for 6 month periods in Palliative Care, Radiation Oncology and Haematology can be cross-credited to Medical Oncology training up to 12 months total. For more information visit <https://www.racp.edu.au/trainees/advanced-training/advanced-training-programs/medical-oncology>

### **Research**

An interest in research when training in Medical Oncology is essential and the service in Christchurch is actively involved in clinical trials.

### **SMO / Kaimahi (staff) support**

The Medical Oncologists pride themselves on their approachability and welcome opportunities to use all clinical situations as teaching opportunities. There is 24-hour SMO on-call availability.

### **Advantages to training in Medical Oncology, Health New Zealand Canterbury Waitaha**

With fifteen Medical Oncologists employed with a vast range of experience, sub-specialty interests and other skills, the Christchurch Medical Oncology service is regarded nationally as one of the best staffed and most functional units in New Zealand.

### **Enquiries**

#### **Dr Alice Loft**

*Director of Training, Medical Oncology*

Email: [alice.loft@cdhb.health.nz](mailto:alice.loft@cdhb.health.nz)