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## MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 3 September, 2010

### New cancer drug to be funded

PHARMAC's announcement today that it will fund a drug for people with advanced lung cancer and widen access to currently available drugs for lymphoma and colorectal cancer, is good news for many cancer patients.

"An ongoing concern for people with cancer is the difficulty they sometimes face in accessing some of the newer drugs, so we are delighted to see one approved for funding," said Chief Executive of the Cancer Society, Dalton Kelly. "Wider access to lymphoma and colorectal cancer drugs is also good news."

"The Cancer Society is a great advocate for new cancer treatments being available and funded in New Zealand. However, we recognise that many of them are high cost. We see the wider access to lung and colorectal medications as particularly important as these are among the leading causes of death from cancer."

Two of the medications announced by PHARMAC are taken orally, instead of the traditional chemotherapy treatment where people must go to hospital. "Traditional treatment is very high cost, so access to the oral medicines will potentially reduce the demands on hospital bed space and the hospital staff. There are gains all round."

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