



Dear Colleague

## what's new at braemar?

Breast cancer surgeon Ian Campbell delights in giving his patients the good news stories



**One is that most will have a positive outcome.**

**"Most of my patients can be very confident about their long-term outcomes. The death rate from breast cancer has halved in New Zealand in the past 30 years. In the future, we will have more effective treatments, less toxic treatments and better targeted therapy."**

Another good news story is that the work of breast cancer surgeons will diminish over time. Breast cancer rates have levelled off in the developed world and are expected to decline. While New Zealand rates are still rising, they are also expected to plateau and then fall.

"Environmental factors led to the increase of breast cancer but with greater education

and improved detection and treatment, we can expect the rates will reduce."

Prof Campbell, who is a general surgeon at Braemar Hospital, has seen extraordinary breakthroughs in breast surgery since he began specialising in the field in 1988. "Thirty-plus years ago, radical mastectomies were mutilating operations. Today they are far less radical and we can offer breast conserving operations, which retain the breast's form and shape."

"Early patients could expect to spend weeks in hospital. Now they rarely spend more than two or three days."

He says the ultimate aim would be for patients to take a tablet that would cure the cancer or stop it in its tracks. "That may be the result in the future. But we are now making incremental gains and through that are improving outcomes all the time."

Prof Campbell, who is Associate Professor in Surgery at Auckland University's School of Medicine and recognised internationally for his clinical research, is leading projects that will produce further breakthroughs.

One is a trial to find better ways to check if cancer has spread to the lymph nodes (sentinel node biopsy). When breast cancer spreads it can travel to other parts of the body through the blood and lymph systems. In standard breast cancer

treatment for women with breast cancer larger than 3cm or with multiple cancers, the surgical team will perform an axillary clearance to remove and examine the lymph nodes in the armpit. Yet two out of three women may not have cancer in their lymph nodes. In a sentinel node biopsy, a smaller number of lymph nodes (most likely to contain cancer cells) are identified and removed. This minimises the surgery and the risk of side effects such as lymphedema (arm swelling) and sensory nerve damage.

He is also involved in other studies to prevent cancer and in endocrine (hormonal) therapy.

Prof Campbell says Braemar Hospital offers "state of the art" facilities for his work and a "marvellous team of supportive people and stable staff." He said he chose to return to work in the Waikato after working in Britain and Australia, because – in the early 1990s – it was one of two regions with a pilot breast cancer screening programme.

Prof Campbell also does a range of general surgical procedures at Braemar such as hernia repairs, gall bladder removals and endoscopy. He also does breast reductions. He says he particularly enjoys that work because it makes such a difference to women. "For many women large breasts are a handicap socially and physically. This operation literally changes their lives".

# braemar hospital sings the blues

Braemar Hospital turned blue in September as part of a nationwide campaign to raise awareness of prostate cancer



From September 13-17, the Hamilton private hospital was decorated with blue flowers and ribbons; staff wore blue bows and t-shirts and painted their faces blue to raise awareness of the disease which kills 600 New Zealand men annually.

Child patients at the hospital were given blue blow-up toys and blues music played at both Braemar hospitals during the week.

Braemar Hospital chairman Dr Rob Cameron said like most New Zealanders, "we are concerned about the incidents of prostate cancer and want to do whatever we can to raise awareness of the disease. With prostate cancer it's often too late when the symptoms become evident – that's why it's vital to take action and talk to your doctor about the disease now. We hope that by playing our part in this campaign, more men will be proactive in protecting their health."

Prostate cancer affects one in 10 New Zealand men. It is estimated at least half the deaths from prostate cancer

could have been prevented if cancer had been diagnosed and treated early enough.

Braemar urologist Pat Bary welcomed the awareness campaign. He says there is a great deal of worrying been done by men who need not be concerned. "There are many misconceptions about prostate disease in general and prostate cancer in particular. Informed comment will go a long way towards correcting the misinformation."

Blue September was launched three years ago to raise awareness of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of New Zealand, which is made up of cancer survivors and their families.



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## why choose a braemar hospital?

### “Choice and Flexibility”

An ageing population, increasing demands and expectations, and the cost of new technologies provide challenges for both the private and public health sectors.

Medical and technological advancements have increased our ability to treat disease and injury. This has led to a greater expectation as to what should be achieved by the health sector. In the public sector the increase in complex surgery has come at the expense of lower cost surgery such as hernias and varicose veins, and the rationing system of waiting lists has led to these, and more complex procedures, being completed in the private sector.

Private healthcare offers choice and flexibility. It also offers access to some of the best Specialists in a timely manner without the restrictions of a waiting list.

At Braemar patients can be assured of a quality service at competitive rates and the very latest of modern medical technology.

Visit our website for more details: [www.braemarhospital.co.nz](http://www.braemarhospital.co.nz)

Dr Rob Cameron  
Chairman

“Quality care costs less at Braemar hospitals”

[www.braemarhospital.co.nz](http://www.braemarhospital.co.nz)



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