



S O U T H E R N

A L L I A N C E



# Regional Southern Blood & Cancer Service

9<sup>th</sup> November 2007

## In This Newsletter

- 1 Background to the Regional Service
- 2 A Start-up Framework
- 3 Target Operational Date
- 4 Information for Referrers
- 5 Planned Service Approach
- 6 Recent Service Improvements

---

*The prime focus based on this regional objective is:*  
**“A regional Oncology and Haematology outpatient service framework that supports and enables equitable access to service components; services to be provided as close as practicable to patients’ place of residence; transparency of process; optimal utilisation of available resource; and sustainability of service provision for the population of Otago and Southland.”**

---

## Background to the Regional Service

Over the last couple of years the Otago and Southland District Health Boards have been collaborating through the Regional Executive Management Team of Southern Alliance, with the intent of establishing innovative models of care which would provide for improved service delivery to the populations of both DHBs. These exploratory discussions matured earlier this year into a proposal to develop a regional clinical service to be known as the Southern Blood & Cancer Service (SB&CS).

The main objectives for the regionalised service are:

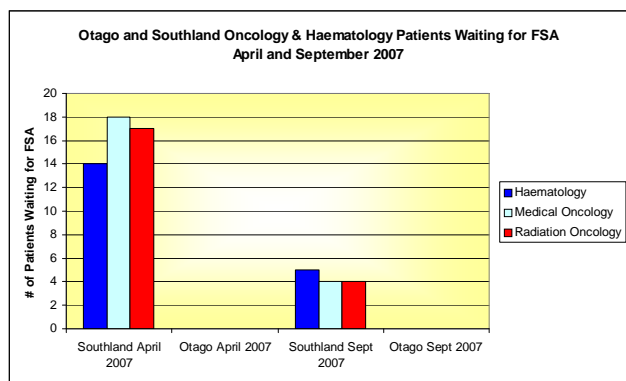
- **Equity** – Demonstrable equity of access to assessment and treatment services; standard of care; and outcomes for patients irrespective of domicile within the region.
- **Transparency** – Processes ensure clarity of purpose and fairness in the management of waiting lists, and in communication to patients and their referrers.
- **Consistency** – Processes of care, communication, and management developed and maintained to required standards by all regional providers of Oncology and Haematology services.
- **Standardisation** – Co-ordinated control of systems and processes to ensure consistency and transparency.
- **Integration** – Monitoring and planning activities reflect the entire region and promote continuity of care and seamless transition for service users.
- **Innovation** – Opportunities to advance best practice and provide added value from available resource are actively sought and developed.

## A Start-up Framework

Initially the SB&CS initiative is focusing on the alignment of services provided at Dunedin and Southland Hospitals. Gary Reed has been appointed Interim Regional Service Manager, and Dr. Blair McLaren has been appointed Clinical Leader for SB&CS.

Additionally, the regional administration team is undergoing review and reconfiguration.

A project Steering Group is addressing issues in support of the identified objectives of the Southern Blood & Cancer Service, and these include adoption of agreed primary and secondary triage criteria, a single regional waiting list, a single regional booking system, progress towards a defined Duty of Care, and interim measures to improve access for patients from Southland to Oncology and Haematology assessment and treatment services.



*Otago and Southland Oncology & Haematology FSA Waiting Lists comparison April and September 2007. The numbers of patients waiting for FSA reduced by between 64% and 78% by sub-specialty over this period.*

#### Otago DHB

Waiting Time	July 07	August 07	September 07
< 4 weeks	11 (55%)	19 (53%)	21 (75%)
4-8 weeks	9 (45%)	15 (42%)	7 (25%)
8-12 weeks	0	2 (5%)	0
> 12 weeks	0	0	0

#### Southland DHB

Waiting Time	July 07	August 07	September 07
< 4 weeks	5 (55%)	2 (29%)	13 (87%)
4-8 weeks	4 (45%)	5 (71%)	1 (6.5%)
8-12 weeks	0	0	1 (6.5%)
> 12 weeks	0	0	0

*Waiting times from FSA to Treatment in the Otago Cancer Centre for category C patients only, measured by number of patients (and % of patients) who commence treatment within recommended timeframes.*

## Target Operational Date

Southern Blood & Cancer Service is intended to be operational from **Monday 3rd December 2007**.

## Information for Referrers

From Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December all referrals to regional Oncology or Haematology should be directed to the Southern Blood & Cancer Service via Dunedin Hospital. Referrers will be advised of contact options (dedicated 0800 numbers direct to referrals co-ordinator, and specialty based booking co-ordinators) prior to the intended start up date of December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2007.

## Planned Service Approach

Regional capability will be facilitated by centralising referral receipt, triage, waiting list management and outpatient scheduling functions within the Dunedin Cancer Centre. It is intended that the number of visiting Oncologist and Haematologist clinic days at Southland Hospital will increase by the end of February 2008, and this will be greatly assisted by recent successful recruitment to consultant posts in Haematology and Medical Oncology.

To provide a single booking system and waiting list for SB&CS the Ora\*Care patient management system, currently in use within Otago, will be implemented in Southland Oncology. The data migration exercise is scheduled for the weekend of December 1st.

To maintain visibility of Oncology patients Southland DHB staff will be given access to Otago's 'HealthViews' to check whether each patient has any Oncology activity scheduled.

In addition Intranet based reports are being developed specifically for Southland DHB Telephonists, ED & Diagnostic Imaging to query whether a patient is an Oncology patient.

Whilst planning to date has focused upon the alignment of service delivery at Invercargill and Dunedin it is intended that the rural providers will be engaged in consideration of the potential to benefit their populations through SB&CS in 2008.

## Recent Service Improvements

Significant improvement has been made in the timeliness of access to First Specialist Assessment (FSA) for Southland domiciled patients over the last six months. This improvement has been achieved by facilitating access to FSA for over 100 Southland patients at regional clinics.

As a result of reduced pressure within clinics arising from unmet demand for FSA, improvement has been made also in respect of Follow Up provision.

Radiation Treatment delivery times have improved over this period, as refinement of processes at the Dunedin Cancer Centre have been made to redress the balance of equity of access across the region.

The contribution of all members of Oncology and Haematology staff, Otago and Southland, to these improvements is acknowledged, and bodes well for the collaborative approach to regional service delivery which lies ahead.