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Te Aho o Te Kahu, the Cancer Control Agency, has today released the first ever comprehensive report of the cancer system in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

He Pūrongo Mate Pukupuku o Aotearoa 2020, The State of Cancer in New Zealand in 2020, provides a detailed snapshot and narrative on the current state of our country's cancer care system.

"We have many world class aspects of cancer control in New Zealand, and the cancer workforce is full of highly committed and talented people, but if we are to improve our cancer survival rates compared to similar countries, focused action is needed," Chief Executive of Te Aho Te Kahu Diana Sarfati says.

"There needs to be continued work in addressing inequities, strengthening prevention, expanding screening and improving diagnosis and treatment for cancer."

A key focus of *He Pūrongo Mate Pukupuku o Aotearoa 2020* is how Māori are disproportionately impacted by cancer.

"Te Aho o Te Kahu is working hard to ensure inequalities in care and diagnostics are identified and addressed.

"We will continue to work closely with Māori leaders and communities to develop services which better meet the needs of Māori patients," Sarfati says.

A priority for Te Aho o Te Kahu is ensuring all New Zealanders get consistent and high-quality care.

"One of the ways we are doing that is to closely monitor the diagnosis and treatment of cancer via the Quality Performance Indicator Programme, and to work with DHBs to proactively address any problems or gaps identified."

On February 4, World Cancer Day, the Agency will be launching New Zealand's first national chemotherapy regimen library.

"Cancer drugs are extremely important to those impacted by the disease," Sarfati says.

"This chemotherapy library will help us understand what medicines are used currently, how this might vary across the country, help us plan what we need to do to improve cancer outcomes and reduce inequities in relationship to chemotherapy delivery."

The report also highlights the importance of cancer prevention and screening.

"Continued investment in prevention strategies – such as smoking cessation and encouraging uptake of the HPV vaccination – will help to improve cancer outcomes in New Zealand", Sarfati says.

"Making sure New Zealand's screening programmes are as accessible as possible is really important. We need to continue to roll out the national bowel screening programme and look at ways to continually improve our other existing screening programmes."

Along with the Ministry of Health and the Health Research Council, Te Aho o Te Kahu is also funding research to investigate the appropriateness and feasibility of lung cancer screening in New Zealand.

As the global community marks World Cancer Day this week, Te Aho o Te Kahu remains committed to working with the wider health sector to ensure New Zealanders have a high-quality cancer system.

"We are aiming to reproduce monitoring reports in the future which will, like *He Pūrongo Mate Pukupuku o Aotearoa*, encourage and challenge our health sector to provide equitable, effective care for all who are impacted by cancer," Sarfati says.

"New Zealand has a strong health system and it is my hope reports like *He Pūrongo Mate Pukupuku o Aotearoa 2020* will only strengthen it."