



## Ten Facts About Brain Tumours

- 1** Brain tumours attack the **very essence of who we are** – our thoughts, our emotions, our behaviour, our personality.
- 2** There are over **130 types of primary brain tumour** (tumours which start in the brain). The causes of most brain tumours are unknown so there is no effective prevention and screening is impractical.
- 3** Brain tumours affect people of any age, gender or ethnicity. They are the **biggest cancer killer** of people under the age of 40.
- 4** Brain cancer causes the **most deaths** of any childhood cancer, being responsible for 42% of all cancer deaths in children aged 14 and under.
- 5** In 2021, 413 New Zealanders were diagnosed with a **primary malignant brain tumour** while many more were diagnosed with primary, non-malignant brain tumours and secondary (metastatic) brain tumours.
- 6** Brain cancer is responsible for around 260 deaths per year, making it the **10<sup>th</sup> most fatal cancer** in New Zealand.
- 7** **Brain cancer survival rates** are among the lowest of all cancers and have barely changed in the last 30 years. The most recent drug used to treat brain cancer in New Zealand was approved 17 years ago.
- 8** The most common type of primary brain cancer in adults is **glioblastoma**. It has a median survival of just 15 months and a 5-year survival rate of just 6%.
- 9** Brain cancer has the simultaneous impact of four diseases rolled into one. First, it is an **aggressive cancer** with a generally poor prognosis. Second, it is a degenerative, **neurological condition** affecting cognition, behaviour, mood and personality changes. Third, it can cause **physical disability**, including balance, mobility, vision and hearing issues. Fourth, it can cause significant **mental health** issues such as depression, stress and anxiety.
- 10** The needs of brain tumour patients differ from those of other cancer patients. **Caregiver burden** is among the highest of all cancers and includes: high levels of stress, anxiety and depression; poor physical and emotional health; career sacrifices; financial loss; workplace discrimination and social isolation.