



CANCER DOESN'T STOP
NEITHER DO WE



20ANNUAL
REPORT20

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



At ESCA CancerSupport (ESCA CS), we strive to ensure that no one faces cancer alone. During 2020, the coronavirus pandemic forced us to significantly reduce our interaction with others, making this ambition more important than ever.

Coping with both the effects of cancer and the increased level of risk associated with Covid-19 has been especially challenging for our community. Unable to meet face to face, we needed to ensure that we could continue to respond to their needs.

Our team overcame this challenge, employing a range of digital and electronic tools and adapting how we provided our services. The support didn't stop!

ESCA CS adopted a three-year strategy at our 2020 Annual General Meeting, focusing our priorities to better reflect the changing and growing needs of our community. Since then, we have worked to establish a men's cancer support group, to expand our services in Lausanne, to develop the depth of our counselling support and, importantly, to reinforce ESCA CS's digital presence. While it was progress on this last aim that proved critical for continued service throughout the year, I am happy to report advancement on all of these initiatives.

Our donors increased their financial support to ESCA CS in 2020. They appreciated the heightened need for our activities and recognized the serious impact that the cancellation of large events, such as our annual Paddle for CancerSupport fundraiser, would have on the association's ability to generate income.

Thanks to their generosity and the strong participation in the virtual challenge, Steps for CancerSupport, our financial resources were sufficient, enabling us to continue providing services throughout the year.

After serving as a member of the board for the maximum six-year term, I will be stepping down. But I will leave this role knowing that the organisation is in good hands and will continue to thrive well into the future.

I would like to thank all who have contributed to ESCA CS's work, ensuring the continuation of funding and services under the most difficult of circumstances. I am grateful for the support of our team of professionals, volunteers and donors. As we race toward the future please always remember that "cancer doesn't stop and neither do we".

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink that reads "Gary N. Buell". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gary Buell

ESCA CS is a not-for-profit association made up of professionals and trained volunteers who understand the impact of a cancer diagnosis. Since 2000, ESCA CS has been the only association of its kind to respond to the needs of the international community in the Lake Geneva region. We provide emotional support, practical help and physical well-being activities, free of charge and in English, to cancer patients, their caregivers, and their families.

Our services are provided in English, but we welcome any and all nationalities. Our CancerSupport Centre, with trained volunteers and an information library, welcomes visitors and provides a friendly and confidential space where they can find support.

Thanks to the generosity and fundraising efforts of the community, the highly appreciated support of our major donors, and our fundraising events, we continue to expand our CancerSupport network and offer help that is year-round, free of charge, and accessible to everyone.

OUR VISION

No one faces cancer alone.

OUR MISSION

*To provide
emotional support,
practical help,
well-being activities
and a welcoming community
in English
to anyone affected by cancer.*



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DIRECTORS' REPORT



Nicola



Patsy

No one could have foreseen a year like 2020. The coronavirus pandemic posed unprecedented challenges for our dedicated team of professionals and volunteers, our donors, supporters and our fundraisers. But we all triumphed, showing remarkable resilience, adaptability and perseverance in order to ensure that no one would face cancer alone.

Who knew that after the move to our new premises in the beautiful Château du Grand-Saconnex on 4 February, we would have only one month before the pandemic forced us to close our doors? While this was disappointing, our first priority was the safety of our community.

New ways of thinking and working were required, and we felt inspired and uplifted seeing how well the ESCA CS team responded. The word “virtual” took on new meaning as we quickly became adept at using new digital platforms.



There were a few changes within our Support Services team. One of our champions, Raynelle Arcaini, stepped down from her role as Counselling and Support Services Manager. We are grateful for all that she gave over the years and take heart knowing that she will remain active as a counsellor. Fortunately, there was a silver lining with the addition of Christian Holyoak as the new Manager. Christian brings with him a wealth of valuable experience. Fitting seamlessly into our team, he has already made a huge impact.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Gary Buell who is ending his term as President of the Board in April 2021. He helped shape ESCA CS's strategic vision in order to ensure that we are ready and able to meet the needs of people affected by cancer during the years to come.



We have valued his leadership, perceptiveness and dedication and are pleased that Gary will continue with us as a peer supporter.

We would also like to thank our volunteers who contributed their expertise, creativity and spirit. Their commitment was exceptional. Working harder than ever, they racked up an impressive 6,000 hours of service.

We are incredibly proud of all that our staff and volunteers achieved throughout 2020 and look forward to working together in 2021.

SUPPORT SERVICES : COUNSELLING



Raynelle



Antonia



Patricia



Maria

Faced with the constraints imposed by Covid-19, our support team quickly shifted gears. Once it was clear that meeting in person was no longer an option, we moved to virtual platforms in order to continue helping people living with cancer in the region. As a result, demand for counselling services increased, new support services were added, and the team expanded. The adaptability and fortitude of the people we serve in making this transition with us to online services was impressive.

Employing digital platforms enabled us to maintain a personal connection with individuals and their family members. The team — Raynelle, Patricia, Antonia, Christina, Carey, Maria, Célie and Christian — provided 497 direct individual counselling sessions to 79 clients, 52 of whom were new to ESCA CS. This compares to 465 individual counselling sessions to 66 clients in 2019.

In addition to individual counselling, 42 hours of group counselling was provided to 30 clients. Throughout the year, the team volunteered a significant amount of their time, offering 540 hours of pro bono client support.

We saw some changes within our team this year. Raynelle moved aside from the Counselling and Support Services Manager role and Christian (psychologist) took up the mantle. Fortunately, we all continue to benefit from Raynelle's therapeutic skills, care and wisdom as she continues with us as a counsellor. Christian's expertise both as a psychologist and a manager ensures that our clients continue to receive the same high-quality care.



Christian



Christina



Carey

We welcomed Maria (clinical psychologist) and Célie (psychologist) to ESCA CS. Both bring unique qualities, skillsets and experience. Regrettably, after a short stint on the team, Célie had to pull back from her counselling duties but remains a volunteer.

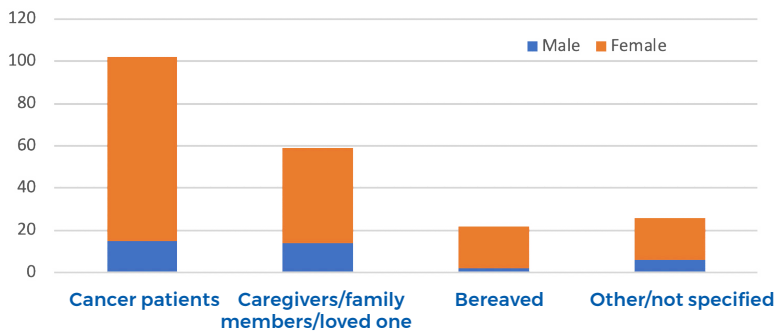
As conscientious professionals, the team continued to enhance their skills and knowledge in psychosocial oncology by attending various trainings, workshops and regular supervision sessions.

The counselling services offered by ESCA CS, including the course on Mindfulness (MBCT-ca), were invaluable for me throughout my breast cancer journey. I got useful advice on how to set boundaries during chemo, and as the Covid-19 pandemic hit, continued the Mindfulness course online. After my surgery and through my radiation I used the techniques to cope and thrive. The ESCA CS team is gracious and helpful and provided me with a warm, genuinely comfortable environment in which to express my fears, hopes, challenges and successes. I cannot thank the team enough.

- ESCA CS client
and member since 2019

SUPPORT SERVICES : STATISTICS

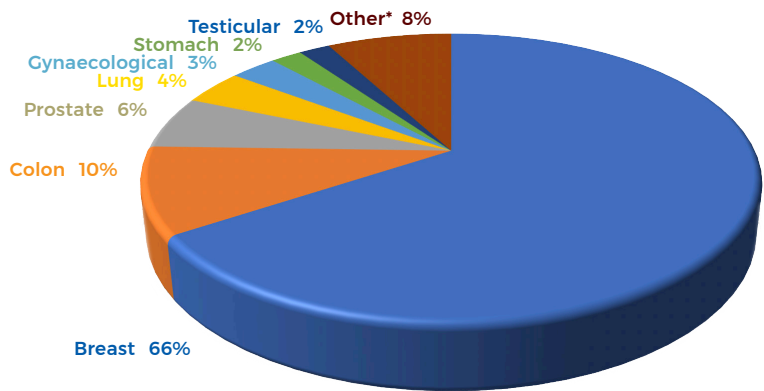
2020 support inquiries



We received 209 calls and emails requesting support in 2020. This compares to 169 calls and emails in 2019, a 24% increase.

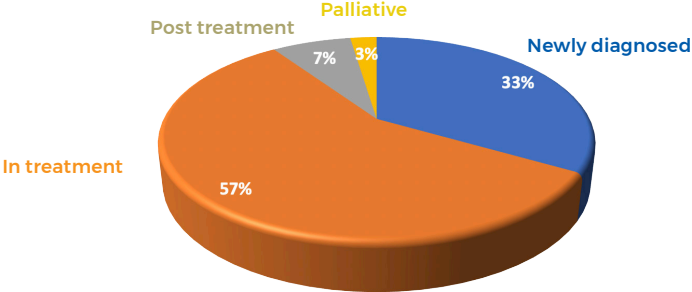
Seventy-three requests came via support@cancersupport.ch, 21 calls were made to the support line. A further 6 requests were received in person at our centre, which were then referred to the Support Services Coordinator. An additional 109 support inquiries came through our volunteer Peer Supporters, the website and social media platforms, as well as directly to the Support Services Coordinator.

Types of cancer affecting cancer patients making support inquiries

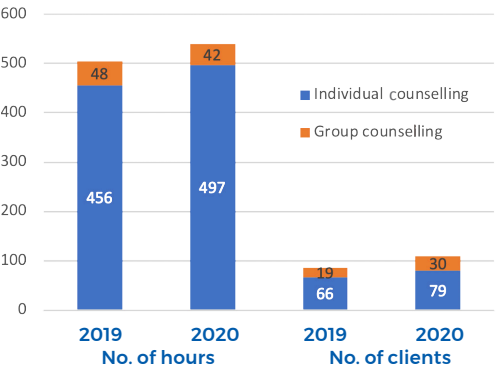


*Other includes: blood, bone, brain, liver, nasal, pancreatic, sarcoma and skin cancers

■ Support inquiries of cancer patients by treatment phase

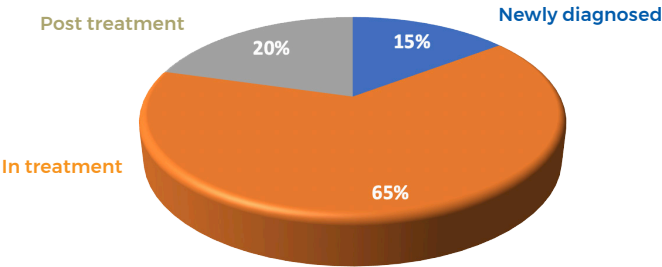


■ Counselling overview



Of the 79 clients receiving counselling, 42 were cancer patients and 37 were family members or caregivers including 5 children (all family members of a cancer patient). Of the 42 cancer patients we helped, the most frequent diagnosis was of breast cancer, followed by prostate and colon cancers. The majority of people contacted us while receiving medical treatment or when they were newly diagnosed.

■ Counselling of cancer patients by treatment phase



SUPPORT SERVICES : ACTIVITIES

At ESCA CS, we always strive to offer a variety of services that meet the practical and emotional needs of our community. This year, more than ever, we sought to be easily accessible to our members and found new and creative ways to continue to ensure this.

Our yoga instructor led the way. Gentle Yoga and Yoga for Recovery and Healing were online within one week of the centre closing. Encouraged by this success, the weekly Pilates and Bosom Pals (BP) breast cancer gym classes also swiftly went virtual, followed by the monthly BP Coffee Mornings and the Lausanne Support Group meetings.

Our members gave us overwhelmingly positive feedback which spurred us on to adapt nearly all of our support services to an online format. We moved the 8-week MBCT-ca course online and pioneered the first Look Good Feel Better workshop via Zoom.

In June, we created a new Geneva Support Group, open to anyone who has a cancer diagnosis. This group thrived even though none of the participants were able to meet in person.

In addition, we hosted a virtual Coffee & Creativity art therapy workshop in June.



A second Walk'nTalk group, based in Lausanne, was trialled in June. The Geneva and Lausanne Walk'nTalk groups each organised several socially-distanced, masked walks, in compliance with federal guidelines.

Our members stressed the importance of staying connected with their ESCA CS family. The increased attendance across all the virtual support services underscored this. So much so that we decided to offer many of the emotional support group sessions and exercise classes throughout July and August when we normally would have taken a break.

The success of our online support services is thanks in large part to the determination and dedication of

our instructors, peer supporters, volunteers and facilitators. Their collective endeavours are truly heart-warming, and ensured we could continue helping at a time when it was most needed.

I've been a volunteer since 2015 and it's wonderful to work with such a kind, caring and dedicated team. A nurse by profession, I find it very rewarding to be able to use my skills and give something back at the same time.

Jane Broere

BP Coffee Morning Coordinator

SUPPORTLINE

+41 (0) 22 723 22 31

SUPPORT EMAIL

support@cancersupport.ch

Under normal circumstances, the ESCA CS Drop-In welcomes anyone whose life has been touched by cancer. Some 25 dedicated volunteers staff the Centre on rotation together with at least one peer supporter present. They offer our visitors a warm welcome and provide information in a secure environment on support services, activities and other local resources. The Centre is designed to afford visitors the opportunity to chat informally and confidentially and host support group courses, volunteer-training sessions and meetings.

: THE LIBRARY

The library team installed our large collection of cancer-related publications in the new Centre just prior to the pandemic. Despite not being able to welcome visitors, the team continued adding new, up-to-date publications throughout the year to help people understand their diagnoses better. They were even able to provide some people with publications by special request while still respecting the Covid-19 safety requirements.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT : ANNABEL PULCRANO



Annabel

My first contact with ESCA CS was as a client, after my own difficult and scary diagnosis. After much support and help, and joining in activities and workshops, I was very happy to become an active volunteer.

It has now been a few years, and I have enjoyed paying it forward by offering peer support to other cancer patients. A resident of Vaud, I have been delighted to help set up a Lausanne-based support group.

Nature and the outdoors being a passion of mine, I am looking forward to re-starting the Walk'nTalk group, in order to share the beautiful area around Lausanne, whilst chatting, and hoping to brighten someone's day.

– Annabel Pulcrano

RAISING AWARENESS : EVENTS

In line with our commitment to ensure that no one faces cancer alone, we undertook several activities designed to build awareness of our services in the Lake Geneva region. But since in-person events were limited, we also concentrated on promoting our services and building our online community through digital platforms.

FEBRUARY



For World Cancer Day, we raised awareness of our services at an event hosted at the International Labor Organization (ILO).

SEPTEMBER



Students at Ecolint LGB held an online community service fair. Our multi-talented volunteer Christina produced a video to present ESCA CS to IB students to inspire them to organise their own awareness or fundraising events on behalf of ESCA CS. Take a look at the video here:

<https://youtu.be/l9Rm-DSB96o>

OCTOBER

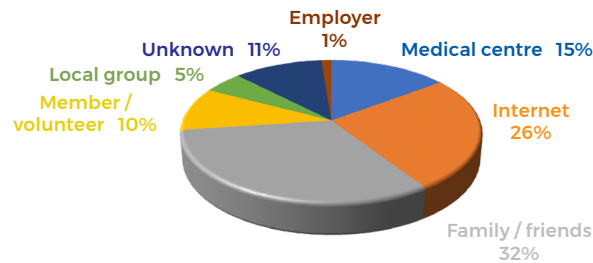


For Breast Cancer Awareness Month, ESCA CS collaborated with the Clinique des Grangettes as part of their 'Octobre Rose' open days.



Walk'nTalk members and volunteers dedicated a walk to raise awareness of breast cancer.

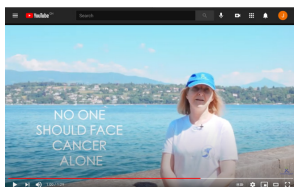
■ How new clients heard about ESCA CS



www.cancersupport.ch

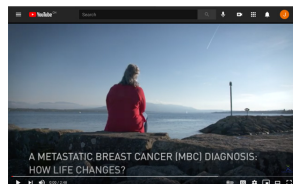


: BUILDING OUR DIGITAL COMMUNITY



In 2020 we released a series of videos featuring clients and volunteers talking about their ESCA CS experiences. Find all our testimonials and videos on our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UC5kTXqPrDe6JTiePQFToq_A

To develop our social media presence we partnered with Eli Lilly to release a series of short, multilingual videos about an ESCA CS client's experience of metastatic breast cancer on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.



: COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

ESCA CS appreciates the relationships we have built with our many partners over the years. We look forward to working closely with them in person again as soon as we are permitted to do so.

- Hirslanden Clinique des Grangettes
- Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève (HUG)
- Centre hospitalier universitaire vaudois (CHUV)
- Fondation genevoise pour le dépistage du cancer
- Ligue genevoise contre le cancer
- Ligue vaudoise contre le cancer
- Réseau cancer du sein
- Association de soutien aux personnes touchées par le cancer de la prostate (PROSCA)
- Eli Lilly (Suisse) SA
- American International Women's Club of Geneva
- CERN
- Palliative Care Suisse
- Réseau de sénologie et onco-gynécologie genevois (SONGe)
- Resiliam
- Soins en Oncologie Suisse
- Vivre comme Avant
- World Council of Churches



With the support of Hirslanden Clinique des Grangettes, work on *Oncolexic* was completed this year and scheduled for release in 2021. The phrase book will be a valuable tool for improving communication between English-speaking cancer patients and their families and francophone health-care providers.

Board member Dr. Conny Vrieling facilitated the contact between Hirslanden Clinique des Grangettes, and ESCA CS volunteer Ashley Machen led the work.

ESCA CANCERSUPPORT FUNDRAISERS

Sadly we had to cancel our annual Paddle for CancerSupport event. It was clear that it would be impossible to host this popular fundraiser following the Swiss authorities' announcement in April that events for 1,000 people or more were prohibited.

With the cancellation of Paddle for CancerSupport, we put our heads together to see if we could still engage our participants in a fun, safe, and innovative activity. We created a fitness and fundraising challenge where teams or individuals could help us collectively achieve the 55 million steps it would take to walk around the world. People were also invited to support the challenge with a donation.

The effort was a resounding success and exceeded expectations. Our participants, some as far away as New Zealand, outdid themselves and clocked a total of 76,428,554 steps, raising CHF 78,524. They did it in 20 days which was a perfect way to also mark our 20th anniversary.



IN NUMBERS

76M steps
370 participants
80 Individuals
29 Teams
Over 500
volunteer hours
CHF 78,524 raised

We would like to thank all the Steps participants for their enthusiasm in raising money on our behalf and the many generous donors who sponsored our walkers, both individuals and the private sector.

Following the success of the event and the great feedback we received, we knew it was a winner and that we simply had to turn it into an annual event.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT : TARA MILLER



Tara

I joined ESCA CS in March 2020 as a volunteer for the Marketing and Communications team. Although the Centre had to close, we still had plenty to do. My role took many forms such as graphic designer, writer, and social media manager. I loved working on a variety of projects. Over the summer, I also became a Marketing and Communications Co-Manager with Marina Teahon. Together, we welcomed many new members to the team who have a range of skills and expertise.

My favourite project so far has been the Steps for CancerSupport virtual fundraising event. Our inaugural year was a huge success and I look forward to working on this event in 2021.

– Tara Miller

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISERS

Throughout the year our community mobilised to create their own initiatives, generating substantial funds for ESCA CS. We are grateful for their creative ideas, fun spirit and endurance.



Coach T and TJ Bullock from Collège du Léman mobilised basketball enthusiasts and organised a shooting competition which raised CHF 4,400.



The cancellation of the Geneva Marathon in May didn't hold back Rob Breare. He persevered, training for a half marathon which he completed on his own in November. With the support of his brothers in the UK, he raised CHF 4,715.



In July, volunteer Sue Hudson, was inspired by the Macmillan campaign "Brave the Shave" and raised CHF 1,440. This was on top of the CHF 1,965 she raised on ESCA CS's behalf by selling her crochet work and baked goods.

Other fundraisers included:

- Sue Montgomery's Marmite run
- Mélinda Schumacher's instagram fundraiser
- British School of Geneva bake sale
- Julie Tomkins-Wagner music CD

... and many more



Having participated in the Coupe de Noël in past years, our volunteer Chris Swan created her own event in December and inspired others to brave the cold waters and set up a further 3 events. Altogether, they raised CHF 7,405.

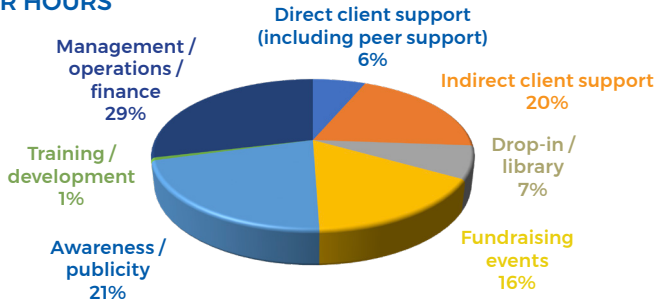


During her 5th round of chemo, Jodie Cole hosted a "Bubbles and Shave Day" encouraging her friends to colour their hair or shave it off. They raised CHF 2,805.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During this challenging year, our volunteers worked tirelessly behind the scenes on behalf of those affected by cancer. These dedicated individuals gave over 6,000 hours of their time in 2020, a rise of over 1,000 from the previous year. With approximately 90 volunteers on our team, this is an incredible achievement and testament to the generosity of all those who help us.

VOLUNTEER HOURS



: PRINCIPAL DONORS

- Capital Group COVID-19 Response Fund
- Church of Scotland
- Fondation pour la recherche et traitements médicales
- EMBA December 2020 Class of the International Institute for Business Management (IMB) – Lausanne
- INEOS Community Fund
- Marguerite Foundation
- Oak Foundation
- Vitol Foundation

ESCA STEPS CORPORATE TEAMS for CancerSupport AND SPONSORS

- Caterpillar
- Firmenich Charitable Foundation
- Harsch
- Hirslanden Clinique des Grangettes
- Hôpital de la Tour
- Intuitive
- LumX Asset Management

: DONATIONS IN MEMORIAM

We would like to express our gratitude to generous family members and friends who made donations to ESCA CS in memory of someone special this year. Our Support Team often works with cancer patients and their families during the final days of a loved one's life and these donations pay tribute to this precious support.

As one of ESCA CS's volunteers, it is an honour and pleasure to be a part of this dream team. It is indeed a wonderful association, with great people, that gives great support for those in need.

Anna Stefanizien
Donations Volunteer

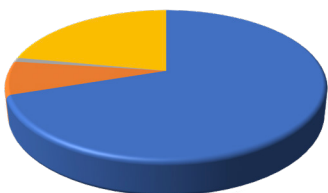
FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

The pandemic brought a lot of uncertainty, including for ESCA CS's financial health. In an effort to mitigate the impact of this, we made cost savings whilst maintaining client services to the extent that the health regulations would allow.

Thanks to the increased generosity of all our donors, we closed 2020 with a 5% surplus. The Board, however, remains cautious about the association's financial outlook and continues to try to diversify our sources of income whilst keeping a close eye on expenditure.

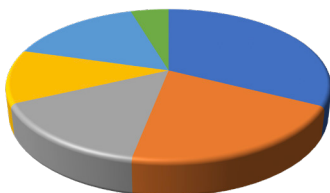
A full version of the audited financial statement is available on our website.

■ INCOME



Grants / corporate donations 70%
Donations 7%
Membership fees 1%
Fundraising 22%

■ EXPENDITURE



Courses / workshops / groups 26%
Counselling 21%
Awareness 6%
Fundraising 11%
Administration 16%
Surplus 5%

2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Gary Buell
Vice President	Annabel Pulcrano
Secretary	Ramona Azarnia
Treasurer	Daniel Avigdor / Dave Mason
Members	James Bissell
	Korin Avigdor
	Robert Leigh
	Geoffrey Matthews
	Thea McFarlane
	Dr. Conny Vrieling

2020 MANAGEMENT TEAM

Co-Director / Volunteer Coordinator	Nicola Bowers
Co-Director	Patricia Allen
Counselling and Support Services Manager	Raynelle Arcaini Christian Holyoak
Support Services Coordinator / Counsellor	Antonia Calame
Office Manager / Community Awareness / Data Protection	Andrea Hayes
Marketing and Communications Manager	Alicia Conill Biebernack Marina Teahon Tara Miller
Events Manager	Candice Richardet-Briand
Drop-In Coordinator	Margaret Stourton

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT !

ESCA CancerSupport is recognised as a charity by Swiss law and depends solely upon membership, donations and fundraising to be able to offer cancer patients and their care givers our services and programmes AT NO CHARGE.

Having been first a caregiver,
then twice a recovered cancer patient,
I have first-hand experience of what ESCA CS offers.
The gratitude I felt made me want
to pass some of the support
I had received to cancer patients
who knocked at the door of this wonderful association.
I am proud to be one of the many professionally trained
ESCA CS volunteers whom I consider to be angels
who help, in one way or another,
cancer patients and their loved ones fly
while their own wings are too weak to do so.

Kate Marx

Peer Supporter