



## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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# ABOUT ESCA CANCERSUPPORT

ESCA CancerSupport is a non-profit association made up of professionals and trained volunteers who understand the impact of a cancer diagnosis. Since 2000, ESCA CancerSupport has been the only association of its kind to respond to the needs of the international community in the Lake Geneva region and has gradually expanded the reach of its services to all of Switzerland. 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 and support all nationalities.

Our CancerSupport Centre, with its professional staff and trained volunteers, is a place to welcome visitors and provide a friendly and confidential space where those affected by cancer can find support. Our online services ensure that support can also reach all corners of the country.

Thanks to the generosity and fundraising efforts of the community and the highly appreciated support of our donors, 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.



# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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In early March, it was a delight to see our Centre open again and have in-person activities breathe life into our beautiful space. This was one of the many joyful highlights of 2022. Nevertheless, virtual services developed during the Covid-19 pandemic were so successful that a hybrid approach of in-person and online services will be integral to our plans going forward. In increasing the number of people we support annually over the next three years, ESCA CancerSupport aims to offer our services to those who need it throughout Switzerland.

In order to offer essential support to a growing number of people, an increase in capacity and skillset is required. The Board approved new positions along with the revised management structure proposed by our new director Elina Viitaniemi and her team. Over the summer and autumn of 2022, the Board met with the management team and key staff to define our future directions and priorities. This resulted in a challenging and realistic plan to grow the reach and scale of our services. Over the period 2023-2025, ESCA CancerSupport plans to: expand the scale and scope of services whilst building community amongst those affected by cancer; strengthen collaborations and enhance ESCA CancerSupport's reputation with medical establishments and other local partners; and expand and develop the resources needed to support these growth plans.

A search and recruitment process culminated in the nomination and approval of three new board members. We welcomed Janet Voûte, Stephen Wann and Dr. Gregory Wirth to the board, who bring much-needed expertise in fundraising and community outreach. We also said thank you to James Bissel, who stepped down after five years of dedicated support.

On a more personal note, as an ESCA CancerSupport Gardening Group volunteer, I would like to highlight this wonderful service. The physical and mental health benefits of gardening are well known. With the garden becoming more established, thanks to the hard work of volunteers during the previous year, in 2022 we were able to welcome people dealing with a cancer diagnosis, so they could get their hands dirty, have a chat in the sunshine, enjoy a slice of homemade cake, and spend time watching the garden bloom.

ESCA CancerSupport's achievements would not be possible without the time, effort and contribution of our volunteers, staff, Board members and supporters. Your relentless support and efforts enable us to ensure our vision that "no one faces cancer alone" continues to go from strength to strength.

Thank you one and all, and I look forward to working closely with you throughout 2023.

With best wishes



Ramona Azarnia



# DIRECTOR'S REPORT



At the beginning of 2023, I celebrated my first full year with ESCA CancerSupport. This first year in the role was both challenging and extremely rewarding. I have come to truly appreciate the incredible spirit of our organisation and the passion and dedication that all the volunteers and staff bring to their work at ESCA CancerSupport.

The year 2022 was also a time for challenging ourselves to think about how we can build on the history and achievements of ESCA CancerSupport to become an organisation of the future, reaching out to even more people across Switzerland.

In this context, we mapped and revised the roles of both staff and volunteers through a collaborative process, ending up with a refreshed structure and clarified roles. We added capacity in key areas such as support services and peer support, operations, and awareness. Similarly, a review of all the support services helped us think through our support model and consider adjustments and set directions for the future. In the short term, this will include introducing more support for caregivers and strengthening our external referral network.

We are now well positioned to take on new challenges, with the capacity to support a growing number of people affected by cancer, guided by a new ambitious 3-year strategy from 2023 onwards.

It has been wonderful to see activities and events come back to our beautiful Centre at the Château de Grand Saconnex. With counselling appointments, a regular Drop-in Centre opening, yoga classes, volunteer meetings and even a singing group, the Château has been full of life. What's more, we were happy to host several events for our partners, reaching out to an even wider community.

I am delighted to also see the success of our online services. We have learned that one-to-one counselling online offers a convenient and safe alternative to in-person sessions while online support groups now bring together people affected by cancer from all over Switzerland and the neighbouring regions.

Looking back at 2022, I am excited about the progress we have made and look forward to the year ahead. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the whole ESCA CancerSupport community: our volunteers, staff, friends, and supporters. You are the key ingredients in our recipe of success in ensuring that no one has to face cancer alone.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elina Viitaniemi". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Elina Viitaniemi

# ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022



We provided over 2,000 hours of direct support



We added 3 new services



Raised over CHF 580,000









223 people supported



The people we supported rated our services 9/10

## VOLUNTEER HOURS IN 2022

Indirect support (e.g. service coordination)		1,654
Direct support to people affected by cancer		1,429
Management, operations and finance		1,225
Awareness-raising		912
Fundraising (including Steps for CancerSupport)		581
Volunteer Training		37

**90** volunteers contributed **5,838** hours

## CATHY'S STORY

*A divorced mother of one, I had two projects during COVID-19. One was finding a new partner and having another child to complete my family. The second was restarting my career which had been derailed because of my move to Switzerland, where my physical therapist qualifications were not recognized. There were some challenges, but I was moving towards my two goals.*

*And then, I developed a persistent cough but tested negative for all infectious diseases. After a three-month rocky road to diagnosis, as is so common, it was obvious that I had cancer. Young and healthy all my life with good natural foods and lots of exercise, this was quite the surprise. But I was lucky to have a highly curable form.*

*I was struggling with so much paperwork and admin, trying to get special visas for my parents to stay with me during my six week-long hospital stays for chemo. Then I discovered that the chemo was likely to affect my fertility permanently. A very special nurse at CHUV, Lausanne, saw my struggle and that CHUV was unable to provide for my mental health and emotional needs. She recommended me to contact ESCA CancerSupport for support in English.*

*ESCA CancerSupport quickly provided me counselling and my daughter play therapy. As I started to get strong again, there were so many amazing groups for physical activity and exercise: Walk'nTalk, gardening, yoga, art therapy, and dragon-boating, all with so many supportive ladies to be wonderful role models.*

*I was also so very fortunate to meet the new Work and Cancer coach, who was so helpful in developing and executing my return-to-work plan.*

*I continue to communicate with the coach even after returning to work, in the hope of transforming the intense pain of losing my fertility into creating something new which can help other women with this struggle.*



# SUPPORT SERVICES

## COUNSELLING

Counselling is one of the services within ESCA CancerSupport. People who are in need of support are able to meet with one of our professional counsellors – all trained psychological counsellors, psychologists or psychotherapists – in a safe and confidential space to talk about their worries, challenges, and difficult situations at the various phases of cancer diagnosis, treatment, and beyond. Because a cancer diagnosis and the side effects of disease and treatment can give rise to a range of feelings, confusion, mental health issues, and social and relational distress, our counsellors offer personalised, targeted interventions to reduce symptoms and distress, enhance coping skills, strengthen the capacity to process thoughts, emotions, and behaviours, and help deal with uncertainty or a period of transition. We provide individual, couple, family, and group counselling to people with cancer, their caregivers, and their family members. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, ESCA CancerSupport is able to offer counselling sessions free of charge.

Having adjusted to delivering an online service whilst Covid-19 restrictions were in effect, 2022 saw a welcome return to in-person counselling. However crucial lessons learnt during the pandemic were incorporated into our service delivery model in 2022, so that we were able to offer both online and in-person counselling. This will be a permanent change to our counselling model moving forward, allowing us to be more accessible and adaptable, and able to provide counselling to people needing our support across Switzerland and the surrounding areas.

The team provided individual counselling to 85 people in 2022, an increase of 16% over 2021. Fifty-two of these people were new to ESCA CancerSupport. There were 613 hours of counselling provided - an increase of 8% on 2021. The counsellor-led groups included the Online Support Group, Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy, and the Prostate Cancer Group. In total, 28 group sessions were held with 32 people and 78 attendees.

A noticeable trend in 2022 was the increase in number of minors using the counselling service owing to their parent's cancer diagnosis. We also worked with individuals and couples facing major adjustments in their relationships including a change in roles (caregiver/dependent), financial stresses, sexual challenges, juggling work, parenting/children and healthcare etc. As was the case in 2021, many of the people we supported had past traumas resurface, triggered by their diagnosis and medical interventions.

The counselling team continued to develop and expand its expertise. We welcomed Milena Claudius, a Counselling Psychologist with a special interest in health psychology and behavioural medicine who is based in Lausanne. Antonia Calame transferred from Support Services Coordinator into a counselling-only position with a special interest in developing support for caregivers. The team attended the World Cancer Congress in Geneva to update its knowledge around cancer and sexuality, managing cancer at work, palliative care, improving psychosocial support and other related topics. A rigorous schedule of fortnightly case supervision continues.

## ESCA CANCERSUPPORT COUNSELLING TEAM 2022



Christian



Antonia



Patricia



Raynelle



Christina



Carey



Rosemarie



Milena

*“Thank you so much for taking the time to listen, for the resources to help me move forward, and for your compassion and sincerity.”*

*“It was a great feeling the hope and support from people that understand the situation”*

The Support Services are a foundational pillar of ESCA CancerSupport, bringing an understanding community together for people touched by cancer as well as their families. In 2022, our team offered a total of 24 different support services, of which three were new, and provided a total of more 2,000 hours of direct support in person and online. With the steadfast commitment of volunteers, peer supporters and facilitators, ESCA CancerSupport’s services continued to thrive throughout the year. In 2022 we welcomed Smita Singh in the role of Support Services Coordinator.

We also conducted a review of our services, as part of our commitment to continually revisit and revise our offers to the people we support. Going forward, it will be our priority to improve our support for caregivers and offer a more comprehensive package of physical support services.

## NEW SUPPORT SERVICES

This year saw the start of three new in-person support services: Gardening Group, Work and Cancer, and heART Space.

We started the new year blooming, with the launch of the **Gardening Group**, at La Parcelle, our beautiful location near the Versoix port. We have been able to welcome people who are supported by ESCA CancerSupport and who are dealing with a cancer diagnosis. The physical and mental health benefits of gardening are well-known. La Parcelle provides



the opportunity for gentle exercise, to spend time with other people and help alleviate the feelings of isolation and loneliness which people sometimes experience when they are touched by cancer. As an escape from day-to-day worries, being in the garden can lift moods, and bring a sense of peace and calm and hope.



Luana

In February, we piloted **Work and Cancer** coaching sessions, and 15 people affected by cancer had attended 59 sessions by the end of 2022. Reconciling work and cancer has its own complexities, challenges, and uncertainties. As one of the people we support stated: "Work and professional issues have been some of the most stressful during my cancer journey. I am so grateful to have someone knowledgeable to discuss these issues with." The Work and Cancer service

helps people do the inner work to re-build self-confidence, and also consults on HR-related matters like preparing for communication with their manager and/or HR, and the next steps in their career. Sessions are conducted by Luana Eckhardt, who is an HR specialist and certified coach, and a welcome addition to the ESCA CancerSupport team.



**heART Space**, our new art therapy service, began in September, and has seen a steady increase in people we support joining to explore their emotions through creative expression. Each month participants meet at the Centre, sharing a safe space to freely explore their creativity around a suggested theme, using a variety of mediums. No artistic knowledge or skill is required. Some may prefer to be creative in companionable silence, others to have

a conversation, and there is the opportunity to reflect on the art created whilst enjoying a slice of cake and a hot drink. Following this initial success, art therapist Eileen Wiley aims to begin an art therapy course in 2023 for those who have been bereaved.





Peer support is at the very heart of ESCA CancerSupport. The organisation was born out of a small group of people who came together when dealing with their own cancer diagnoses, sharing information about how to negotiate their disease in a health system and language that was foreign to them, and offering each other mutual support. ESCA CancerSupport's professional counsellors came later, as the organisation grew, but peer support was foundational and remains vital.

ESCA CancerSupport peer supporters are an amazing group of volunteers who use their own experiences to help others who have been directly or indirectly affected by cancer, and we are grateful to them. They are warm, caring, empathetic and form a resourceful group who provide support to people with a cancer diagnosis, their family, carers and to those who are bereaved as a result of cancer. Peer supporters help in a variety of different ways. Typically, this might be emotional and practical support, offered over the phone, online or in person; driving someone to a medical appointment; translating; accompanying someone to a first wig-fitting; and other help, depending on an individual's particular needs. In addition to one-on-one assistance, peer supporters also participate in ESCA CancerSupport's various groups and support services – such as the Walk'nTalk or Gardening Group – as well as staffing the Drop-in Centre and information stands.

Our peer supporters receive specialist in-house training. The training program was reviewed and revamped in 2022. Eleven new peer supporters received their initial training, and a further nine underwent refresher courses, so that by the end of the year, ESCA CancerSupport had a total of 45 trained peer supporters to call on. Mental health, first aid and child protection courses were included for the first time in this training. Annually we are training new peer supporters as well as providing refresher courses for existing peer supporters.

In December 2022, Dani Glover joined ESCA CancerSupport in the newly created position of Peer Support Coordinator. All peer supporters are invited to join the Peer Support Coordinator and the Support Services Coordinator in monthly support and coordination meetings.

### **HAND-IN-HAND WITH PEER SUPPORTERS**

*When we moved to Geneva, we were moving here with the knowledge that my 17-year-old son Adam was in the end stage of life from Rhabdomyosarcoma. After doing all we could to prolong his life as long as possible, he was admitted into the HUG. While there, the social services informed me of ESCA CancerSupport services offered in Geneva. I reached out to them and was paired up with a wonderful counsellor who came out to the hospital to sit down with me to talk once Adam was admitted into hospice. She listened and helped me come to terms with what was happening and continued to listen and counsel me through my grief after Adam passed.*

*When I was struggling with the Geneva public school system, ESCA CancerSupport stepped in and put me in touch with a peer supporter. We met for coffee a few times and she was a HUGE help with this struggle. Her daughters had gone through the public school system, and she was able to answer my questions. To be honest, without ESCA CancerSupport and the American International Women's Club, who helped me with social contacts, I'd be a huge mess.*

*Both organisations saved my life.*



## PROVIDING SUPPORT ONLINE

Providing virtual services allows a larger number of people to benefit from the tailored support they may not otherwise be able to access. Feedback from users of online services showed that they appreciated the convenience and flexibility of meeting online, allowing access to a community of support from the comfort of their own home.

In-person yoga returned to the Centre in September 2022, whilst a separate online session was maintained for those who were not fully mobile or who feared infection in a group setting. Both groups remain popular and cater for different levels of physical strength and all ranges of mobility.

The Online Support Group was established to enable those people from various physical locations in Switzerland to join in with a group, including those not well enough to leave home and who cannot attend a group in person.

The Prostate Cancer Group was set up as a virtual group during the pandemic, and continued online throughout 2022, allowing men from across the country to come together. In the same way, the breast cancer support group (Bosom Pals) coffee meetings continued virtually throughout 2022, and are set to remain that way, allowing women from all corners of Switzerland who have been touched by breast cancer to join a circle of support without the need for travelling to an in-person location.

*"Thank you so much for taking the time to visit with me over the phone. And also for all of this impartial information, which is invaluable to me."*

## ESCA CANCERSUPPORT LIST OF SERVICES

- Support Line/Email
- Counselling
- Prostate Cancer Group
- Teen Support
- Drop-In Centre
- Library and Resources
- Peer Support
- Breast Cancer Support (Bosom Pals)
- Online Support Group
- Lausanne Support Group
- Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Cancer Patients
- Bereavement Support
- Art Therapy for the Bereaved
- Art Therapy for Cancer Patients
- Art Therapy for Carers and Volunteers
- heART Space
- Work and Cancer Coaching
- Online Yoga
- Yoga at the Centre
- Bosom Pals Gym Class
- Pilates
- Walk'nTalk Lausanne and Geneva
- Look Good Feel Better
- Gardening Group

### SUPPORT LINE

+41 (0) 22 723 22 31

### SUPPORT EMAIL

[support@cancersupport.ch](mailto:support@cancersupport.ch)

### DROP-IN

ESCA CancerSupport  
Chemin Auguste-Vilbert 14  
1218 Le Grand-Saconnex

## ACCESSING OUR SERVICES

The first point of contact a person usually has with ESCA CancerSupport is by telephone to our **support helpline** or **by email**. An experienced counsellor works collaboratively with the person making the call or enquiry to determine their needs, which may range from seeking practical information and needing assistance to emotional support.

Anyone being supported has their privacy respected and their confidentiality is assured. Any necessary information is provided, together with recommendations for support services that would best suit their needs. Our professional team then comes together to make a tailored plan to support the person, their family and carers affected by cancer. At every stage of support, people are invited to use our support helpline when they feel the need to speak to someone: there were approximately 140 people using the helpline service in 2022.

Our **Drop-In** is a warm space offering the opportunity for people to come into our welcoming community. As 2022 began, the Centre was obliged to remain closed due to pandemic restrictions, but March saw the reopening of the Drop-In and it has been nice to see this inviting space filled with people once again. Anyone is welcome to drop-in to the Centre and they will be greeted by our trained peer supporters and volunteers, who provide a space of safety and comfort for those who'd like to find out more about our services, or just share some time in the company of others. Tea, cake, and comfy sofas await. It is also our central point where people can find information on other services in the region which may be useful.



Within the Drop-In, our ever-expanding **library** is home to more than 420 books and remains a valued information point for our members, volunteers and counsellors.



The library often doesn't get the accolades that our other services get, yet, it acts as a sturdy backbone for our clients, volunteers and counsellors. Often we see clients before or after their counselling or group browsing the book shelves and asking for recommendations.



## JESSICA'S STORY



*When I was diagnosed in July 2021 with stage 2 triple positive breast cancer, I immediately did an online search for English-speaking cancer support groups. Since I was living halfway across the world from my friends and family, I knew that I would need support, at the very least. When ESCA CancerSupport appeared in the search results, what I didn't expect was a whole new support system and community, from mental health support to new relationships and professional advice.*

*After consultation with an ESCA CancerSupport support coordinator, I joined the online support group specifically for breast cancer patients prior to starting treatment. The facilitator and fellow cancer patients and survivors were so welcoming and gave me a lot of helpful information and encouragement, as well as validation for what I was going through. I still attend various support groups and am now at a point where I'm both receiving and giving tips and understanding.*

*Another resource suggested was ESCA CancerSupport's six-week mindfulness course. This course was so much more than learning some basic mindfulness exercises. It provided me with the tools I used throughout the rest of treatment, and still use today in surviving the post-cancer treatment life, because it was tailor-made for those whose lives have been impacted by cancer. It also introduced me to three of my now best cancer friends, who are some of my favourite people ever.*

*Additionally, I am very grateful to the ESCA CancerSupport counsellor, a psychologist and cancer survivor herself, who has helped me deal with the depression and anxiety issues common to cancer patients. And finally, the Work and Cancer coach, an experienced HR professional and affected by cancer, who provided me with invaluable advice while I was returning to work, and in dealing with all of the hurdles I have encountered at my job since.*

*I don't know how I could have made it through the last year and a half without ESCA CancerSupport, their services, and the people involved supporting me in navigating this world of cancer and cancer treatment.*

*I had always implicitly thought that I would be immortal. My son-in-law, a doctor, told me that I could well become 100 years old. When in October 2020, aged 76, I heard that I had prostate cancer, my world turned upside down.*

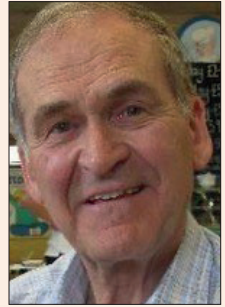
*At the time my wife and I were also in a complicated, vulnerable situation, because we lived in temporary accommodation, having sold our house and starting thorough renovation works on the flat that we had just bought.*

*I started radiotherapy mid-November 2020, and when I had trouble in keeping my bladder under control for these sessions, I got quite depressed. I was put on anti-depressants and sleeping pills, and somehow, I managed to get through all the 39 sessions which ended mid-January 2021. I received fantastic help and support from my wife and two children, but it was a counsellor from ESCA CancerSupport who put me on the right track emotionally. My four aims with him were: (1) to sleep better; (2) to cope better; (3) to be less anxious; and (4) to re-establish my social contacts, which had suffered because of my depressed feelings.*

*In September 2021 I started the ESCA CancerSupport mindfulness course. My two objectives for the course were: (1) to get more positive thoughts; and (2) to reduce my medication. Both objectives were reached after about one year. We had a great group of about eight women who had breast cancer, and I was the only man (a little bit older) among them. I learnt that I should view events or thoughts that were bothering me first of all in a non-judgmental manner, then to infuse kindness in all people involved, and then to define my own action. I included these thought processes in my morning and evening meditations, which I had practiced for years, well before the onset of my prostate cancer. I also continued to do my yoga exercises in the morning and walk my minimum of 7,000 steps per day.*

*During the autumn of 2022 I then followed four ESCA CancerSupport "heArt Space" studio sessions given. This got me into a more playful mood by painting some images, such as a life tree and a sleepy moon. For about two years I also attended the prostate cancer group at ESCA CancerSupport, which provided interesting information on new treatment options.*

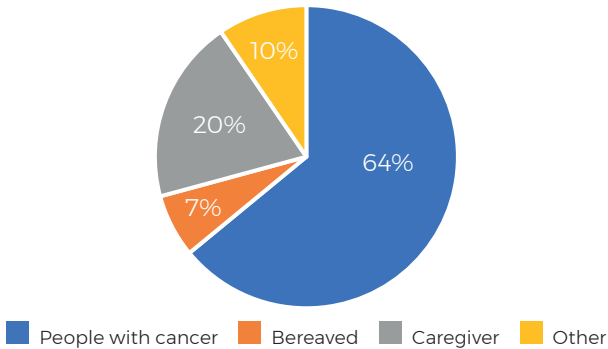
*Months later I now feel that I am back in town, although there are some differences to how I was before. There are still a number of medical side effects to be looked after, but my main aim now is to be more than to have. To be grateful to be alive; to feel at ease with myself and to live in harmony with my family, friends and people that I meet; and - to the extent possible - to live in harmony with our Mother Earth and all people and living creatures that inhabit our planet. Lizzy, our new (stray) dog adopted from Greece, helps me to be on that road.*



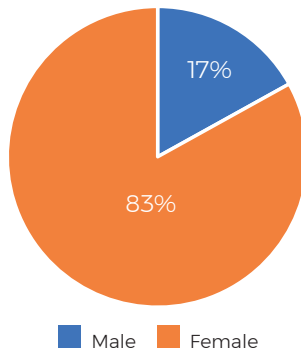
## OUR WORK IN NUMBERS

With the COVID-19 pandemic somewhat in the rear vision mirror, we have taken the opportunity to look at the trend of the total number of people supported by ESCA CancerSupport over the past five years. A straight line drawn from 2018 to 2022 shows a general upward trend in the use of our services. The pandemic years of 2020 and 2021 saw a spike in demand for our services, which is a similar trend seen in other human service organisations. During this time, our services were adapted to the online environment, more people reached us from around Switzerland via the internet, and changes were made to counselling and support services to ready ourselves for future increased demand. The learnings during the pandemic years have informed our approach moving forward, namely that we will continue to develop and improve online services while maintaining in-person services, opening up our services to people with cancer and their family members nationwide.

### ESCA CANCERSUPPORT SERVICE USER NEEDS 2022 (%)



### GENDER OF SERVICE USERS 2022 (%)

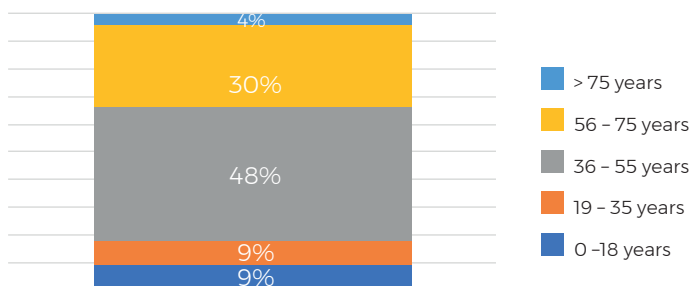




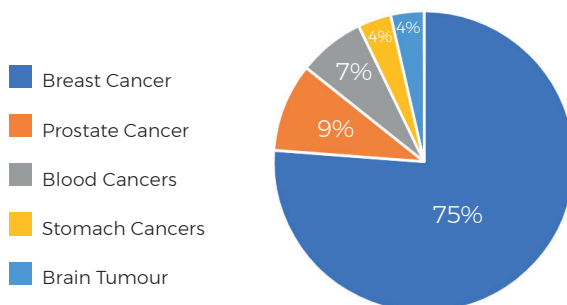
## NUMBER OF SUPPORT ENQUIRIES FOR PEOPLE WITH CANCER BY TREATMENT PHASE



## AGE OF SERVICE USERS 2022 (%)



## THE MOST COMMON CANCERS AMONG PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY ESCA CANCERSUPPORT 2022 (%)



# OPEN HOUSE AND MARCH FOR CANCERSUPPORT

On 24 March 2022, we organised an Open House at the ESCA CancerSupport Centre to showcase our work and connect with the community we serve. The Centre was full of life, with visitors discovering our various services such as counselling, art therapy, Walk'nTalk, Garden Group and the various support groups.

We hosted some special guests, including **Mauro Poggia, Geneva State Councillor** in charge of Health; **Michel Pommato, mayor of Grand-Saconnex**; and **Dr Cary Adams, CEO of the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)**. We were pleased to have them present, advocating for cancer support and highlighting the value of our services. We were also extremely happy to welcome various NGOs and companies, as well as individuals interested in our services.

This year our March for CancerSupport joined forces with our Steps for CancerSupport fundraiser. Immediately after the speeches we kicked off the fitness and fundraising challenge by beginning our march down to Lac Léman to raise awareness for cancer and see the Jet d'Eau light up in ESCA CancerSupport colours.

It was great to welcome so many new faces into the Centre after not being able to properly showcase our new space due to Covid-19.



# COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS



In October, we co-hosted the **HUG Octobre Rose** event with the theme of "Cancer and work: More inclusion!". The event, opened by Mauro Poggia, the Geneva State Councillor in charge of Health, explored the challenges around work and cancer, and included a lively roundtable discussion with various cancer associations and medical professionals, as well as representatives from local administration and businesses. ESCA CancerSupport was represented by our Work and Cancer coach, Luana Eckhardt.

At the **World Cancer Congress** in October, in collaboration with the **Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)**, our team invited Congress participants on a walk modelled on our Walk'nTalk groups, through Geneva parks with ESCA CancerSupport volunteers and staff.

This year for **Pink October** we were delighted to host the **Hirslanden Clinique des Grangettes** event at the ESCA CancerSupport Centre in Geneva. The theme for this year's event was 'Taking care of your well-being during and after breast cancer.' The day included multiple speakers and information, including from

many partner organisations around the canton. It was wonderful to be able to host this event at our Centre and see the space filled with people and activity.

In November, we hosted a discussion "Et si.. on parlait de la mort" at our Centre with **Palliative Genève, La Maison de Tara** and **Groupe Genevois de Médecins Pratiquant les Soins Palliatifs**. It offered an open space for the public and cancer and palliative care professionals to exchange thoughts around death in a comfortable and safe setting.



# AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS

In line with our commitment to support anyone affected by cancer, we participated in several activities throughout the year designed to build awareness around cancer and cancer support in the Lake Geneva region.

WE HOPE Festival



## MARCH

Volunteers from ESCA CancerSupport ran several information stands during **Colon Cancer Month**. One at the **University hospital of Geneva (HUG) Mars Bleu Colon Cancer Awareness Day**, an event which attracted medical personnel and the public. Geneva State Councillor responsible for health Mauro Poggia opened the event.

The two other information stands linked to **Colon Cancer Month** were in collaboration with the **Residents' association of Petit Saconnex** and **la Fondation genevoise pour le dépistage du cancer (FGDC)**. Both were chances to strengthen collaboration with the dynamic team at FGDC.

## SEPTEMBER

We were invited to be present at the event held by **International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)** in Geneva. After performances of spiritual dance, readings, and short plays the audience were able to visit the ESCA CancerSupport stand.

The **Ecolint International School of Geneva** invited us to participate at the CAS (Creativity, Activity and [Community] Service) afternoons at **La Châtaigneraie and La Grande Boissière campuses**. This is a time for students to look for opportunities to undertake voluntary community actions. There was a large number of students, and many were interested to hear about us, especially our Steps for CancerSupport fundraiser.

An information stand at the **WE HOPE Festival**, an arts, music and community event in Geneva, was a chance to reach out to a young international audience, and to collaborate with other cancer organisations such as **La Ligue genevoise contre le cancer, FGDC, and Hirslanden Clinique des Grangettes**.

ISKCON event





## OCTOBER

For **Breast Cancer Awareness Month**, ESCA CancerSupport volunteers helped **Réseau cancer du sein** raise money for their organisation by helping at their stand which was set up at **Genève-Servette Hockey Club S.A.** during their annual **Pink Night**, which aims to raise awareness of breast cancer amongst both female and male members of their audience.

To mark Pink October, **Edwards Lifesciences** in Nyon invited our Director to speak about breast cancer and the work of ESCA CancerSupport to their employees in Switzerland, which was live-streamed to their other offices across Europe and Latin America.

Our volunteers joined seven other cancer-related organisations (coordinated by **la Fondation genevoise pour le dépistage du cancer**) at the departure area of the Geneva Airport to raise awareness of breast cancer amongst travellers, through a game of wheel of fortune.

An Octobre Rose event was hosted at the **Centre hospitalier universitaire vaudois (CHUV)** on the topic of "Psycho-oncology and breast cancer care", where we manned an information stand. It was an opportunity for us to connect with local medical staff, including the head of the oncology department, and other cancer groups.

Our work was presented at a **Laksharchana** event in Geneva that gathered many people from the local Indian community. An ESCA CancerSupport volunteer from that community also used the event to connect with others and provide more information about our work.

At an event organised by **Palliative Genève** for **World Palliative Care Day** at **HUG**, we hosted an information stand alongside key palliative care stakeholders in the canton. It was a useful opportunity to inform medical staff directly about our services, and to network with others, especially the providers of domiciliary care to people with an end-of-life diagnosis.

The **Terry Fox Course de l'Espoir** is an annual walking event that our members, their families and pets, and volunteers regularly take part in, to help raise awareness for those affected by cancer. It's always a great event for us to wear our branded gear to take the opportunity to promote ESCA CancerSupport.

An evening conference was held at the **Hôpital Riviera-Chablais in Rennaz**. This was an opportunity for us to have an information stand and connect with similar organisations and the medical community who support local English speakers who are affected by cancer.

## NOVEMBER

We were part of the lively **International Bazaar** organised by the **United Nations Women's Guild Geneva** to raise funds for women and children in need around the world. Our volunteers helped with the logistics on the day, and we displayed information about ESCA CancerSupport to event visitors.

World Palliative Care Day at HUG



Terry Fox Course de l'Espoir



# AWARD-WINNING FUNDRAISER



Our third annual Steps for CancerSupport was again a success. This fitness and fundraising event held in March and April is a virtual challenge. Participants count their steps and compete to be the top team or individual while raising funds to support our services. Together we walked 214 million steps and raised CHF 102,952 from registration fees, donations, and grants. Our 974 participants joined us from ten different countries around the world, reminding us how global our community is. We would like to thank all the donors and participants for helping us fundraise to make sure that no one faces cancer alone.

World Cancer Conference Award  
Best Fundraising Campaign Report



At the World Cancer Congress held in October, we were proud to receive the award for Best Fundraising Campaign based on our report and presentation of Steps for CancerSupport as a fundraising model for nonprofits. This prestigious award was given to us based on the criteria of sustainability, innovation and impact.

OPEN TEAM  
Littlefoot



OPEN TEAM  
Smruti Patel and Friends



OPEN TEAM  
American International  
Women's Club



CORPORATE TEAM  
Firmenich



"It is wonderful to live another spring. Happy to be doing this challenge this year for the second time. I think every cloud has a silver lining, even cancer."

- Gul Unal





214 million  
Steps



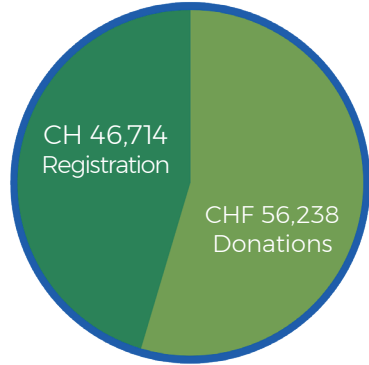
66  
Open Teams  
28  
Corporate Teams



77  
Individuals



974  
Participants



Proceeds

## SPONSOR

Firmenich

## CORPORATE STEPPERS

Beckman Coulter Teams

- 1, 2 and 3

La Clinique Grangettes Teams

- Centre de la Prostate
- Centre du Sein
- Onco Nurses
- Physiotherapie des
- Radio-Oncologie

Firmenich

Intuitive Teams

- A, B and C

Hôpital de la Tour Teams

- Accelérateurs
- Bloc Operatoire 1
- Bloc Operatoire 2
- Bloc Operatoire 3
- Bloc Operatoire 4
- Ensemble
- Equipe Maternite
- Equipe Oncologie
- Equipe Physio 1
- Equipe Physio 2
- Equipe Urgences
- FC Pantouffles
- Pool
- Reception
- Reception Physio
- UCO LET'S GO!!

*"On any other day, I simply wouldn't step out for a walk in this weather. Thanks to the challenge 'stepping' continues... rain/snow or shine. Grateful to be a part of the Challenge."*

- Sandhya

# COMMUNITY FUNDRAISERS

Each year, many of our members undertake their own fundraising initiatives. In 2022, our supporters once again came up with fun and innovative activities, which generated significant funds and helped ensure that we could continue to offer our services free of charge to anyone affected by cancer.

## BOOST FITNESS STUDIO GENEVA

In support of and to help raise awareness around breast cancer, BOOST Fitness Studio generously donated all proceeds from exercise classes held on October 19, 2022, to ESCA CancerSupport, with additional funds coming in from product sales. During the day our volunteers presented our work before each class, and managed an info stand throughout the day. In addition, Diana Caballero from BOOST Fitness broadcast an Instagram Live interview with one of our Board Members who has personal experience of breast cancer, in order to help raise awareness.

**Amount raised: CHF 963**

## STUDENT BAKE SALE

Chloe Pattison, a student from the Ecolint International School of Geneva, La Châtaigneraie campus, organised a pre-Christmas bake sale at a market in Nyon, in aid of ESCA CancerSupport.

**Amount raised: CHF 252.60**

## RUNNING WITH PURPOSE GENEVA HASH HOUSE HARRIERS (HHH)

In September, the members of the Geneva HHH dedicated one of their weekly events to Olivia Newton-John, who had recently passed away from cancer. At the gathering after the run, they passed a hat around to collect donations for cancer support.

**Amount raised: CHF 650**



## ARTISANAL MADELEINES SALE

A bakery in the canton of Vaud, Maison Galatà, generously offered to sell their madeleines to raise money for ESCA CancerSupport. Together

we created a custom box of six madeleines which were for sale on their website and at their Saturday market stands for the month of October. In addition, they provided individual madeleines for us to sell at our Hirslanden Clinique des Grangettes Pink October event.

**Amount raised: CHF 314**

## GETTING CRAFTY

Sue Hudson combined her three hobbies – crocheting, cooking, and gardening – to raise money for ESCA CancerSupport. Some of her cakes ended up feeding the ESCA CancerSupport gardeners in Versoix. Just before Christmas, Sue prepared an extensive “menu” of baked and cooked goods to contribute to her efforts. She says it was exhausting but she was thrilled to beat the amount she raised for us last year!

**Amount raised: CHF 2,200**

## PINK OCTOBER AT AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB (AIWC)

Throughout the month of October, the women at the AIWC collected funds in support of Breast Cancer awareness month and ESCA CancerSupport. They did so by promoting their initiative on their website, in their newsletter and at events.

**Amount raised: CHF 118.50**

## EATON

For Pink October, Eaton Industries Manufacturing GmbH organised a bake sale at their office site and donated all proceeds to us.

**Amount raised: CHF 1,000**

## SEXY GANG



A group of friends came together and ran the Course de l'Escalade fun run in December and encouraged their friends to cheer them on by donating to ESCA CancerSupport.

**Amount raised:  
CHF 191.28**

## CHRISTMAS CARD SALE

Sophia Turpault, the daughter of a long-time ESCA CancerSupport volunteer, made Christmas cards to sell. She sold them to fellow volunteers and friends.

**Amount raised: CHF 65**

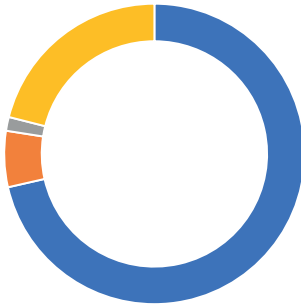
# FINANCES

In 2022 our income shows a 30% fall from the record high of the prior year. Steps for CancerSupport is now an established successor to Paddle for CancerSupport and we remain loyally supported by a select number of foundations. In 2022 a number of donors have put their support on hold as a result of the unexpected surplus we reported in the prior year. As part of the 2023-25 strategy, we have put in place a more robust fundraising approach that aims to further grow and diversify our income in the coming years.

Overall, the expenditure level reflects the investment in paid human resources designed to be the foundation for growth. The expenditure on our counselling services increased by 30% for a second successive year, whilst expenditure on other support services increased by 7%. The 2022 expenditure on the awareness programme increased following the recruitment for the vacant manager position and this has now returned to more normal levels. Fundraising spend was just below prior year levels and an increase in administration spend reflected both a full year of the new director and the hiring of a part-time Centre & Operations Coordinator.

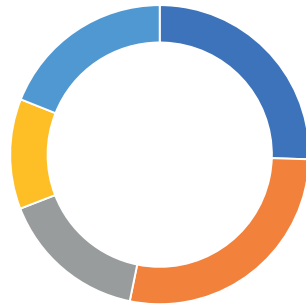
A full version of the audited financial statements is available on our website.

## INCOME 2022 (CHF)



Grants and corporate donations	358,420
Donations	30,294
Membership fees	7,444
Other fundraising	105,582
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>501,740</b>

## EXPENDITURE 2022 (CHF)



Counselling	164,460
Other support services	178,810
Awareness	102,635
Fundraising	76,766
Administration	122,379
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>645,049</b>

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## DONORS

- Fondation Pour La Recherche Et Traitement Médical (FRTM)
- Marguerite Foundation
- Oak Foundation
- Fondation Philanthropique Famille Sandoz
- Fondation Alfred and Eugenie Baur
- Schroder Stiftung
- Eli Lilly (Suisse) SA
- Commune d'Anières
- ASFER Association de Soutien en Faveur de l'Economie Romande
- Ville du Grand-Saconnex
- Commune de Pregny-Chambésy

## OUR COMMUNITY

We would like to express our gratitude to all the individuals who made a generous donation, who support ESCA CancerSupport by becoming members, and family members or friends who made donations to ESCA CancerSupport 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.

## VOLUNTEERS

As for many, 2022 was an ever-changing year. We began 2022 with our activities still very much dominated by Covid-19 and our work all online. As the year progressed, we were able to gradually introduce some in-person activities back to our Centre. Throughout these changes, our volunteers have always been our constant – reliable, adaptable, dedicated and always with a smile. Their energy, enthusiasm, commitment and compassion are remarkable.

As an organisation, it is important for us to have something to rely on. For ESCA CancerSupport that something is our volunteers. Their work is reflected in all areas of the organisation, as outlined in this report. Thank you to all who give their time in helping to support those touched by cancer.



Sally

We were thrilled to hear that our cherished volunteer Sally was selected as one of the winners for the Platinum Champions Award, hosted by the British Embassy in Bern. This event celebrated the outstanding contribution

volunteers in Switzerland have made to the lives of others. A very proud moment to have Sally recognised for all she has contributed to ESCA CancerSupport, over her many years of service.

# IN 2023, WE AIM TO



**Support 40% more people affected by cancer**



**Provide 2 new services**



**Raise CHF 85,000 more money**



**Train 15 new volunteers**

## GOVERNANCE

### 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<b>PRESIDENT</b>	Ramona Azarnia
<b>TREASURER</b>	Dave Mason
<b>SECRETARY</b>	Bill Laneville
<b>MEMBERS</b>	Dr. Conny Vrieling Jessica Silberman Dunant Korin Avigdor Robert Leigh Thea McFarlane Stephen Wann (from April) Dr. Gregory Wirth (from April) Janet Voûte (from April) James Bissell (until April)

### 2022 MANAGEMENT TEAM

<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Elina Viitaniemi
<b>COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT SERVICES MANAGER</b>	Christian Holyoak
<b>SUPPORT SERVICES COORDINATOR / COUNSELLOR</b>	Antonia Calame (until June)
<b>VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR</b>	Nicola Bowers
<b>DROP-IN COORDINATOR</b>	Margaret Stourton (until June)
<b>OFFICE MANAGER / COMMUNITY AWARENESS / DATA PROTECTION</b>	Andrea Hayes (until August)
<b>CENTRE AND OPERATIONS COORDINATOR</b>	Anne-Liis Lääne-Sáez (from August)
<b>COMMUNICATIONS AND AWARENESS MANAGER</b>	Alana Dunsmore (from August)



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