

***Interview with Madam Martine Risch, psychologist, psychotherapist at the Cancer Foundation's (FC).***

Martine Risch — psychologist, psychotherapist, specialized in psycho-oncology — is a member of the Cancer Foundation's (FC) psychosocial service.

In this department you will find five psychologists and one health professional in charge of information and preventive projects, and social help for patients such as diverse administrative steps like financial aid for patients, professional reclassifying, management of national social security (CNS), invalidity pensions and entitlement to subsidies.

Patients should get in contact directly with the FC from the moment of diagnosis, during or after treatment, and at the moment when they become conscious of being in quite a difficult situation, and feel unable to bear the burden.

Once the first appointment is made, the patients may choose in which language they want to communicate: Luxembourgish, French, German, English, Portuguese, Greek or Spanish. This wide range of languages caters to all the nationalities that might show up. Refugees are also included, those for example diagnosed with cancer during a medical check-up. The FC finances the service and provides an interpreter to help and advice.

These appointments with the cancer patients take place at the FC itself, or may be done by videoconference. Sessions last about 50 to 60 minutes.

Patients show up alone, or can be accompanied by their partner or family. In addition, parents may need to learn how to explain the disease to children. If children experience a change in behaviour following a sick parent, the FC can help.

First of all, Martine and her colleagues set up a case history and see what the patient's personal resources are for dealing with the situation. Everything depends on the person: diagnosis and the situation itself. Above all, the FC tries to strengthen individual resources to improve the quality of life.

Martine also explains that it is completely normal for the patient to feel scared, but you should never let this fear become overwhelming.

In addition, The FC has brochures which address different target groups such as children and young people. There is also a practical guide, and a brochure which covers how to manage cancer in the workplace.

All services provided by the FC are free. And support groups and sports groups such as muscle reawakening, gymnastics and yoga are also provided. Starting in autumn, the following classes will be offered: back to work, mindfulness, relaxation, cognitive boost, and support groups for breast cancer patients.

Cognitive boost targets exercise for concentration and to improve memory which can be affected by chemotherapy or stress.

You may reach Martine Risch and her team from Monday to Wednesday from 8am to 5 pm, or by email: [patient@cancer.lu](mailto:patient@cancer.lu)

There's also lots of information to be found on the FC's website [www.cancer.lu](http://www.cancer.lu) or call 45 30 33 1.

Thank you Martine, thanks to your team which is there to care for patients suffering from cancer.

Thanks for your commitment.



***The interview was conducted by Ms. Françoise Hetto-Gasch, member of the committee of Europa Donna Luxembourg.***

**Europa Donna Luxembourg Asbl**  
1b rue Thomas Edison L-1445 Strassen  
Tél. : 621 47 83 94  
E-mail : [europadonna@pt.lu](mailto:europadonna@pt.lu)  
[www.europadonna.lu](http://www.europadonna.lu)