

*Let's help children get better and
make their dreams come true*

ANNUAL REPORT ON RECEIPT
AND USE OF
SUPPORT FOR 2019 OF THE
CHILDHOOD CANCER FUND
RUGUTÈ





For fifteen years, we have been following our hearts and providing support for children with oncological diseases. We are very happy that together with paediatricians who specialize in oncohematology we were able to contribute to a more successful treatment of children, ensure the application of the most advanced treatment schemes, finance testing performed in Lithuania, pay for necessary operations in clinics abroad, help purchase hearing aids, and provide central venous catheters or other necessary medical equipment.

The support provided for the renovation of the hospital wards of the Oncohematology Centre of the Children's Hospital is also important. After all, a hospital ward is a temporary home where children are forced to spend weeks and sometimes even months due to complications of their treatment. Cosier and more comfortable hospital wards help the children be happier and more optimistic.

We are happy to be able to accompany the nurses to the conferences as we believe the new skills they acquire there help every little patient feel better.

No less important were the long-term international projects implemented by the Fund when together with the children from other countries who have overcome the oncological disease we have sent encouragements to those currently being treated in hospitals.

Over the course of fifteen years, the Fund has grown, as have the children who we have met at the beginning of the Fund's operation. In order to commemorate the Fund's anniversary, we asked these young people to go back a few or even a dozen years back in their memories and remember the hospital wards. Here we share the thoughts of Jekaterina and Ignas.



Jekaterina's thoughts. *"When I was twelve years old, in July 2005, I was diagnosed with acute myeloblastic leukaemia. The treatment, like for all those diagnosed with oncological disease, was not easy. During the treatment, I felt isolated from the outside world. I was communicating just with other children who were in the hospital ward of the same division, my parents, and doctors, and everyone else were in the outside world, i.e., they were healthy and could live a normal life, go to work, school, or supermarket. During chemotherapy sessions, these simple things seem like a dream to a patient. Nausea, pain, weakness, diseases that are constantly attacking, and drips are the part of patients' daily routine, which is certainly not easy for a body weakened by chemotherapy.*

However, during my illness, I never stopped believing that this illness is a temporary stage which will soon end and after I will be able to live a normal life again. That is what happened. Infinite faith, positivity, and not accepting the disease is the greatest antidote and cure."

Ignas' thoughts. *"I was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma in 2012. This news shocked me because I never complained about my health before, I exercised actively, and enjoyed my life.*

There were always good and bad periods during the treatment. Sometimes I did not want to get out of the bed and sometimes I was asking my family to take me to the park nearby! My main goal at the time was not to stay in that hospital environment and move forward.

When you hear that someone you know was diagnosed with an oncological disease, you are horrified. You understand how much they may need to stay in the hospital. Now, when something seems difficult, I remember the time I was ill and my optimistic attitude that helped me move forward.

During the treatment, the most important thing is to want to recover, eat a lot, communicate, dream, play, and never allow yourself to stay trapped in that gloomy vortex of illness."



We want to express our gratitude to our long-term and new sponsors, initiatives of businesses, schools and individuals, i.e., all those who supported Rugutė's activities, for the ability to continue our activities and help other children who were diagnosed with oncological disease. Thank you for giving sails and favourable breeze to the children who are trying to paddle in the big and insidious ocean of disease. We are confident that this support will help them to reach a safe port as soon as possible and there will be no hospital wards or treatment rooms and they will finally see a straight path that will lead them to their dreams coming true.

Thank you for helping us help the children.
Edita Abrukauskienė



GENERAL INFORMATION

Childhood Cancer Fund Rugutė (hereinafter referred to as the “Fund”) is a legal entity registered in the Republic of Lithuania. It is a non-profit non-governmental organization.

Registration No.: 300070090

Registration date: 29 November 2004 (registered in the State Enterprise Centre of Registers)

Date of granting the status of beneficiary: 29 November 2004

Fund's registration address: Kosmonautų g. 3-15, Panevėžys, Republic of Lithuania

Fund's office address: P. Smuglevičiaus g. 45, Vilnius, Republic of Lithuania.

Childhood Cancer Fund Rugutė was founded in 2004 by Edita Abrukauskienė and Dainoras Abrukauskas after they lost their three-year-old daughter Rugilė who was diagnosed with an oncological disease. The confrontation with their daughter's oncological disease, the current situation of the health care system, and the lack of information in the Lithuanian language about oncological diseases encouraged the founders to share their experience related to complex treatment and help families affected by the child's oncological disease

For fifteen years, the aim of the Rugutė Fund has been to provide information, financial, medical and psychological assistance to children diagnosed with oncological diseases, to support medical institutions where these children are treated, to collect legal, social, and medical information necessary for families affected by child's oncological disease, and to promote the communication and sharing of experiences between these families.

The Fund also implements various social projects, initiates or contributes to support campaigns aimed at improving the quality of treatment of Lithuanian children diagnosed with oncological diseases.

When carrying out its various activities, the Fund closely cooperates with non-governmental organizations of Japan, Poland, Sweden, France, Turkey, China, Belgium and diplomatic missions of the Republic of Lithuania in these countries, with Lithuanian communities and individuals in the USA, China, Luxembourg, Belgium, Norway, and Ireland that are interested in ensuring that every young patient receives targeted and the most efficient treatment. The Fund provides support to children from age 0 to 18 who are being treated or have reached remission of the disease.

Since its establishment, the Fund exists thanks to sponsors and initiatives and enthusiasm of volunteers. Volunteers organize support events and concerts, actively contribute to the implementation of the Palankaus vėjo malūnėliai campaign, visit sick children and their families, prepare projects, and edit texts. In 2019, the average number of volunteers was 15.

Linus Vasiliauskas, a long-term volunteer of the Fund, shared his thoughts on volunteering in the Rugutė Fund. *"I first learned about Rugutė by chance about 13 years ago, and after half a year, inspired by Edita Abruškauskienė, Head of the Fund, I dared to visit the hospital for the first time. How daring it was to climb to the third floor! Later I started visiting children who were treated there. I get a lot of inspiration and learn a lot from them. How can one describe a feeling when a blind boy gives you a bracelet he has made or a souvenir boat he has sewn himself? Is there a feeling that can be compared to a feeling when you see a child in a wheelchair rushing towards the finish line in a race and the whole stadium supports him? How could a cake, baked by a five-year-old friend, taste bad?"*

I found great friends in Rugutė. I interact with children and their families not only when the hospital becomes just a memory, but also when the disease defeats the child.

Twelve years ago, I witnessed the establishment of the Rugutės namai (Rugutė house). Here, children from all over Lithuania who come to be tested or their parents who come to visit their children can find a cosy home environment. Rugutės namai, sometimes called Namučiai, also hosts blood donation campaign Padovanok lašelį (Give a droplet) every six months, Palankaus vėjo malūnėliai (Favourable Windmills) and Christmas souvenir workshops.

I can see up close the daily life of Rugutė: the search for medication for the most modern treatment and provision of comprehensive help for a family affected by a child's oncological disease. I also see many people from all over the world who put their efforts and time to help sick Lithuanian children. It is always exciting when people during their wedding, birthday, or other personal celebration think of the children and instead of expecting a gift or flowers for themselves, they ask to donate to Rugutė.

Every sincere action for the sake of another person is magnificent. Thank you to everyone who dared to donate a piece of their hearts to bring more smiles to the world, to make dreams come true, and to start beautiful friendships."



SOURCES OF SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE CHILDHOOD CANCER FUND RUGUTĖ IN 2019

1. Support from legal entities of the Republic of Lithuania: EUR 152,515.17
2. Support from legal entities of foreign countries: EUR 19,709.75
3. Support from anonymous and natural persons of the Republic of Lithuania: EUR 93,096.01
4. Support from anonymous and natural persons of foreign countries: EUR 15,544.61
5. Support received as material assets: EUR 741.84
6. Share of income tax allocated by individuals: EUR 114,228.79

Total support received in 2019: EUR **395,836.17**



39%
Support from legal
entities of the Republic
of Lithuania



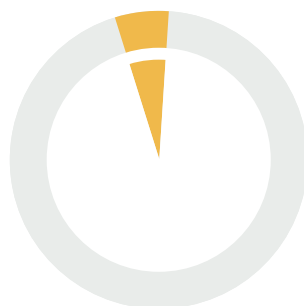
29%
Share of income tax allocated
by individuals



23%
Support from anonymous
and natural persons of the
Republic of Lithuania



5%
Support from legal
entities of foreign
countries



4%
Support from anonymous
and natural persons of
foreign countries



1%
Support received as
material assets

ACTIVITIES PERFORMED BY THE FUND, ITS PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES IN 2019

In 2019, the Fund pursued its objectives through the performance of the following activities.

Charity for families

As every year, the Fund provided a wide range of charities for children diagnosed with oncological diseases and their families, i.e., provided financial assistance, nursing and rehabilitation equipment and medicines. The Fund created conditions for sick children to undergo diagnostic and genetic tests in clinics of foreign countries that are not performed in Lithuania and conditions to apply promising treatment methods not applied in Lithuania and paid for operations in clinics of foreign countries.

Based on the requests received from the families raising children with oncological disease and after assessing the importance of the need indicated in the requests, the families were provided with monthly or one-time support. When a child develops an oncological disease, the family's financial situation changes, i.e., income plummets because one of the parents has to take care of the child during the hospitalization period and cannot work for a long time, and the family's expenses increase significantly. Other family members try to spend as much time as possible with the sick child, so in cases where the family lives far from the city where the medical institution is located, a lot of money has to be spent to cover travel expenses. Hospital meals are provided only to the child being treated, so the person taking care of the child must buy his/her own meals. Treatment of oncological diseases with cytostatic drugs often has strong side effects, and drugs that reduce these side effects are not always compensated by the state. Patients' families also have to acquire various nursing equipment at their own expense. Thus, using the support provided by the Fund, the families were able to purchase the necessary nursing equipment, food, cover their travel expenses or other expenses incurred. This has ensured not only a better physical condition of the children but also has improved their emotional, psychological and spiritual condition which has a huge impact on the success of the treatment and recovery. In 2019, the Fund donated EUR 149,686.63 to families (in cash and material assets).

Medicine is advancing every day, i.e., medication and medical devices, which cure diseases faster and help to reduce or eliminate the risk of side effects, are constantly being improved. Technologies that are used for the performance of tests and help to identify more accurate causes of diseases (which leads to more effective treatments) are also being improved. Unfortunately, the amount spent to purchase some of the latest medication, tests and medical devices in Lithuania is not compensated by the state. The Childhood Cancer Fund Rugutė has been working to help fill this gap for 15 years, i.e., it constantly provides support so that oncohematology specialists treating children could have all the opportunities to prescribe medications specified in the latest treatment protocols. There is no doubt that such treatment leads to higher cancer survival rates and long-term remission. In 2019, medicaments worth EUR 13,586.96 were transferred.



The Fund constantly ensures that long-term central venous catheter insertion procedures are performed to children with oncological diseases when needed, which significantly improves the psychological well-being of young patients during the treatment and helps to avoid pain and multiple peripheral catheter insertion procedures. In 2019, 20 units of long-term venous catheters and 630 units of compatible needles were purchased. The benefits of such a catheter are described by a girl with oncological disease: “When I got sick, every needle-prick seemed like the end of the world. Later it became more difficult to endure the catheter insertion procedures, as the veins from all chemotherapies had become very weak and brittle and felt like burned. A long-term catheter greatly improved the treatment. The nurses were able to inject medication while I was sleeping and I didn’t feel anything. I was able to move completely freely.” The total amount provided by the Fund for the purchase of Surecan long-term venous catheters and compatible needles is EUR 6,089.94.

Since 2018, the Fund has been helping to purchase special connectors for central venous catheters. Catheter valves and connections are the main ways for the microbes to enter, and special connectors reduce the possibility of catheter infections. 200 special connectors were purchased for the amount of EUR 169.40.

120 opaque systems were purchased for children with oncological diseases because some cytostatic drugs are light-sensitive. The Fund provided support of EUR 569.18 for the purchase of these systems.

One of the most common consequences of chemotherapy is ulceration of the oral mucosa, which worsens both the physical and emotional condition of the young patient because the child suffers from severe pain and is unable to eat. When it comes to the Fund’s key focus, i.e., to contribute as much as possible to the successful treatment of young patients, oral care products are often described as a trifle. However, the feedback from families that are grateful that their children were able to smile and have the opportunity to continue the treatment without a rumbling stomach makes us admit that this indeed is a relevant issue. The Fund provided support of EUR 2,362.16 for the purchase of GUM® AftaClear, Caphosol (193 units) mouthwashes.

In early December, the Fund received a request from D. I.’s mother to help buy an exercise machine for her son. In 2017, an eleven-year-old boy was diagnosed with Ewing’s sarcoma. The disease was cured, but the consequences described by the mother remained: *“I come to you with a big request for help. Devid has completed rehabilitation course, and we are trying to work with him, but unfortunately not everything goes the way we want. We make a lot of effort, not expecting any miracles, but as long as there is metal in Devid’s leg, he will not be able to fully extend it. However, it is possible and necessary to reduce contracture and maintain the result, but this requires complex exercises. It is very hard to achieve the desired results because of metal in his leg. Exercise is very painful and sometimes almost impossible. Physiotherapists always feel resistance. I consulted with many doctors on how to alleviate the suffering of Devid. Unfortunately, not everything suits him at the moment. However, we discovered something that could make the boy’s life easier. All doctors agreed that the Motomed leg/arm trainer would be very helpful in strengthening muscles and exercising the knee joint. Unfortunately, it would be difficult for us to go to such an exercise every day because we live on the 5th floor and Devid has a hard time taking the stairs. In addition, the boy is already big, and his father is no longer able to carry him on his hands.”* The foundation agreed to help the boy to recover and bought a trainer for EUR 4,269.00.

From the very beginning of the fight against oncological disease, the most desired word you want your doctor to utter is 'remission'. 'Remission' means the end of unpleasant and painful procedures, the ability to return home and have a normal childhood or adolescence. Unfortunately, some children experience the late oncological treatment side-effects that force the little fighter to return to the hospital ward. One of the late side-effects of treatment of the disease is impaired hearing. It is becoming more difficult for children to hear teachers' voices and fully participate in lessons. In 2019, the Fund bought modern hearing aids for two children for EUR 5,199.00.

Back in the spring of 2019, the Fund met K. M., a boy from Ukraine who had Ewing's sarcoma and came to Lithuania for treatment. A central venous catheter was inserted to prevent problems with fluid infusions during the treatment. After a while, a call was received from Giedrė Rutkauskienė, Head of the Paediatric Oncology and Haematology Sector of Kaunas klinikos hospital. She said that K. M. was successfully fighting the illness and had already overcome several stages, i.e., chemotherapy and surgery. However, there is a huge problem, i.e., the money donated by good people to the family has already been used, and the boy has started radiation therapy, and several more courses of chemotherapy are planned. The decision to help was made immediately because the Fund values the life of every child no matter what country he/she is from. For the radiation therapy and several courses of chemotherapy EUR 9,188.82 were paid.

In October 2019, R. J.'s mother contacted the Fund asking to pay for the genetic tests performed on her daughter by Roche Pharmholding B.V. After assessing the importance of these tests, EUR 2,662.00 was paid by the Fund for the treatment.

In February 2019, a teenager A. R. was diagnosed with a very rare oncological disease, i.e., a liver tumour (hepatoblastoma). In May, doctors decided to urgently send A. R. for surgery to the Paedi-atric Surgery and Urology Centre of Gdansk University Hospital (Klinika Chirurgii i Urologii Dzieci i Młodzieży Gdańskiego Uniwersytetu Medycznego). Due to the urgency of the operation, it was not possible to submit documents for the payment of the operation. The Fund covered the costs of the first operation, i.e., EUR 6,536.91, and provided the family with support of EUR 5,000.00 intended to cover the costs of two trips, accommodation, and meals.

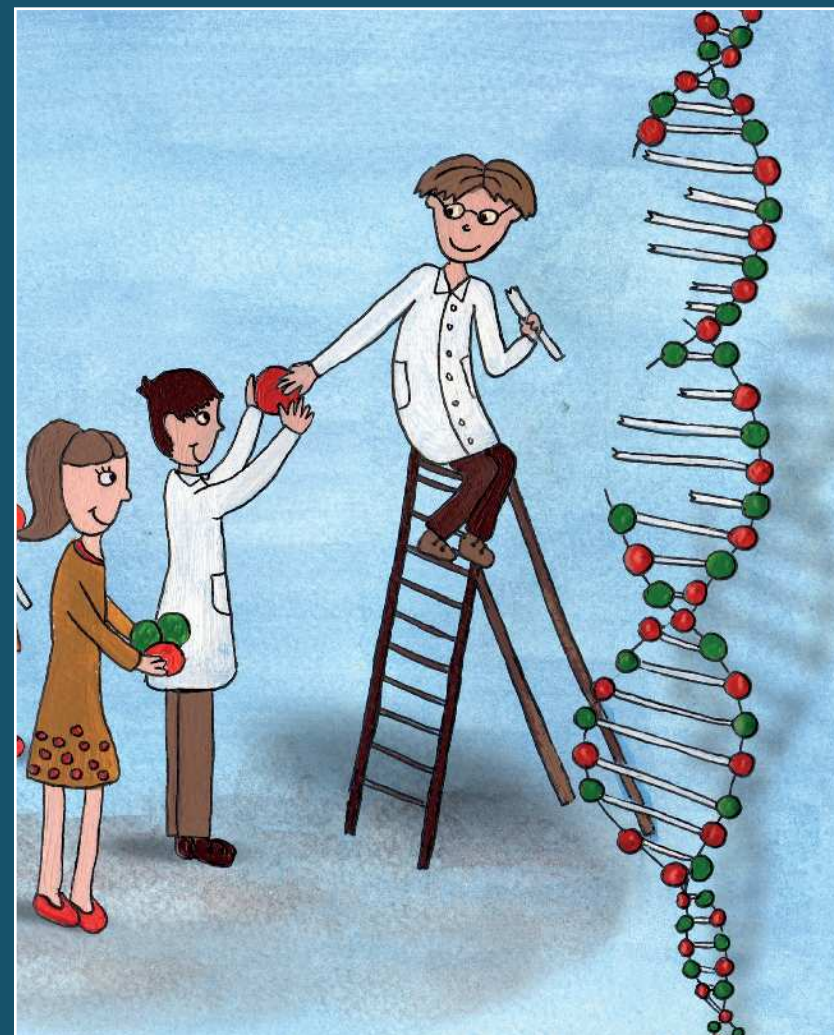
In April 2019, just before Easter, O. V. was diagnosed with diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma. This is probably the most severe form of brain cancer. In June, the boy's parents contacted the Fund asking to help raise funds for their son's treatment at Cologne Hospital. They wrote: *"German doctors say that the spread of the disease can be slowed down, although much depends on the individual characteristics of the body, including whether the child's heart is strong enough. We think that we have to do everything we can for our son. We have already agreed that we will go to that German clinic in the beginning of July."* The Fund appealed to the public and EUR 36,000.00 was collected for the treatment of O. V. and transferred to the family.

Genetic tests for more targeted and effective treatment of every young patient

In 2016, the Fund launched a long-term project Genetic Tests for More Targeted and Effective Treatment of Every Young Patient. In autumn of 2016, a scientific discussion took place between Dr. Giedrė Rutkauskienė, the Head of the Paediatric Oncohematology Subdivision of Kaunas klinikos of the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, and OncoDNA (Belgium) researchers Dr. Jean-François Laes and Dr. Fiona Demol. It was decided that it is most appropriate to perform composite genetic and other molecular tests of oncological solid tumours on children with only high-grade gliomas. Survival prospects for children with this disease are very low, and treatment used until now has not been effective. After performing compound and progressive genetic tests, it is expected to offer these children a more precise and specific treatment (depending on the genetic mutations in the tumour) that could help them cope with the disease and achieve remission.

Since August 2016, comprehensive OncoDEEP&TRACE tests have been performed on 16 children diagnosed with extremely malignant tumours of the central nervous system. Tumour biopsy or postoperative specimen samples in paraffin blocks and blood samples were used for the test. The aforementioned samples were sent to the OncoDNA company that is at the Institute of Genetics and Pathology in Belgium. At the Institute, the diagnosis of the tumour was reaffirmed, sequencing of more than 200 oncogenes was performed, and all mutations in them were identified. Also, at the Institute, specific immunohistochemical, methylation, translocation, increment/inclusion, and other tests were performed. Based on the results obtained, a detailed biological report was generated for each patient, and the most appropriate individualized treatment was identified. Based on the report and taking into account the general condition of the patient, individualized chemotherapy or target therapy was prescribed.

In 2019, OncoDEEP&TRACE tests were performed on 2 children. The Fund paid EUR 6,050.00 for these tests.





Rugutės namai

The goal of Rugutės namai, which has been operating for ten years, is to provide free accommodation for children with oncological diseases and their family members if needed. The Fund seeks to ensure that children could have the opportunity to stay in Rugutės namai, which is located next to the Vilnius Children's Hospital, and feel like at home, rest from complicated treatment and the hospital environment. A short rest with the loved ones restores the sense of security and helps the family not to lose the sense of community. Both the relatives of the young patient who come to visit him/her from distant places and the family members who are taking care of the child in the hospital during the day have the opportunity to stay temporarily in this house.

Everyone who stayed at Rugutės namai could use/have free of charge:

- separate bedrooms;
- access to bathroom;
- children's play areas;
- access to kitchen, where you can prepare your own meals;
- washing and drying machines;
- tea, coffee and shelf-stable food;
- small library with a variety of books and other information on oncological diseases;
- internet and cable TV.

Other projects of the Fund were also carried out at Rugutės namai: preparation for the Palankaus vėjo malūnėliai campaign, during which small windmills are produced; mutual assistance group meetings and seminars for parents who have lost their children; unpaid blood donation campaign Padovanok lašelį. Meetings with sponsors and children with oncological diseases and their relatives also took place there.

The costs of renting premises, utilities, cleaning services, bed linen washing, telephone services and other amenities provided free of charge in 2019 were EUR 17,050.59.

Bendrauk (Communicate)

Children undergoing oncological treatment have to spend a lot of time in hospital separated from their friends and family members. In order to improve the psychological condition of sick children, the Fund granted the right to use mobile Internet free of charge to all children treated in the Paediatric Oncology and Haematology Sector of Kaunas klinikos hospital. In 2019 the Fund provided support of EUR 659.51 to the Bendrauk project.



In order to make children with oncological diseases happy, the Fund fulfils their dreams.

In November 2018, the Fund received an invitation to delegate one child to the International Week of Children with Leukaemia event that takes place in Turkey. Tija's documents were submitted in the spring of 2019, but the event was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. There is nothing more painful than giving a child hope and then taking it away, so it was decided that Tija will still go to Turkey, only not to attend the event, but to fulfil the dream of getting to know this country and its nature and to relax with her mother and father. After the girl returned from the trip, this letter reached the Fund: "We came back well rested! Edita, not only did Tija smile during this trip, we all enjoyed every moment together, and the hotel at which we stayed was like from a fairy tale. We really fell in love with Turkey. It is said that fairy tales are only for children because they believe in miracles. I can object to that! You have given us a real miracle! Painful life lessons make you enjoy every minute of life, and such trips help you get some rest from everyday challenges." The Fund provided support of EUR 2,013.37 in order to make this dream come true.

At the end of the school year, the Fund received a sensitive letter from Monika, who has a brain tumour. She wrote that she has a dream of spending a week at the Žirgas, gamta ir aš (Horse, nature and me) camp. Monika admitted that she loves horses very much. The Fund provided support of EUR 300.00 to make this dream come true.

In August 2019, E.V. was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia. In September, the hospital ward where the boy was staying became not only the place where he is fighting for his life but also the place where he does his homework. In order for him to be able to find learning material faster, perform assigned tasks, and communicate with teachers or friends, a computer was needed. Thanks to the sponsors of the Fund, we managed to give the boy the opportunity to study more comfortably, to be more curious, to find answers to the questions that concerned him and thus to improve his skills every day even if he is spending time in the hospital ward. The Fund provided support of EUR 1,446.99 to buy a computer.





Aquarium for children in hospital

In 2012, the idea of Eugenijus Mačiukas, the father of a boy with an oncological disease, to donate two aquariums to children undergoing treatment at the Paediatric Clinic of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences was implemented. Professionally equipped large and beautiful aquariums with live fish and special vegetation not only provide a feeling of comfort to the hospital premises but also have a psychotherapeutic effect on young patients, i.e., help them calm down, relieve tension and fear, and forget pain and strengthen their spirit. Better emotional well-being of children ensures the effectiveness of treatment of the disease and faster healing processes. A pleasant environment that evokes good emotions is especially important for children whose hospitalization lasts for many months.

In 2019, the Fund provided support of EUR 274.75 for the renovation and maintenance of aquariums. 274,75 Eur.

Palliative care. Nursing at home

The Fund has also been focusing on palliative childcare for six years now. We believe it is necessary to assess the needs of a child who is in need of palliative care and the needs of his/her relatives and give them the opportunity to choose where to spend this stage of the disease, i.e., at home or in the hospital.



Support in the form of medical equipment and other items

In close cooperation with medical institutions treating children with oncological diseases, the Fund helps to acquire not only the necessary medical/nursing items, but also medical equipment for more targeted and effective treatment of the young patients.

In January 2019, the Fund received a request for assistance in renovating the hospital wards and backroom space of the Children's Oncohematology Centre of the Children's Hospital. What is a hospital ward for children with oncological diseases? A hospital ward is a temporary home where children are forced to spend weeks and sometimes even months due to complications of treatment. The little ones spend extended periods of time in hospitals, i.e., they receive their treatment there, play, learn, and communicate with friends who live outside the hospital. Cosier and more comfortable hospital wards help the children be happier and more optimistic. We united with the Lithuanian Children's Cancer Association Paguoda and Rimantas Kaukėnas Charitable Foundation and during the show Valanda su Rūta we have invited the public to contribute to the renovation of hospital wards and the creation of a cosy environment. In 2019, the Fund additionally provided support of EUR 30,000.00 for the renovation from its own funds.

Continuing the cooperation with the Children's Oncohematology Centre of the Children's Hospital, the Fund helped to purchase a lamp (EUR 1,331.00) for the treatment room and other necessary equipment (EUR 360.72).

In November 2019, the Fund bought 2 new computers and put them in the playroom in the Chil-dren's Oncohematology Centre. The aim was for all the children in the department to have the opportunity to watch a new or their favourite movie, play an interesting game, read the news, or connect with their friends. Such activities brighten the mood, bring joy, and help the children to forget about unpleasant procedures. The Fund paid EUR 2,699.98 for two computers.

When cooperating with the Paediatric Oncohematology Sector of Kaunas Clinics, the Fund bought 2 Omron HBP1300 Pro blood pressure monitors which are intended to facilitate the monitoring of children's condition. For two devices EUR 623.54 were paid.

In July 2019, the Fund received a request from the doctors of the Paediatric Haematology Department of Klaipėda's Children Hospital to help purchase furniture for the treatment room. This department provides medical assistance and treatment to children with oncological diseases who live in the western part of Lithuania. Often, a child who returns home after a course of intensive chemotherapy develops a severe condition which can only be improved with infusions of fluids or medications or transfusions of blood components. Thanks to this department, a child and his/her relatives living in Western Lithuania do not need to go to Vilnius Children's Hospital or Kaunas Children's Hospital and they can avoid tiring journeys. The amount of support provided is EUR 2,000.00.

During the treatment of oncological diseases, it is important to ensure timely provision of targeted and effective treatment and to provide the opportunity for the nurses to participate in international conferences and meetings. For this purpose, the Fund provided EUR 6,800.00 in support to the Lithuanian Society of Paediatric Oncohematology Specialists.

The total amount of support provided in 2019 is EUR 43,815.24.





Other support

The emotional and psychological well-being of the children is extremely important during the treatment of oncological diseases. The Rugutė Fund was happy to contribute to the renovation of rooms intended for the psychological well-being of children and a playroom, and to the creation of festive Christmas mood and bought various targeted equipment for EUR 1,294.23 intended for the improvement of the child's condition.

Padovanok lašelį (Give a droplet)

On 2 June 2019 and 30 November 2019, the Fund together with the Public Institution National Blood Centre organized two Padovanok lašelį campaigns at Rugutės namai. Since its establishment, the Fund has been fostering the idea of unpaid blood donation. Blood transfusions are often needed to save the life of a person who has suffered a serious health problem or serious trauma, and the blood of donors is the most meaningful gift for such a person.

Expenses of these campaigns that took place in 2019 is EUR 417.09.

Visit of dwarfs

In 2019, a kindness campaign was organized at a school in Hörby town in Sweden to support sick children in Lithuania. Swedish students were encouraged to collect and pack Christmas presents. For the thirteenth time on December 12–15 these presents are brought to Lithuania from Sweden by a long-time friend of the Fund Stefan Espersson, teacher Anita Larsson, two students, and translator Ieva Sturesson. During the visit, going from one hospital ward to another, dwarfs from Sweden not only handed out presents to the young patients of Children's Hospital of Kaunas Clinics and Vilnius University Hospital Santaros klinikos' Branch Children's Oncohematology Center, but also performed other activities, i.e., juggled, sang, danced, and wished a quiet holiday. On 13–14 December, the guests visited Radvilė, Lukas, Abhajus, Urtė, Titas, Augustė, Laurynas and Kirilas at their homes and gave them Christmas presents. On 15 December, together with the children who gathered in Rugutės namai, they celebrated St. Lucy's day.

Meetings with dwarfs leave indelible impression on the children's hearts. Have a look at what Domantas' letter said: *"You are the only child we visit every year," said the eldest dwarf Anita, who visited me again this morning. I'm trying to count how many times we've hugged. Nine, ten or more? The heart fills with joy and excitement every time we meet. For me, the anticipation of the holidays begins after their visit because they bring that Christmas spirit and Christmas mood. While drinking tea, we tell each other how our year has passed. Anita shared her memories of our first meetings about how I always used to ask to give Santa my baked cookies. Thanks to Anita, Stefan, Ieva, and two other dwarfs for the meeting. See you next year! Happy holidays to everyone!"*

The cost of the joint project implemented together with benefactors from Sweden was EUR 2,279.37.



Onko-Liga 2019 sports games

Long-term friends of the Childhood Cancer Fund Rugutė, i.e., Fundacja Spełnionych Marzeń (Fulfilled Dreams Foundation), an organisation operating in Poland, organised the first football game Onko-Liga on 19–22 July 2019. The participants of this wonderful event were children from Lithuania who had overcome an oncological disease. They had the opportunity to test their strength competing with their peers from Slovakia, Czech Republic, Ukraine, Turkey, and Poland. Impressions of the head of the Fund after returning from the competition:

“Sometimes the experience is dull, sometimes tearful, and sometimes so insanely strong that it blows your mind (I couldn’t find other words that could express my feelings). An exceptionally special four-day trip to the event organized by Rugutė’s friends, Polish Foundation Fundacja Spełnionych Marzeń, only reaffirmed that when you work shoulder to shoulder the impossible becomes possible and that the most important thing is the TEAM’s unity. [...]

So, our TEAM, that has overcome many challenges, experienced a variety of emotions, and learned that friendship and unconditional support can help move mountains. We stepped on the highest step and triumphantly raised the cup! I’m very proud of everyone and I’m grateful for this unforgettable experience.”

The costs of participation in the sports games Onko-Liga 2019 were EUR 2,953.10.



In 2019, the Fund distributed EUR 203,382.00 to charity, support, projects, campaigns, and initiatives.

Director of the Childhood Cancer Fund Rugutė
14 May 2020



Edita Abrukauskienė