

IMPACT REPORT



**BREAST CANCER
SUPPORT FUND**

Helping Women. Today.

OUR MISSION

To support Canadian breast cancer patients on their journey to wellness by providing short-term financial support.



OUR VISION

To be Canada's leading voice in changing the conversation about breast cancer by raising awareness about the financial challenges that accompany a diagnosis.



“

Knowing that I lacked the resources to manage this on my own as a single mother, I needed to ask for help. I am grateful to have discovered the Breast Cancer Support Fund, which has made such a difference for me and my son. Thank you.

– Laurie, recipient of support through the Breast Cancer Support Fund

A Message from the Founder

“
No woman
undergoing
treatment for
breast cancer
should have to
make impossible
decisions while
she fights for
her life.



This is the conviction at the heart of Breast Cancer Support Fund's mission. For a decade now, BCSF – supported entirely by our incredible community of donors and volunteers – has been helping Canada's most vulnerable women avoid having to decide between paying rent, buying food or carrying on with breast cancer treatment.

These are the choices faced by too many women who receive a breast cancer diagnosis – particularly those who are living in poverty or struggling to make ends meet as single parents. These are the choices that represent the hidden side of breast cancer: the often crippling financial impacts of undergoing treatment.

Each year in Canada, millions of dollars are raised for breast cancer care and research. Yet at the same time that these necessary dollars are bringing us closer to a future without breast cancer, countless women are struggling – today – to pay for out-of-pocket expenses related to their diagnosis and treatment.

BCSF exists to help these women. Donor support has directly delivered over \$400,000 in financial assistance to more than 300 women across Canada. The impact of this support has been life-changing – enabling our clients to both meet the costs of treatment and buy groceries to feed their children.

Right now, the need is greater than ever. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the financial challenges faced by the women we support have been compounded while cancer screenings have plummeted to historic lows. In 2021, we worked hard to make sure the needs of our clients were met – including piloting an innovative new program to deliver free, healthy meals directly to women in need.

As we anticipate continued high demand for funding support, we are relying more than ever on the generosity of our extraordinary community of donors and volunteers.

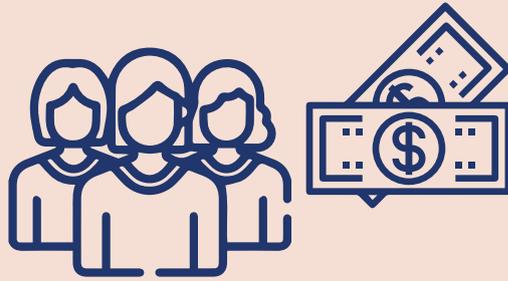
None of this work would be possible without you. On behalf of the entire BCSF Board of Directors and the women we serve across Canada, thank you for helping women living with breast cancer avoid having to make impossible decisions. We are deeply grateful.

Donna Sheehan
Founder, Breast Cancer Support Fund



Donna Sheehan
***Founder, Breast Cancer Survivor,
Breast Cancer Support Fund***





Together with our dedicated community of donors, volunteers and champions, Breast Cancer Support Fund has directly impacted the lives of almost **300 WOMEN** by providing **MORE THAN \$400,000** in short-term financial assistance.

**WHO
ARE THE
WOMEN
WE SERVE?**

The women we serve are wives, moms, sisters, aunts, friends.
**NONE OF THEM CAN AFFORD
TO GET BREAST CANCER.**

78%

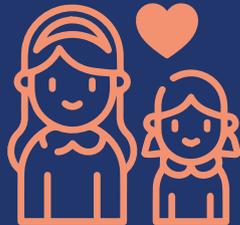
of our clients live
on less than \$25,000
per year while
undergoing treatment



40%

are single moms

33%



have children
under the age of 18

16%

are living with
Stage IV metastatic
breast cancer

NEARLY HALF ARE UNDER AGE 50

“

One in eight women in Canada will develop breast cancer during their lifetime. But not every woman will experience breast cancer the same way.



Deborah's story: The little things make the biggest difference



Six years after Deborah beat cancer for the third time, she found a lump on her collarbone. After a visit to her specialist, her worst nightmare was confirmed: it was cancer, and it was spreading.

“The reality hit me very hard,” says the mother of two. “But when I thought of those beautiful years I spent without cancer, I immediately gathered the courage and was once again ready to fight.”

Although her treatments were covered by insurance, soon enough Deborah's daily expenses and bills began to pile up. “I couldn't even spend a penny over my limit,” she says. “I had lost all of my hair and didn't even have any extra funds to buy a wig.”

After looking into options for accessing support, Deborah discovered the Breast Cancer Support Fund and applied for funding. She was immediately granted support to help offset the cost of needs outside of her medical expenses.

Deborah says the help she received from BCSF was transformative. "With the help of the Fund, I was able to do a lot of little things that I didn't think would be possible, like buying a wig, hat and scarf to help me feel more like myself," she says. "I was also able to buy some of the most important products to support my post-surgery recovery. I'm so happy I found BCSF!"

For women living in poverty, a breast cancer diagnosis can mean having to choose between paying rent, putting food on the table or paying for out-of-pocket expenses related to their treatment – like medication, hospital parking and transportation to access treatment.

Breast Cancer Support Fund is changing that. Take a look at how our clients used funding support from BCSF in 2020.

How Patients use our Support



How we are Funded



“

A U.S. study found that cancer patients from marginalized communities experience food insecurity at nearly five times the average rate.

*Source:
Journal of Health Care
for the Poor and
Underserved, 2014*

New program launched to close the food gap for vulnerable women



The vast majority of women served by the Breast Cancer Support Fund live on less than \$25,000 per year while undergoing breast cancer treatment. This means that food insecurity is a very real day-to-day challenge for many of our clients – one that impacts their health, the well-being of their families and their ability to manage through the physical and emotional toll of treatment.

For women who are single parents or live alone, the struggle to access healthy, nutritious food during treatment and recovery is multiplied.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the food insecurity crisis faced by the women we serve has been compounded – creating unforeseen financial barriers and making the very act of grocery shopping a threat to their lives. While everyone is at risk of contracting COVID-19, individuals

living with cancer are significantly more likely to experience severe illness and death.

Delivering healthy food to patients in need

Recognizing an urgent gap in services for women who live in poverty or do not have adequate supports in place, in 2021 the Breast Cancer Support Fund team piloted the Meal Support Program at two cancer centres. This is a new initiative to help our most vulnerable clients access healthy, nutritious meals while undergoing treatment for breast cancer.

The Meal Support Program will deliver free healthy meals directly to patients' homes five times per week – greatly reducing the financial burden of accessing food and reducing the need for women with compromised immune systems to enter a grocery store during the pandemic.

With a focus on serving single women and single mothers, the Meal Support Program will soon be available to women undergoing surgery, chemotherapy and radiation for breast cancer at Health Science North, a major cancer centre in northeastern Ontario, and the Juravinski Cancer Centre located within the Hamilton Health Sciences network.

The Meal Support Program is only possible with the generous support of our donor community. Thank you for helping to fill the food gap for vulnerable women undergoing breast cancer treatment.

Too many Canadians lack sufficient access to food. Breast cancer patients report that food insecurity has a negative impact on their physical and mental health.



The Bras Family Foundation doubles its support for BCSF

“
We just want to help women access the financial support they need so they can concentrate on getting well.



When the board of directors of the Bras Family Foundation first learned about the financial struggles faced by many women undergoing breast cancer treatment, Maggie Bras, the Foundation’s chair, said it was a wake-up call.

“That we had not given much thought to the financial impacts of breast cancer for women already living in poverty was shocking,” she said. “We were grateful that Donna brought the issue to our attention.”

Since 2012, the Bras Family Foundation has been a proud supporter of the Breast Cancer Support Fund. “We just want to help women access the financial support they need so they can concentrate on getting well,” said Maggie.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Bras Family Foundation immediately recognized the disproportionate impacts it would create for women undergoing treatment for breast cancer – and doubled its annual grant to BCSF.

Maggie knows the Foundation’s support is making a difference for women in need, and encourages others to consider giving what they can.

“If you can give, do,” Maggie said. “The reward of knowing you have helped even one woman living in poverty while she battles breast cancer is the ultimate gift!”

To Maggie Bras and the entire Bras Family Foundation – thank you! We are incredibly grateful for your enduring generosity and support.



Maggie Bras
Chair, The Bras Family Foundation



Centennial College PR students get social with BCSF!



In early 2021, the Breast Cancer Support Fund team was thrilled to work with students of Centennial College's public relations program to raise awareness for our cause.

The students, who took on BCSF for a course project, designed and launched a social media campaign asking followers to 'TAG AN AMAZING WOMAN' in their lives using the hashtag #supportthegirls. The campaign ran through to International Women's Day on March 8.

By the end of the campaign, BCSF's Instagram following had increased by an incredible 20 per cent – made up entirely of millennials!

We are so grateful to the wonderful students of Centennial College for helping to raise awareness of BCSF and the financial struggles faced by women living with breast cancer. Thank you!





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Helping Women. Today.

TAG AN AMAZING WOMAN DAY!

THIS INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S DAY
MONDAY, MARCH 8
TAG AND TELL US ABOUT
AN AMAZING WOMAN IN
YOUR LIFE USING
#SUPPORTTHEGIRLS

FOLLOW US TO LEARN MORE
[@BREASTCANCERSUPPORTFUND](#)



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“

Help support
women with
breast cancer.
Not someday.
Today.



Meet a BCSF Volunteer: Lindsay Kronenberg

BCSF is a volunteer-run organization. Here, we're proud to share the story of long-time volunteers and donors Lindsay and Bud Kronenberg.

“During my breast cancer treatment, I was fortunate to not experience financial issues. But from my conversations with other patients at the hospital, it was clear that this was not the case for everyone. I quickly learned that financial challenges are one of the biggest concerns for patients who can't work or who don't have family support.



In fact, some people I talked to had to decide between undergoing treatment or continuing to work in order to support their children.

I have known Donna Sheehan for years. In 2011, when she first told me about her idea to launch the Breast Cancer Support Fund, I jumped on board immediately. I've been on the Application Review Committee since the very beginning, reviewing all paperwork accompanying each request for funding.

It's not an easy role. We want to support everyone applying for support, but with limited funds we focus on selecting those in greatest need – especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has created even greater challenges for so many of our clients.

My husband, Bud, and I are also proud to support BCSF as donors. We support a number of charities, and our main criteria is trust. With BCSF, we know that our dollars go directly from our hands to the clients. I see this in my work with the organization every single day. “



Lindsay Kronenberg
BCSF Volunteer

The first Annual Peach Party at the Thompson Hotel was an amazing success!



We celebrated everything peachy including deliciously amazing food and fabulous live entertainment! Some of Toronto's most generous philanthropists, celebrities, taste makers, cultural leaders and socially conscious individuals danced the night away.

The event was proudly hosted by The Thompson Hotel, along with creative co-chairs Canadian designer David Dixon and his brother, interior designer and television personality, Glenn Dixon who also served as the night's master of ceremony.

Guests enjoyed All Star entertainment from four time Juno winning recording artist, Simone Denny and Juno nominee Tyler Shaw, along with DJ sets by international DJ Mark Holmes also known for his work with award winning, Platinum Blonde. There was also a celebrity midnight set by Michael Jordan's official DJ and OVO Bounce DJ Matthew Romeo who kept the room dancing until the wee hours of the morning.

All funds raised will support the Breast Cancer Support Fund, specifically breast cancer patients on their journey to wellness by directly providing much needed financial support.



Thank you to the BCSF team!



Breast Cancer Support Fund is an entirely volunteer-run organization. We're proud to recognize the incredible members of our team who are working hard to help the women we serve, every single day.

Board members

Glenn Dixon
Dina Nikitina
Jill Voisin
Donna Sheehan

Volunteers

Lyndsay Kronenberg
Lois Dydik
Daniela Pagliaro
Joyce Peats
Nicolette Blazenko
Paul Gray
David Dixon
Jason Forbes

Roula Panagiotopoulous
Deborah Peniuk
Wendy Topham
Debbie Boncheff
Elizabeth McDonald
Patrick Voisin
Peter Voisin
Heather Voisin

Thank you to our donors!



Without the enduring generosity of our donor community, BCSF would simply be unable to help women in urgent need of financial support while undergoing breast cancer treatment. Thank you so much to every single one of our wonderful donors. We are so grateful for your generosity.

- Aird & Berlis LLP
- Ballard Family Foundation
- Bras Family Foundation
- Boss Print & Creative Services
- Brock University
- CHEIL
- CI Investment
- Cocoon Apothecary
- Collective Agency
- Cure Foundation
- Death Defied
- Dejong Family
- Dotte and John Hecht Foundation
- Etobicoke Dolphins Girls Hockey League
- FASHION magazine
- Fuse Marketing
- Franklin Lau
- Fusion Mineral Paint
- Hologic
- Indeed Laboratories
- Jules Casting
- KARE Design
- Ketel One Organics
- Kruger
- Manifest Communications
- Milestone Studio
- Mystique Brand Communications
- Opening Night Flowers
- Piates Barr Studio
- PURE Communications
- Philp Smith Foundation
- Provisions
- Phat
- ra enterprise
- Red Rocket Cafe
- Saeco
- Sappho
- St. Joseph's Media
- Snowy Owl Films
- Speed Rack
- TD Bank
- Terra20
- The Unexpected Gift
- Thompson Hotel
- Turner Fleischer
- Trulife
- United Services Group
- United Way
- Valentina's
- Well.ca
- Westbury National
- Zulu Alpha Kilo
- 100 Men of Oshawa

“

I was trying to do everything I could to take care of myself, and it was costing me thousands of dollars. I never knew a program like BCSF even existed or that I would be able to get that kind of financial help. It was like all my angels came together. That's the way I look at it, whether it's the support of friends and family who rallied around me, or the funding from the BCSF. It really helped lower my stress level. I know a lot of people go into debt if they don't have financial support, but with the help of BCSF I didn't. I'm so grateful for that.

– Saideh, recipient of funding from Breast Cancer Support Fund



THANK YOU

The work of the Breast Cancer Support Fund is only possible with the support of our extraordinary community of donors, volunteers, supporters and champions.

We are deeply grateful to you for being by our side. Together, we are helping to ease the financial burden of breast cancer for Canadians in need.



**Easing the Financial Burden of Canadians
Living with Breast Cancer**

416.233.7410 | donna@breastcancersupportfund.ca | breastcancersupportfund.ca

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