



## 2024 MEDIA KIT

### About The Breast Cancer Support Fund

The Breast Cancer Support Fund is dedicated to reducing the financial strain experienced by Canadians diagnosed with breast cancer.

Understanding the profound impact of this illness, the charity extends a helping hand to those unable to afford the essentials—food, shelter, medication, and other treatment-related expenses. Financial aid is specifically aimed at patients undergoing active treatment or those within two months post-treatment, prioritizing those living at or below the poverty line.

The BCSF focuses on illuminating the financial difficulties that come with a diagnosis while emphasizing the critical role of prevention. Through raising awareness and fostering understanding, we strive to create a landscape where the conversation around breast cancer is not only about the medical battle but also about the journey towards holistic wellness, unburdened by financial strain.

### Our Mission

To support Canadian breast cancer patients on their journey to wellness by reducing their economic burden.

### 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 and the importance of prevention when it comes to breast cancer.

### How Breast Cancer Support Fund is Different

We help women with breast cancer. Not someday. Today. #CareBeforeCure

Because the rent is due. Groceries must be bought. Hospital parking is expensive. And lost wages during treatment and recovery means less money for the bills.

Despite millions raised to find a cure, very little priority has been placed on providing much needed financial support for the nearly 26,000 Canadians diagnosed with breast cancer every year.

The truth about breast cancer is that the financial burdens can be just as devastating as the physical ones. This is why the Breast Cancer Support Fund (BCSF) exists – to bridge the gap between the financial reality faced by breast cancer patients and the limited financial assistance available.

Cancer-related, out-of-pocket expenses, such as medication not covered for treatment, over-the-counter medications, transportation costs, hospital parking, prosthetics, wigs, restorative therapies and medical devices add to the burden for patients who are sick, vulnerable and fighting for their lives. However, approximately 75% of the financial assistance provided to patients helps them pay for basic necessities such as rent, groceries, utilities,

The BCSF is one of the only national organizations actively addressing the devastating economic impact of breast cancer. Millions of dollars are raised in the name of breast cancer and directed to research and education every year, while many patients struggle with expenses related to their diagnosis and treatment. We help support women on their journey to recovery.

## Programs and Services

The Breast Cancer Support Fund offers two support programs to low-income breast cancer patients that meet the eligibility criteria. We prioritize applications according to income levels and frequently find that patients to whom we provide financial assistance are living at or below the poverty line.

### Financial Support Program

The **Financial Support Program** supports Canadian breast cancer patients who do not have the financial resources to cover the costs of basic necessities such as food and shelter, as well as medical and additional expenses related to their treatment.

The primary reason for the financial crisis is often the patient's lack of income during the time they are in treatment.

BCSF offers up to \$2,000 in financial assistance so patients can focus on getting treatment and recovery.

### The Meal Support Program

The Meal Support Program provides nutritious, prepared meals to low-income patients struggling with a significant financial burden. Patients receive prepared meals for a period of 4 to 24 weeks, depending on their treatment plan - *at no cost*. Children under the age of 18 are enrolled in the program ~ and occasionally a spouse.

The Meal Support Program supports patients who both live in the community where they are being treated and patients who have to travel from out of town for treatment. This program is currently available in Ontario and Atlantic Canada.

### **Eligibility and Application Process**

Women and men that are actively going through treatment can apply online. Eligibility criteria are straightforward: applicants must be diagnosed with breast cancer, provide comprehensive financial documentation, and have their applications endorsed by a healthcare professional involved in their care.

### **Breast Health Program**

The breast health Program educates Canadians about the importance of prevention when it come to breast cancer by providing information on risks factors and how to reduce the risk.

## **Fundraising & Events**

Every donation and contribution has an impact helping to keep a roof over the heads of breast cancer patients and put nutritious food on the table to support them during treatment

The BCSF expresses sincere gratitude for its many donors and sponsors.

### **Peach Party Takes Place Thursday Oct 10th 2024**

The Peach Party is our annual legacy event and top fundraiser, and the place to spot local celebrities. It's a night of fashion, fun, and fundraising and is an intimate networking event with a lot to celebrate!

We hope you'll join the philanthropists, taste makers and socially conscious individuals, as we support the financial needs of those fighting breast cancer. We have a lot to be grateful for, and we could not have done it without our very dedicated team and generous supporters!

For other events hosted by BCSF and other supporters, please visit the website.

## **Neighbour Network**

The Neighbour Network, BCSF's newest initiative, is an opportunity for the community to unite to support breast cancer patients.

Through the Neighbour Network, BCSF is providing essential support to patients during their greatest time of need. We reduce their financial burden by helping them pay for medications, rent, groceries, utilities, transportation and childcare, ensuring patients can focus on their recovery and getting well.

## **Media Highlights**

The Breast Cancer Support Fund has garnered significant media attention for its commendable work, reaching an audience of more than 3.4 million in 2023. Recognition spans across various platforms, including high-profile television news segments and national newspapers. Notably, our efforts have been spotlighted by major media outlets over the past few years highlighting the Financial Assistance Program, the Meal Plan programs, and the annual Peach Party fundraiser.

- **CTV's The Good Stuff** with Mary Berg featured Donna Sheehan and Rony Pal from Meels in their Good People Segment on <date> - [Watch Video](#)
- **CBC's Our Toronto** on Oct 23, 2023 during Breast Cancer Awareness Month - Watch Video - watch video
- **CityNews at 6** highlighted the work that BCSF is doing to support patients with a focus on the new Meal Support Program - watch video

## Facts and Statistics

### Prevalence and Incidence:

- Breast cancer is the most common cancer among Canadian women, excluding non-melanoma skin cancers.
- Approximately 1 in 8 Canadian women is expected to develop breast cancer during her lifetime and 1 in 33 will die from it.

### New Cases and Mortality Rates:

- An estimated 27,000 women and 260 men in Canada were diagnosed with breast cancer in 2024 alone.
- Around 5,100 women and 55 men in Canada died from breast cancer every year.
- Impact on Indigenous and Underrepresented Communities: Indigenous women, as well as those in remote and rural communities, may face additional barriers to accessing screening and treatment, potentially affecting outcomes.

### Financial Impact:

- Indirect costs, including lost income and productivity losses to the Canadian economy, can range from \$75 million to \$317 million per year, according to the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer.
- Almost 60% of young adult survivors spent at least \$100/month on cancer-related expenses, and 49% missed at least one year of work.

### The patients we support

- 78% of the support provided to patients help them to cover the basic necessities: rent, groceries, utilities.
- 48% are women under the age of 50
- 33% have children under the age of 16
- The youngest woman supported by BCSF was 23.
- 40% are single mothers
- 15% are living with Stage IV metastatic breast cancer
- 19% are living on social assistance

## Quotations, Impact Statements & Patient Testimonials

"We are all hoping for a world where breast cancer doesn't exist, but right now, we help breast cancer patients with the short-term financial support they need so they can focus on getting well."

~ Donna Sheehan, Founder, Executive Director, Breast Cancer Survivor

"Millions of dollars are raised in the name of breast cancer and directed to research and education every year, while many patients struggle with expenses related to their diagnosis and treatment. Our goal is to be a leader in raising awareness of this crisis, while also striving to build a community of support around the issue."

~ Donna Sheehan, Founder, Executive Director, Breast Cancer Survivor

"My quality of life would have suffered if I did not receive this support at this time in my life. There are so many pleasurable things that are taken away during this journey. Having a comforting and nutritious meal is both pleasurable and life-sustaining. Even though I will never meet the chef and staff who spent the time preparing these meals, I feel that they were part of my healing journey. I thank them for their work and energy when I didn't have it within me to feed myself. I fully and whole-heartedly recommend this 'real-food' program that is locally based."

~ Janice P.

"Undergoing cancer treatment with 2 young teens at home and a spouse who is working long hours to make up some of the income lost due to me not currently working, this service has been wonderful and extremely helpful during this difficult time. This service has taken away a great deal of mental and financial stress. The meals are well prepared and easy to heat so my kids can easily prepare their own meals."

~ Jenn G.

*"Thank you so much for helping me. Everything for the last year has been going wrong in my life. This is the first good thing to happen that I can remember for some time."*

*Abby New Brunswick*

*"I was at the point where I just could not survive any longer and here was this ray of hope shining through the clouds. Not only did I receive financial support: I also received friendship and emotional support. The process is made very easy by BCSF and they respond very quickly. They truly understand the crisis that exists when health stands in the way of work and there is the stress of just trying to get through every day."*

*" Joy B.C.*

"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"

"Offering this service to the family rather than just the patient is amazing and incredibly helpful. Most days I do not have the energy to make dinner for when my children and husband

return from school/work. The meals provided are healthy, well made and portion sizes allow for leftovers. I am so thankful for this program – it is greatly appreciated. Thank you." Alison, Nova Scotia

[CLICK HERE TO SEE SOME OF OUR PATIENT STORIES](#)

## Media Resources and Assets

### **Breast Cancer Support Fund Logo**

Logo use is allowed with permission.  
To access our logo files, please click here.

### **Image Library**

Image use is allowed and does not require permission.  
To access our image library of high-quality photos are available here:

## Media Contact

### **Media Inquiries**

For media inquiries, interviews, or quotes please contact:

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For Donna's full bio, click here

### **Speaking Engagements**

For speaking, education or workplace events please contact:

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