

ECL Cancer Prevention Study Visit at the

SWISS CANCER LEAGUE



Association of European
Cancer Leagues (ECL)

16 and 17 September 2019
Bern, Switzerland

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DAY 1

INTRODUCTION AND TOUR DE TABLE

Annick Rywalski (AR), head of the prevention section at *Krebsliga Schweiz* (Swiss Cancer League) welcomed participants in Bern. Wendy Yared (YR), Director of the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL), proceeded to welcome everyone in the study visit and thanked the Swiss Cancer League for hosting the meeting. Subsequently, present participants introduced themselves during tour de table.

SESSION 1. OVERVIEW OF PREVENTION DEPARTMENT'S WORK & STRATEGIC APPROACH

PREVENTION STRATEGY OF THE SWISS CANCER LEAGUE

Annick Rywalski (AR) presented an overview of the Swiss demographics and the country's federal structure with 26 cantons. In that context, the [Swiss Cancer League](#) is an NGO acting as an umbrella organisation for 18 cantonal leagues. Its work doesn't solely focus on cancer prevention and screening, but also on research funding, patient survivorship and cancer-related advocacy.

AR presented the Swiss cancer burden, it being the second most common cause of death and one of the big four non-communicable diseases (NCDs) affecting the country. Given the fact that 1 out of 3 Swiss will suffer from cancer, the organisation puts a special focus on survivorship. Therefore, prevention work does not only focus on healthy populations but also cancer survivors.

The organisation's priorities and strategic areas of work were discussed, in which health promotion plays a key role when addressing tobacco, sun protection, environmental health, nutrition, physical activity and cancer screening. All of this are tackled with underlying principles of health literacy, equal opportunities and accessibility, as well of quality of life.

EUROPEAN CODE AGAINST CANCER: ICONS

Florian Suter (FS) presented the Swiss Cancer League latest product: new icons for the European Code Against Cancer (ECAC). They have been developed with the rationale that "every person should be encouraged to shape their lifestyle based on their current resources and circumstances so that his or her quality of life improves."

The icons design process was presented, which involved the "reading and writing" association in Switzerland to ensure proper understanding according to health literacy in the target population.

The internal and external strategies for information and awareness-raising were explained. The Swiss Cancer League is planning to determine a yearly focused area within the ECAC, most likely being environment for 2020. Participants proceeded to discuss the differential use of the ECAC for behavioural and structural prevention.

PREVENTION PROJECTS: SCHOOL PROJECT FOR UV PROTECTION & LEGISLATION ON SUNBEDS

Nolvonn Gambin (NG) presented the skin cancer burden in Switzerland as a rationale for the focus that the organisation puts on [sun protection](#).

As an example of behavioural prevention, NG focused on the “Children book on Sun UV protection”, a bottom-up project that piloted in the canton of Zug aiming at 0-6-year-old children. A book has been developed, in which games focusing on sun protection are embedded within the content.

In terms of structural prevention, the focus on Swiss legislation on solariums was showcased. Only recently in June 2019 the country introduced legislated solarium facilities. The measures included and an implementation plan of the federal law were presented.

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES: SECONDARY & TERTIARY PREVENTION

Alexandra Balz (AB) presented a pilot project supporting cancer survivors through a telephone health coaching service. The rationale of the project was reviewed, which is based on the Australian Healthy Living after Cancer (HLaC) initiative. The project is expected to start recruiting patients for a telephone coaching 6-month programme in early 2020.

Kerstin Zuk (KZ) presented 2 projects related to healthy diets, which lay on the shifting focus the organisation has put towards consultation processes rather than primary prevention. A newly developed website on healthy diets was showcased, which includes a pilot phonenumber on nutritional advice for cancer patients ([link](#)). Some nutrition brochures were showcased, with different materials aiming at primary prevention or survivorship. Discussion on how to target the information provided according to the socioeconomic background followed, as it is a clear determinant when it comes to healthy diets.

SESSION 2. SPECIAL FOCUS ON TOBACCO CONTROL IN SWITZERLAND

TOBACCO QUIT LINE IN SWITZERLAND

Catherine Abbühl (CA) presented the Swiss national tobacco quit line, available at [0848 000 181](tel:0848000181). The Swiss Cancer League holds the mandate to organise the quit line with government funds since 2005. Latest cost-effectiveness data showed that the quit line invests 0.20 CHF per smoker and the return investment is 1:4. The counselling strategy based on behavioural change was presented, as well as the collaboration established with hospitals across the country. The quit line consultations over time were discussed, specially the rise experienced in 2016-17 linked to a multimedia campaign encouraging to quit smoking based on a competition framework.

Given that the smoking cessation budget has been reduced nationally, the Swiss Cancer League joined the “[StopSmoking.ch](#)” consortium which has launched a digital platform for smokers interest in quitting. Participants engaged in discussions about how to tackle e-cigarettes and the effectiveness of a hospital-based quitting programmes as available in Switzerland.

POLITICAL ISSUES IN REGARDS OF SWISS TOBACCO LEGISLATION

Franziska Lenz (FL) presented an overview of the Swiss tobacco legislation.

There are around two million smokers in Switzerland representing 27,1% of the population (male 31.0%, female 23.3%), with smoking trends decreasing slowly in a rate comparable to international standards. The tobacco-related legislation in Switzerland is rather weak and has a big focus on personal freedom of choice. In consequence, it leads to situations such as 3 cantons not having any age limit for buying tobacco products at all. Furthermore, Switzerland signed the WHO Framework Agreement on Tobacco Control (FCTC) agreement in 2004 but has not ratified it due to the lack of corresponding legislation.

FL elaborated on the reasons behind the complex situation, including the strong presence of the tobacco industry in the country, as well as the headquarters of the World Health Organisation (WHO). The new Swiss law on tobacco products was discussed, given its concurrent development to the meeting. In early September 2019 the popular initiative "Children without tobacco" led by some health organisations, among which the Swiss Cancer League, reached the necessary 100,000 signatures to submit to the government ([read more here](#)).

SITE VISIT- FEDERAL OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH (FOPH)

NATIONAL STRATEGY OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NCD STRATEGY)

AR introduced Eva Bruhin (EB), the head of section prevention strategies at FOPH. EB introduced the [Swiss NCDs Strategy 2017-2024](#), which covers five diseases and different risk factors along with its related socioeconomic factors. The plan is based upon two key pillars: health promotion & prevention and prevention in healthcare. The different actors involved in the plan were discussed, which include the federal authorities, the cantons and the national health promotion foundation. Finally, EB build upon different implementation challenges that FOPH is currently facing, such as the need to raise political awareness, restricted financial resources to tackle NCDs and the importance of orchestrated action among the NCD-community.

NATIONAL STRATEGY AGAINST CANCER (NSK STRATEGY)

Michael Röthlisberger (MR), co-director of the NSK, presented the [NSK strategy 2014-2020](#). MR presented the rationale behind the strategy, and specially the regional disparities found in the country due to a complex federal system made up of 26 cantons, in which health is a matter of region. The strategy is led by [Oncosuisse](#), a platform consisting of seven cancer-related institutions. By 2020, when the strategy comes to an end, the goal is to have built a cancer community that will take upon the developed actions and continue on the achieved projects.

ENVIRONMENT RELATED TO HEALTH & CANCER

RADON AND CANCER PREVENTION

Fabio Barazza (FB), scientific assistant at the section on radiological risks at the FOPH, introduced the evolving interest and understanding on radon over time, having Switzerland been one of the first countries worldwide to introduce radioprotection limiting values. The country's [National Radon Action plan 2012-2020](#) was presented, currently undergoing internal evaluation. Such plan focuses on various

areas, from detecting dwellings with radon emission over the limits, assessing public awareness of the health effects due to radon to creating informative booklets for the general population.

POSITIVE EFFECTS OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS OF HUMAN HEALTH

Gerda Jimmy (GJ), representative of the forest division at the Federal Office for the Environment ([FOEN](#)) presented the agency's working areas including its commission on environment and health. The positive effects of natural environments were discussed, with a special focus on its interlinkage to health. Scientific evidence on the forests' psychological effects on health and its potential role when planning cancer and other NCDs prevention interventions were presented.

CANCER PREVENTION & ENVIRONMENT

Florian Suter (FS), Prevention and Environment specialist at the Swiss Cancer League, presented the link between environment and cancer. Given the fact that environment effects on health are complex, the importance of the precautionary principle acts as a key rationale for the [organisation's work on the field](#). When it comes to environmental factors, FS explained the framework through which the Swiss Cancer League prioritises its work on environmental factors, taking into account scientific evidence, public awareness and political importance with the ultimate goal to contribute to the reduction of cancer risk, both from the behavioural and structural prevention perspective.

CANCER EPIDEMIOLOGY IN SWITZERLAND

Ulrich Wagner (UW), Director of the Foundation National Institute for Cancer Epidemiology and Registration ([NICER](#)), presented a snapshot of cancer epidemiology in Switzerland. UW put a special focus in the fact that cancer incidence has been slightly decreasing among men but increasing in women, mainly due to tobacco use. The historical development of Cancer Registration in Switzerland was reviewed; notably the data collection was conducted on a voluntary basis with a bottom-up approach. From 2020 a new law will be enforced, and national reporting will become compulsory with the aim to extend the registry coverage and data quality. Furthermore, a separate paediatric registration is contemplated, covering population aged 0-19 years old.

STATISTICAL DATA, MONITORING, EVALUATION (MonAM)

Laure Curt (LC) presented the Swiss Monitoring System of Addiction and Noncommunicable Diseases (MonAM). LC expressed the importance of disseminating knowledge about NCDs and addictions rather than creating more knowledge. To do so, the [MonAM website](#) was developed and launched on October 2018, with a broad visualisation of indicators related to NCDs and addictions. The website features maps and graphs on cancer incidence and distribution in the country. LC presented several factsheets, booklets and brochures that have been created for the general public.

COMMUNICATION & CAMPAIGNING

Flavia Nicolai (FN) excused Barbara Kull, team leader on communication and NCDs at the FOPH, and presented on her behalf the FOPH's communication strategy on NCDs. Its main goal is to provide "the population with reliable information on how to stay well and on health-promoting and health-damaging

behaviours in an age-appropriate and needs-based manner". A focus was put on online platform for partners which will go live in Autumn 2020. It intends to serve as a knowledge hub for health professionals and media in the field of NCDs.

FN, head of communication and marketing at the Swiss Cancer League, then proceeded to present the organisation work in the field. In 2015 the communication was made in associations and several featuring heterogeneous campaigns. That led to a rearrangement of the strategy towards an umbrella campaign overarching all the cantonal leagues under the message "Krebs ist es egal, we du bist. Uns aber nicht" ("Cancer doesn't care who you are. But we care about you"). A spotlight on melanoma prevention campaigns was put, given the high burden present in Switzerland. The importance of a branding and using testimonials was underlined, with some data showcasing the organisation's successful strategy.

DAY 2

SESSION 3. PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CANCER PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

CANCER SCREENING IN SWITZERLAND

Guido Biscontin (GB) presented an overview of the screening programmes in Switzerland. Breast and colorectal cancer are covered by population-based programmes only in some cantons. The Swiss Cancer League and its partner organizations involved in screening face challenges due to the lack of national management and harmonisation of such programmes. The organisation is also involved in the management of the [Cancer Screening Committee](#), which it is devoted to the questions surrounding cancer screening issues, such for example as the lung cancer screening programme.

Moreover, cervical cancer screening programme is not in place, though debate revolves around HPV test more than on the implementation of an organised cervical cancer screening. The screening rate of the latter is dependent on revenue and education level, as situation that perpetuates health inequities. GB proceeded to elaborate on the national vaccination recommendations, being HPV vaccination recommended to both boys and girls from 11 to 26 years old.

PREVENTION BUS & PREVENTION EVENTS

Christian Mury (CM) presented the events that the Swiss Cancer League organises in regards of cancer prevention. The organisation offers different [products](#) in the form of buses or augmented models of the colon and breast through which cancer prevention messages are spread.

After the session, participants had the opportunity to visit the [präventionsbus](#) by themselves and experiment with the stations delivering information based on the European Code Against Cancer.

SESSION 4. COMMON PRIORITIES IN CANCER PREVENTION

Facilitated discussion amongst participants from ECL member leagues and representatives of the Swiss Cancer Leagues regarding areas of common interest and potential collaborations in the future was held.

Representatives from 4 countries presented the actions undertaken by their organisation in regards of cancer prevention.

SPANISH ASSOCIATION AGAINST CANCER (AECC)

Sebastián del Busto (SB), National Prevention & Health Promotion Coordinator, presented [AECC's](#) mission which focuses in three areas: prevention, patient & family care and research. A recently established new multilevel strategy for cancer prevention work was presented, combining community interventions with political agenda, advocacy and international collaboration. Primary, secondary and tertiary prevention projects were showcased.

CYPRUS ASSOCIATION OF CANCER PATIENTS AND FRIENDS (PASYKAF)

Marina Kafourou-Cosma (MK), Senior Awareness Officer, presented actions that [PASYKAF](#) has organised in the past year revolving around the European Code Against Cancer (ECAC). MK showcased lectures targeting general population, known as "coffee with love", as well as a train the trainer action in order to ensure teachers are knowledgeable on the ECAC messages and will convey them to their students. Furthermore, awareness raising campaigns on skin cancer and UV protection were presented. On a political level, PASYKAF released a press conference during World No Tobacco Day.

LEGA ITALIANA PER LA LOTTA CONTRO I TUMORI (LILT)

Ylenia Sacco (YS), Head of Research and Innovation, presented the activities that [LILT-Biella](#) organises in terms of cancer prevention. In 2016, the organisation inaugurated "Spazio LILT", a multifunctional cancer centre for prevention, early diagnosis and rehabilitation in Biella (Piedmont). From 2019, LILT-Biella has set tertiary prevention as a key priority area, maintaining the ongoing primary and secondary prevention activities. CHOICE (multicentric nation-wide RCT), a new pilot study on physical activity for cancer survivors, was also presented.

PORTUGUESE LEAGUE AGAINST CANCER

Humberto Delgado Lourenço (HDL), Executive Coordinator, presented on behalf of the [Portuguese League Against Cancer](#) the organisation's focus areas, among which prevention activities. On primary prevention, HDL showcased health promotion activities, such as "schools against cancer", and specific cancer-related actions, such as "healthy sun heroes" for skin cancer and "pink wave" for breast cancer. The league has also organized multiple campaigns, such as "HPV e quê?" and "smoke is a drug".

INTERNAL SWISS CANCER LEAGUE TRAINING SESSION

Carolina Espina (CE), scientist at the International Agency for Research on Cancer ([IARC](#)), presented an overview on the European Code Against Cancer (ECAC) implementation. She presented the rationale behind the ECAC as well as the process through which the fourth edition of the code was developed. The three levels of information were revised and visualised in the [ECAC website](#): the code itself with 12 messages (level 1), a questions and answers section (level 2) and the scientific justification (level 3).

CE proceeded to focus on the method behind the ECAC development, which basis lied in 5 principles: recommendations based in robust scientific evidence, risk causes significant cancer burden throughout the EU, focus on the European individual, relevant for the general population (not to high-risk groups), and recommendations propose actions that the individual can take.

All evidence gathered was looking into causality and effectiveness related to cancer, including two kinds of evidence: on causes and risks for cancer and on medical interventions. The authoritative sources ([IARC monographs](#) and [WCRF CUP](#)) were explained, as they are built upon similar methodologies. Also, WHO position papers and the latest scientific evidence was reviewed using PICOS model. Such well-established procedure could be easily replicated to update the ECAC and extend it to other regions worldwide, such as Latin America.

CE proceeded to review the 12 recommendations and their evolvement from previous editions and remarked the footnote towards extending the ECAC recommendations not only to individual level, but population level towards governments and other stakeholders.

David Ritchie (DR) followed to present the Association of European Cancer Leagues ([ECL](#)) actions to promote and evaluate the impact of the ECAC. ECL's 2019-2021 strategy was reviewed, in which cancer prevention lays in its core. DR proceeded to present a series of surveys and studies in which the ECAC awareness and impact was been evaluated through different relevant stakeholders, including cancer leagues representatives and general population.

DR went through the main results which underpin the benefits of the ECAC, its strengths and challenges, as well as the importance to maintain its promotion in the future embedding a social determinants of health perspective and including new evidence.

CONCLUSIONS AND FOLLOW UP

DR gave final remarks and thanked Krebsliga Schweiz for sharing the work done by the prevention team. Discussions on the establishment of a potential ECL prevention taskforce will follow as outcomes of this workshop.

ANNEX 1. MEETING AGENDA



**ECL CANCER PREVENTION STUDY VISIT:
SWISS CANCER LEAGUE**

Monday 16 - Tuesday 17 September 2019
 Swiss Cancer League, Effingerstrasse 40
 CH-3001, Bern
 T +41 31 389 91 09




PROGRAMME

DAY 1	
09:00 - 09:30	Welcome
09:30 - 11:00	Session 1) Overview of prevention department's work & strategic approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevention Strategy of the Swiss Cancer League (Annick Rywalski) European Code against Cancer: ICONS (Florian Suter) Prevention Projects: school project for UV Protection – legislation on sunbeds (Nolvonn Gambin) Healthy Lifestyles: secondary & tertiary prevention (Alexandra Balz / Kerstin Zuk)
11:00 - 11:30	Coffee break
11:30 - 12:30	Session 2) Special focus on tobacco control in Switzerland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tobacco – quit line & political issues in regards of Swiss tobacco legislation (Catherine Abbühl / Franziska Lenz)
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch
14:00 - 17:30 SITE VISIT- Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH)	
14:00 - 14:10	Introduction
14:10 - 14:40	National Strategy of non communicable diseases (NCD Strategy) & National Strategy against Cancer (NSK Strategy) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eva Bruhin & Michael Röthlisberger
14:40 - 15:40	Environment & Health / Cancer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radon and Cancer Prevention (Fabio Barazza - FOPH) Positive effects of natural environments of human health (Gerda Jimmy - FOEN) Cancer Prevention & Environment (Florian Suter, Prevention and Environment specialist - Swiss Cancer League)
15:40 - 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 - 16:40	Statistical data, monitoring, evaluation (MONAM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laure Curt - FOPH
16:30 - 17:10	Cancer Epidemiology in Switzerland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NICER: Dr. Ulrich Wagner, Director of the Foundation National Institute for Cancer Epidemiology and Registration (NICER)



PROGRAMME

DAY 1 (cont.)	
16:40 - 17:20	<p>Communication & campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FCPH: Barbara Kull • Swiss Cancer League: Flavia Nicolai / Luca Toneatti
17:20 - 17:30	Conclusion
18:00 - 19:00	Social Programme - Stattland
19:30	Evening Dinner - Grissini
DAY 2	
08:45 - 09:00	Welcome
09:00 - 10:30	<p>Session 3) Primary and secondary cancer prevention activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention BUS – Prevention events (Christian Mury, Corinne Rentsch) • Vaccination & Screening topics (Guido Biscontin)
10:30 - 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 - 12:00	<p>Session 4) Common priorities in cancer prevention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated discussion amongst participants from ECL member leagues and representatives of the Swiss Cancer Leagues regarding areas of common interest and potential collaborations in the future. • Opportunities for 2-3 presentations by participants
12:15 - 13:15	<p>Internal Swiss Cancer League training session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are invited to join this 1-hour session the evidence and implementation of the European Code against Cancer in Europe with guest lecture from Carolina Espina (IARC).
13:15 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 14:30	<p>Conclusions and follow up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final remarks from Swiss Cancer League and ECL