



WHO WE ARE

The Cancer Support Community of Southern Connecticut (CSC-SCT) is an affiliate of the Cancer Support Community – an international network of independently chartered nonprofits that provide professional programs of emotional support, education and hope for people affected by cancer, at no charge to participants, so that no one faces cancer alone.

The Cancer Support Community was formed by the unification of The Wellness Community and Gilda’s Club, and CSC-SCT is proud to be building the first facility and off-site capacity of its kind in Connecticut, serving **Fairfield, New Haven, Middlesex and New London Counties** – and your help is needed to open our doors in late 2013 and bring this amazing resource to our community. CSC-SCT is a registered charitable organization (IRS EIN: 56-2542098).

WHO NEEDS A CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY?

Cancer has staggeringly high incidence rates, nationally and locally.

Nationally, looking at all forms of cancer, **over the course of their life, men have a 1 in 2 chance of developing an invasive cancer and women have a 1 in 3 chance** of doing so.

The American Cancer Society estimates that 1.5 million cases of cancer are diagnosed annually, with about **20,000 new cancer diagnoses made in Connecticut** each year.

Table 1. Estimated New Cancer Cases for Selected Cancer Types in Connecticut, 2010

All	Female Breast	Uterine Cervix	Colon & Rectum	Uterine Corpus	Leukemia	Lung & Bronchus	Melanoma of the Skin	Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma	Prostate	Urinary Bladder
20,750	2,960	120	1,770	650	510	2,640	1,090	860	2,940	1,110

The impact of CSC-SCT goes beyond those diagnosed.

Think of the kids: It’s estimated that almost **a quarter of cancer patients in the US have children under 18** living in their households. These children, as well as any other relatives, loved ones, caregivers and/or close friends are all eligible for membership at CSC-SCT, with the same professional guidance that ensures members are able to navigate our portfolio of psychosocial support services.

The impact of CSC-SCT goes beyond those currently living with cancer.

Support can be a lifelong need. Happily, the 20,000 annual diagnoses of cancer in Connecticut are adding up to a growing survivor community. The national 5-year **survival rate for all cancers has risen from 50% to 68%** when last calculated in 2005.

Childhood cancer has seen a particularly high increase in survival, rising from 58% to nearly 80% thanks to advances in treatment. These survivors, for whom a community of peers can be particularly valuable, are easy to integrate into CSC's robust programming.

CSC-SCT's focus on fostering a warm community environment where members can "come as you are" (as well as programming that includes options for post-treatment and long-term survivors of all ages) allows individuals to remain active members as long as *they* need support, whether through formal activities or on a drop-in basis.

WHY A CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY?

In 2009, Yale University School of Public Health conducted a needs assessment for cancer-related services in Southern Connecticut, funded and supported in part by CSC-SCT. Healthcare professionals, community leaders, cancer patients and survivors were interviewed to assess their knowledge and opinions on the resources available in Southern Connecticut.

Research participants were asked to identify gaps in services currently available in the local area. As a result of this assessment, the need for a Cancer Support Community facility in Southern Connecticut was confirmed. Specific areas of need included:

- guidance to patients in navigating psychosocial support services,
- programming for caregivers,
- cancer survivor support programs,
- programs that cater to the diverse populations of cancer patients and survivors,
- access to and integration of alternative therapies into cancer treatments,
- information and guidance on nutritional options for patients,
- body image counseling for both men and women, and
- knowledge and access at all stages of cancer, including post-treatment.

Estimates based on similar Cancer Support Community chapters and local demographic information suggest that a minimum of **1,000 members would utilize our on-site and off-site programming annually** – with many individuals to be served through lectures and other educational programs through outreach and awareness opportunities. Our ability to serve members is more likely to be limited by available financial support than demand for our program and services.

CSC-SCT WILL BE A UNIQUE RESOURCE FOR SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT

CSC-SCT offerings are all evidence-based and professionally led. Our program has a framework designed by a national team of experts, and will be implemented locally by a licensed health and wellness professional who will adapt our portfolio of offerings to members' needs. **We maintain a gold standard of psychosocial cancer support**, recognized around the world as the hallmark of the Cancer Support Community. This commitment allows medical professionals to refer their patients without hesitation, building a strong alliance between our efforts and theirs, and ensures that all members of the community have access to the highest quality – and full spectrum – of services.

The diversity of our programming best serves a diversity of needs. By offering a portfolio of psychosocial support services including multiple offerings for **group support, education, healthy lifestyle, social activities, information and referrals**, our licensed professionals are able to help **each member construct a customized plan that serves their individual needs**. CSC-SCT is a single source for most psychosocial needs, a singular community that empowers those affected by cancer with knowledge and hope.

The CSC-SCT target population is expansive and inclusive. Our programs are designed to serve **anyone affected by cancer - men, women, children, teens, patients, survivors, caregivers, friends and loved ones**. We accept members affected by **any type of cancer**. We accept members at **any stage of their journey**, from the moment of diagnosis, to years post treatment or families living with loss. Our members are the experts in identifying their support needs; our professionals help them navigate the appropriate options.

All CSC-SCT programs are offered free of charge to members. This is critical to maintaining our community and program success. Fees would inevitably and problematically alter the therapeutic relationship within specific programs. Equally important, while the need for psychosocial services to complement medical care crosses all socioeconomic lines, access to these services is not as universal. **CSC-SCT is a community with no financial barriers** for our members. Our members are equals, and form a community based on emotional and social support for each other, accessing program opportunities based on their individual needs, unqualified by ability to pay.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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