

Annual Report 2019

Dear lifecircle members

I am pleased once again to report on the activities of our association.

As you probably know, the Board decided to stop admitting new members from 1 May 19. This was necessary because we had so many requests for a voluntary assisted death (VAD) that we had no available appointments for the coming five months but we also want to offer our existing members appointments at short notice, which forced the stoppage on us. As a result, membership has increased only slightly, from 1440 at the end of 2018 to 1579 active members at the end of 2019.

Our dealings with the only pharmacy in the BL canton prepared to fill the prescription for the necessary medication, are well established and we are pleased that transactions with the pharmacy are so smooth and considerate.

A second organization has rented space in the property rented by Eternal Spirit in Oristal in Liestal and started operations in September 2019. The new organization, Pegasos, has nothing to do with lifecircle and lifecircle's work is neither influenced nor hampered by the existence of the new organization.

In autumn 2019, the opportunity to buy a large property in Flüh presented itself, in which we could offer not only B+B but plan for communal end-of-life accommodation later. We could also transfer VADs from Oristal to Flüh, which would relieve the property in Oristal. However, there is a great deal of resistance within the Flüh municipality. We have received authorization from the building commission but several parties have proceeded with their objections. It will be a long time before we can move to Flüh.

Concerning the court case brought against me by the BL public prosecution service, I was acquitted of the murder charge, but convicted of breach of the Therapeutic Products Act. Unfortunately, the prosecution did not accept the acquittal so there will be an appeal before the Cantonal Court. However, in no way will this restrict the work of the lifecircle association and the Eternal Spirit Foundation.

Unfortunately, one of our two psychiatrists has left and the other is so seriously ill that he can no longer perform assessments. The very fact of his illness, has made him decide to support our work. It is very regrettable for all concerned that fate has taken such a bad turn. But we were lucky: during my trial, another psychiatrist contacted us and is now performing assessments for the foundation with great conviction.

We were unable to organize any panel events in 2019 because of the stress of my trial but for 2020 we had again planned one with a very distinguished panel, which unfortunately has now fallen victim to the coronavirus. The goal, however, is to continue to promote the debate on self-determination at the end of life. So the discussions are continuing in our Café Goodbye in Reinach

<https://www.cafegoodbye.ch/> .

It was important for our cause for me to participate in the proceedings before the German Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe. I was permitted to appear twice before the eight judges to express my opinion of why VAD must be permitted in Germany, too. When the judgement was passed in February this year, VAD was declared permissible in Germany. This is a landmark on our way to world-wide self-determination.

In addition to various other events, we supported the first "Dementia Meet" in Allschwil. People with dementia and their relatives talked openly about their problems, an exchange which brought relief. This disease specifically, which one of our members described as a "cancer of the soul", we should bear together because it increasingly affects all of us.

In terms of further promoting quality of life, the lifecircle association donated to the following institutions amounts totalling CHF 69'950.-: Stiftung Kolibri, Schweizerische Muskelgesellschaft, Kinderheim Heimelig, Insieme Basel, Sehbehindertenwerkstatt, IVB Behindertentransport, Stiftung Autismuszentrum Aesch, PluSport Behindertensport Schweiz, Kinderspitex Nordwestschweiz, IVB Behindertentransport Basel, Netzwerk Demenz Beider Basel, Verein ALS Schweiz. The recipients expressed their great appreciation to the association; the accountant will report further.

The time in which I write this, is a very particular time. Many people live in a state of isolation triggered by a virus. Isolation itself can trigger the desire to die but isolation should never be a reason for a voluntary assisted death (VAD). That is why I am urging all of you, phone whenever possible, meet two metres apart, despite or even because of the virus.

Our aids, including wheelchairs, walkers, walking sticks, electric wheelchairs, raised toilet seats etc., are still underused. Please get in touch when you need such aids.

Finally, may I refer you to the latest issue of the newsletter, in which I have already reported on other events from last year.

With kind regards

Dr med. Erika Preisig,

President of the "lifecircle" association

