

20

22



Dăruiește Aripă  
we innovate for children with cancer

# ANNUAL REPORT





*Alina Pătrăhău*

Founder & President

Dear friends,

If I had to choose a single word to capture how 2022 went, it would be “fierce”. Just when we thought that, finally, things were about to settle following the pandemic and we would be in a place to focus energies on our ongoing projects, the heartbreaking events in Ukraine brought about needs of such magnitude and drama that we decided to get involved.

In the first months of 2022 we were able to provide safety, shelter and food for dozens of families who fled the war. The call from the European Commission to help had set our team in motion; we rapidly created a national service for Ukrainian children with cancer to be admitted to paediatric oncology units in Romanian hospitals across the country. And we managed to do so in a matter of days. In fact, children were sent to these specialized hospitals in less than 24 hours from the time of entry into Romania.

This tumultuous start of the year set the tone for what followed next: a spring and a summer that required a constant flow of energy directed to both streams of our work – the ongoing support for and endowment of hospitals in Romania with vital equipment, and on the other hand, the set-up of new medical services for children with cancer. We are constantly fighting for change, for these children to be treated to international standards, here, in our own country.

We are in the lead for a full-fledged modernization and digitalization of the onco-paediatric medical services. This is our most ambitious objective, considering all the work and achievements made over the 10-year span since our official beginnings. Two of our long-term projects are the homecare treatments for children with cancer – now also available in Bucharest and 9 counties in Romania – and the development of the digital platform Dara which will host all electronic files for these children and beyond, to offer them better medical care.

In the autumn of 2022, the Romanian Government certified our association with the credentials of “public service”. We became involved in the legislative process for the approval of the National Plan for Fighting Cancer, the chapter on Onco-Paediatric Cancers. This is another step forward towards our most ardent wish: EQUAL CHANCES FOR LIFE AND HEALTH for Romanian children compared to the standards in Western Europe.

You will read in this report about each one of these milestones. 2022 was indeed a year of achievement, very intense, a season that gave us the confidence that WE CAN CHANGE the system.





**+ 5200**  
CHILDREN INCLUDED IN  
OUR PROJECTS



**12**  
HOSPITALS  
RECEIVED SUPPORT



**30**  
MEDICAL WARDS  
ENDOWED



**1.250.000 €**  
INVESTMENT



**452**  
NEWBORNS CARED FOR IN  
CONSTANȚA COUNTY  
HOSPITAL



**130**  
MEDICAL  
EQUIPMENTS  
DONATED



**25,758 KM**  
ON THE ROAD  
FOR HOMECARE SERVICES



**80**  
UKRAINIAN  
FAMILIES AT  
SAFETY



**2538**  
HYGIENE KITS  
FOR HOSPITALS



**THE FIRST**  
GENETIC TESTING  
SYSTEM FOR FUNDENI  
CLINICAL INSTITUTE



# ABOUT US

We are a charity established in 2013 with the purpose of providing access to quality medical and social services for Romanian children with serious illnesses, in particular for children with cancer, as well as for their parents. We foster innovation in paediatric oncology, as strategic partners to the Romanian Society for Paediatric Onco-Haematology. We are a dynamic team, involved in the modernization of the public hospitals' infrastructure and equipment. At the same time, we bring forth ideas, processes and mechanisms to implement new medical services and fundamentally change the way in which children with serious medical illnesses are cared for here, in Romania.

Our mission is to change the way in which these children receive medical and social support, in their own country. We achieve this by means of integrated services that improve their survival rate and quality of life. We want every child to have the opportunity to meet their potential.



**ALINA PĂTRĂHĂU**

Founder & President



**DR. ADRIANA APOSTOL**

M.D Specialist in Paediatric  
Onco-Hematology



**DR. MIHAELA BUCURENCI**

Expert in public health &  
health service management



**DIANA BADEA**

Administrative Director



**CLAUDIA POLIVANOV**

Volunteer



**ANA-MARIA TOMA**

Administrative Coordinator



**EMILIA WAHED**

Marketing Director



**RALUCA BRĂGAREA**

Consultant, Public Affairs &  
Communication



**ANDREEA DRĂGAN**

Project Manager



**LILIANA ȚIBREA**

Social Worker





## CO-AUTHORS OF THE NATIONAL PLAN AGAINST CANCER – PAEDIATRIC CANCERS CHAPTER

The partnership between Dăruiește Aripă and the Romanian Society for Paediatric Onco-Haematology (SROHP) has delivered this year the most important public policy project to support children with cancer.

All proposals we submitted, with the aim of increasing the survival rate and quality of life for children with cancer, were integrated into the National Plan for Fighting Cancer, the section on Paediatric Cancers. The draft law was adopted by the Romanian Parliament in October 2022. We are committed to contributing further, together with our experts, to draft the secondary legislation (i.e. the norms) to implement the Plan.

One of the objectives highlighted by Dăruiește Aripă in the Plan advocates for the development of multidisciplinary integrated services for children with cancer, which follow all stages of the clinical process, with the help of innovative IT applications. Our leading projects - homecare treatments, and Dara digital platform - are the practical outputs of these concepts of a multidisciplinary approach and innovation by digitalization. The framework legislation allows for our two projects to be scaled up at the national level. This is a landmark that Dăruiește Aripă has included in its medium-term strategy covering 2023-2028.





# HOMECARE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH CANCER





# HEMOCARE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH CANCER

## KEY STATS 2022



**425**  
CHILDREN



**334**  
VISITS



**35**  
LOCALITIES



**25,758 KM**  
ON THE ROAD



**1436**  
BLOOD SAMPLES



**THE MEDICAL TEAM**

6 doctors  
1 psychologist  
10 nurses  
1 social worker  
1 assistant coordinator

1 nurse aid  
1 coordinator  
1 dispatcher  
1 driver



## WHAT MOTHERS SAY ABOUT OUR PROJECT

“ *We live in the countryside. To get to the hospital we need to find a neighbour with a car or take the minibus. Lia always wears a mask, and the minibus is busy. It takes about an hour one-way, and at times we wait longer at the station going home, because we had queued up in the hospital together with other children, and hence missed the bus. In the days when we go to the hospital Lia sleeps from the moment we arrive home to the next morning, because she is excessively tired. When the lady doctor visits us at home.... we don't even feel that was a day of treatment.*

*In 30 minutes the ladies finish up and leave, and Lia goes to play.*

*(Maria M, Cogealac - Constanța)*

“ *The lady nurse visits us every week wearing a large smile and beaming. She tickles George if he doesn't want to show his hand from under the blanket for the blood sampling. He laughs and winks at her when she takes his temperature. And when she leaves, I feel a part of my burden is lifted away, and the day passes more easily.*

*(Elena C, Giurgiu)*





## OUR PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

- We extended it to Muntenia region, for children under treatment at the Oncological Institute in Bucharest
- We updated the standards and criteria applied to select patients for the programme
- We introduced the digital support function - Dara platform - to record information from the visits to children's homes
- We introduced a standardized life quality assessment, according to international benchmarks PedsQL and Lansky-Karnofsky
- We developed and updated the social assistance guides used in the programme

















# Dara Digital Platform



Fundația  
Vodafone  
România



# DARA - THE DIGITAL SOLUTION FOR MEDICAL FILES

Dara is the digital solution that allows the care for children with cancer in multidisciplinary teams, in the hospital and at home – irrespective of geographic distances.

The ill-famed “bag” stacked with medical reports has been replaced by a digitalized file which incorporates all medical data from a patient, for the duration of the treatment, and also for subsequent monitoring.

Doctors can easily access this data and medical assessments provided by doctors from other specialties, at any time. Interdisciplinary teams have the opportunity to collaborate, in real time, at home and abroad, and to request “second opinions” from fellow doctors, whilst accessing all medical parameters for each case.

The digitalization of medical files links all parameters that define an integrated system of care for the children with cancer:

- Interdisciplinary team, the so-called “Tumour Boards”
- Community support services
- Long-term monitoring for cancer survivors
- Support for the transition to adulthood



# DARA - THE DIGITAL SOLUTION FOR MEDICAL FILES

## Achievements in 2022:

- The platform has been in use in hospitals since May 2022
- Various management processes have been developed: for single users and medical units; case management; complete records of clinical interventions; collaboration between central and local hospitals; multidisciplinary and international collaborations
- The management of the homecare medical services has been fully integrated into the platform and is used by the dedicated medical team
- An audit for data security was performed by accredited experts, and every issue they found was fixed
- We implemented a cloud solution for medical imaging
- We defined protocols for the users of the platform





**#STANDWITHUKRAINE**





## ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN WITH CANCER FLEEING THE WAR

We acted quickly so that 16 children with cancer from Ukraine were received by paediatric oncology centers across Romania in less than 24 hours since their arrival into country.

No one should be on their own in such tragic times, and we learned this from our little patients. The war across the border was a wake-up call to act and help these children.

Together with the Romanian Society for Paediatric Onco-Haematology (SROHP) we set up a national service to receive and assign these children to specialized medical units here.

We took part in the emergency mechanism set by the European Commission, and joined forces with the European Society for Paediatric Oncology (SIOPE), and with St. Jude Global for their "Unicorn" project; ultimately, we set up a national call center to manage requests for help from across Romania and we engaged with other countries participating in the EU's cooperation mechanisms.





## **SUPPORT FOR MORE THAN 80 UKRAINIAN FAMILIES**

We provided free meals and accommodation, with help from our friends and supporters of the Association who, as always, volunteered no matter the cause we engaged with.

## **SCHOOLING FOR REFUGEES**

Our volunteers and friends of the Association joined in the effort to set up a small school in Constanța, for Ukrainian children, to help them continue their classes, network and feel part of the community.



# DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL REGISTRY FOR PAEDIATRIC ONCO- HAEMATOLOGY





The Romanian National Registry for Paediatric Onco-Haematology (RNOHP) has been developed within the strategic partnership with the Society for Paediatric Onco-Haematology. It constitutes the sole fundament to learn about the real picture in paediatric oncology in Romania: the annual incidence, the diagnostic, the need for doctors and specialized medical units, the need for medication, specific investigations and equipment.

## ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

- We extended the team of specialists who secured the validation of data and the communication with hospitals
- We updated the tracking system for notification of child cancers and reconfirmed the statistics in the entire database with experts
- A first for Romania, we sent official data on child cancers to the European Cancer Information System
- Another first, we were invited to join with our data the largest study of survival in child cancers, BENCHISTA, which aggregates data from national registries in Europe, USA, Australia and Japan



# GENETIC DIAGNOSIS FOR PATIENTS WITH LEUKEMIA





## WE PURCHASED A ONE-OF-A-KIND GENETIC TESTING EQUIPMENT IN LEUKEMIA FOR FUNDENI CLINICAL INSTITUTE

This equipment makes it possible, for the first time in Romania, to identify rare subtypes of acute leukemia, which require a different and personalized therapeutic approach.

The purchase of this equipment is an important step in the adoption of personalized treatments for children with cancer in Romania, at Western European standards.

According to the National Registry for Paediatric Onco-Haematology, approximately 400 children are diagnosed annually with various forms of cancer in Romania, the most common being leukemias and lymphomas, over 50% of cases.





” *Asociația Dăruiește Aripă continues its active involvement in paediatric onco-hematology in our country by equipping the Molecular Biology Laboratory of the Fundeni Clinical Institute with new, super-performing equipment. It contributes to a personalized therapeutic approach that will increase the chances of survival for children and adults with acute leukemias.*

*In our laboratory, tests will be done for all patients from Romania. Our medical team thanks both Asociația Dăruiește Aripă and its supporters and donors for their wonderful initiatives.*

Prof. Univ. Dr. Anca Coliță  
Manager of Fundeni Clinical Institute  
Head of the Paediatric Haematology Department



# **MODERNIZATION OF THE PAEDIATRIC ONCO- HAEMATOLOGY SECTION THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL IAȘI**



## WE PURCHASED LATEST GENERATION EQUIPMENT

The Emergency Hospital for Children "St. Maria" from Iași provides paediatric medical assistance for the entire region of Moldova.

We learned about the needs here during our efforts to transfer as many Ukrainian children with cancer as possible from hospitals in their war-torn country.

With the support of our partner ERG, we endowed this ward with modern equipment so children with cancer can benefit from treatments and personalized care.

This includes a full-featured ultrasound machine, necessary to monitor the disease and the adverse effects of chemotherapy, especially cardiac ones. It is for the first time that the department owns such equipment. In addition, the hospital received morphine pumps, infusomata and injectomata, as well as a wide variety of consumables specific to modern and painless treatments for the small patients.

Laptops and multifunctionals were purchased for the medical staff, and new facilities were brought in for the hospital area dedicated to the parents.







## WHAT DOCTORS FROM THE EMERGENCY HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN "SF. MARIA" IN IAȘI SAY ABOUT US

“ We are in the process of fully rehabilitating our hospital and equipping it with state-of-the-art equipment. The donation offered by Asociația Dăruiește Aripă supports our joint effort to give the children hospitalized here the best chance for treatment. Always together for the health of our children!

Dr. Alina Belu  
The Manager of the Emergency Hospital for Children "Sf. Maria" in Iași





# **10 YEARS IN SUPPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR PAEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY IN CONSTANȚA**



A child is seated in a black hospital chair with a white armrest labeled 'AccuVein'. The child is wearing a clear plastic protective gown and a black face mask. The background wall is white with large, colorful polka dots. The text 'Deneb' is visible on the back of the chair.

## WHAT MOTHERS SAY ABOUT OUR PROJECT

“Mihai's diagnosis took us across many hospital wards. The first time I visited the department in Constanța, I thought I had entered the wrong place. It was like there was too much light, too clean, plus a lady nurse smiled at us.

We tell Mihai "we are going to the center" and he is relaxed and listens to us. If he knows that we go to the hospital, to other wards, his mood is completely different. Even though here, at the center, we collect tests and he receives treatment, he seems to forget about them as soon as he has chosen a toy.

He told his schoolmates about going to a hospital lounge with colored polka dots on the walls and a cupboard full of toys, and the teacher thought he was making it up. I am grateful for his cheerfulness and I think he owes a lot to Dăruiește Aripă Association and the staff here.

(Liliana, Mihai's mother - Constanța)



## WHAT MOTHERS SAY ABOUT OUR PROJECT

“*Iulian's second round of treatment happened to be around Christmas, and we were really thinking how sad it is to undertake chemotherapy at this time. But at the center we found the decorated tree, presents, candy and prizes for all the children who were there. The nurses were wearing Santa hats and the doctor had put tinsel on her stethoscope. We left smiling and Iulian had his arms full of gifts. It was as if we hadn't even gone to the hospital.*

*(Mihaela, Iulian's mother - Constanța)*

“*I called for an appointment for Ana, after an investigation that had gone wrong, and they called us right then and there. I was surprised, I expected an appointment to last for months. We immediately went in to be seen by the doctor and we were able to reassure ourselves that everything was fine, the same day!*

*(Sorina, Ana's mother, Năvodari)*





# **7 YEARS IN SUPPORT OF THE NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT IN CONSTANȚA**

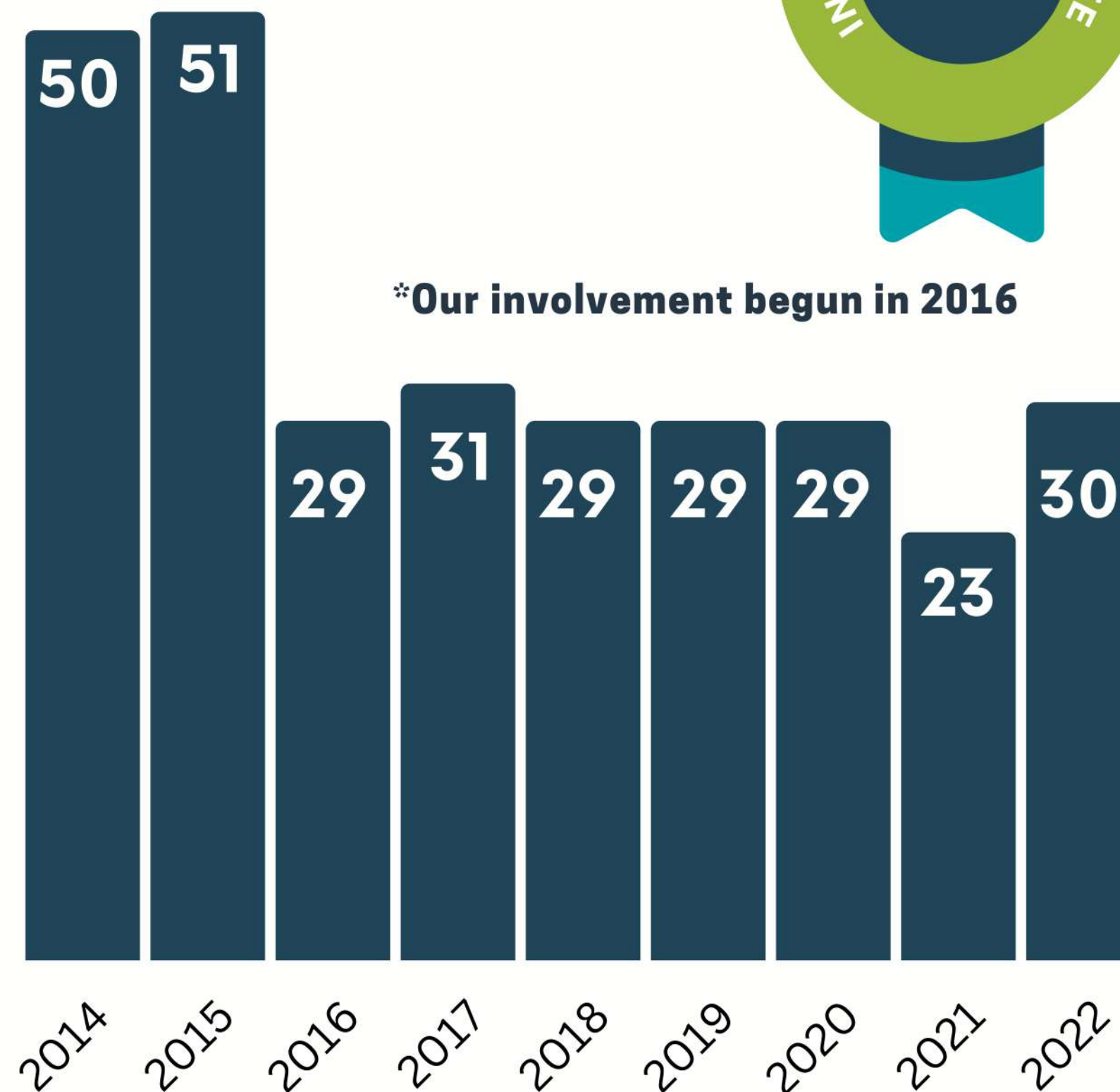




**482 babies were admitted  
to the ward in 2022**



## NUMBER OF DEATHS ON THE RECORD



**\*Our involvement begun in 2016**





## HYGIENE KITS FOR HOSPITALIZED CHILDREN AND THEIR MOTHERS

In 2022, we distributed 2538 personal hygiene packages for the families of children hospitalized in the Paediatric and Paediatric Surgery departments of Constanța County Hospital.

These products offered hospitalized mothers and children a little comfort and help for the immediate hygiene needs during the first days in the hospital.



**2538**  
**HYGIENE KITS**





## EQUIPMENT FOR THE OPERATING ROOM, THE SURGERY DEPARTMENT, CONSTANȚA COUNTY HOSPITAL

We purchased, for the first time, a high-performance equipment (mediastinoscopy kit), which is used in minimally invasive surgical interventions required for patients with lung cancer.

The patients no longer have to travel to other specialized centers in the country to benefit from such interventions.





## EQUIPMENT FOR THE ADULT ONCOLOGY DEPARTMENT, CONSTANȚA COUNTY HOSPITAL

A first for the Adult Oncology section of the Constanța County Hospital, we purchased a transport system for immobile patients in 2022, to help them have access to the various hospital sections more easily.

These patients have now a much easier time moving to the ward to receive their oncological treatments.





## REHABILITATION OF THE POST- OPERATIVE ROOM OF THE O.G. UNIT, CONSTANȚA COUNTY HOSPITAL

The Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology has not had an area dedicated to post-operative care until now. Our project meant the construction and modernization works so that the patients operated on here can be cared for at up-to-date standards.

Medical gases were installed in the area. The space was equipped with 9 electrically adjustable beds, monitors and the necessary medical furniture, as well as an electrocardiograph, a defibrillator, an injectomat and a secretion aspirator.

In addition, 4 UVC light disinfection devices were installed.





## **MODERNIZATION OF THE E.R. RECEPTION UNIT, CONSTANȚA COUNTY HOSPITAL**

We refinished all the surfaces in this unit, which were very damaged due to heavy traffic.

Patients now benefit from better care conditions, the newly installed surfaces being sanitized and disinfected according to the required standards.

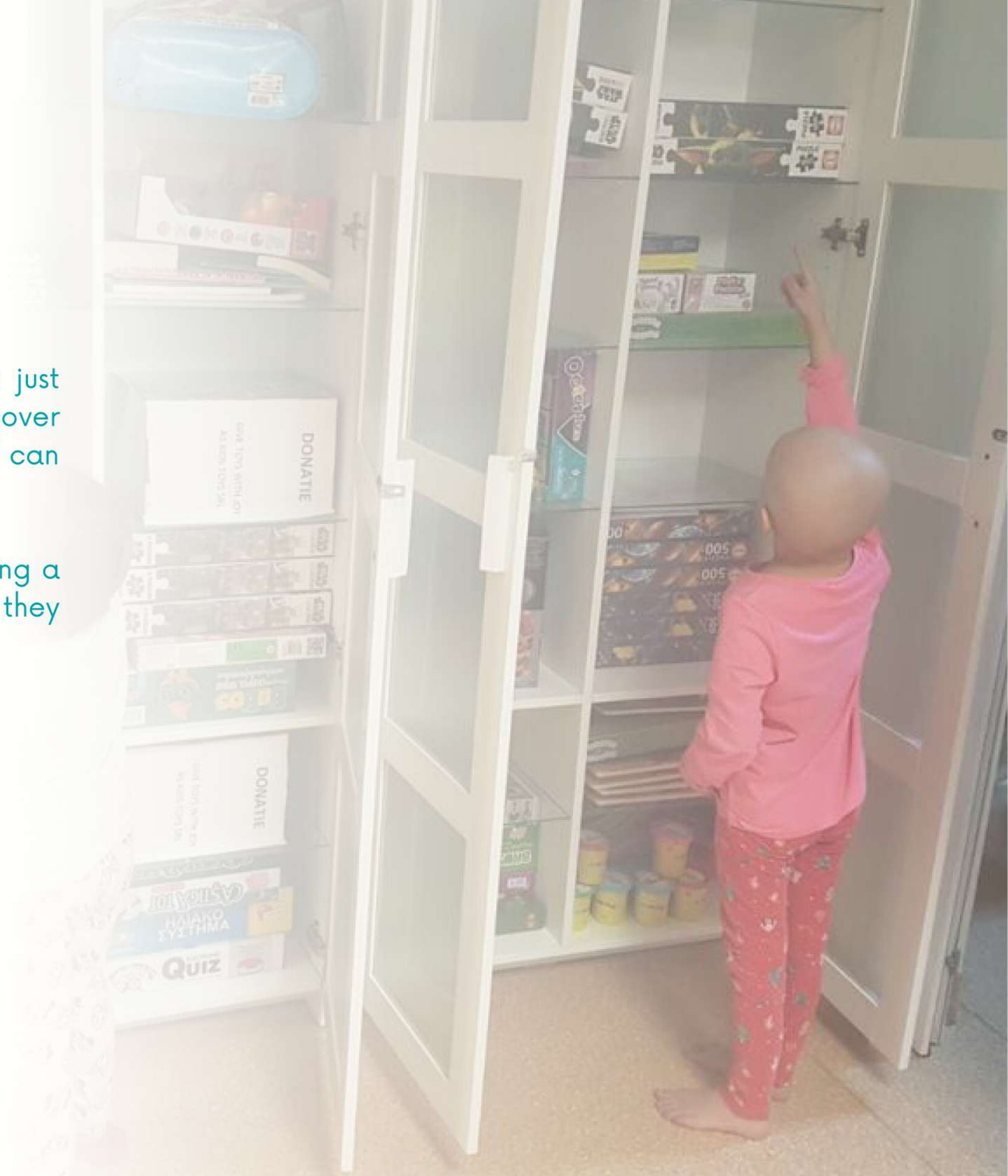


# THE TOY CLOSET

"You know I'm not afraid of the needle, I'm just thinking about how many toys I'm going to discover in the toy closet. I can't wait to finish here so I can go get a toy!" - said Maria to the doctor.

For children with cancer in the hospital, choosing a toy from our closet can give them the boost they need in the uphill battle ahead!

The toy cabinet is our secret hospital weapon!







# EVENTS



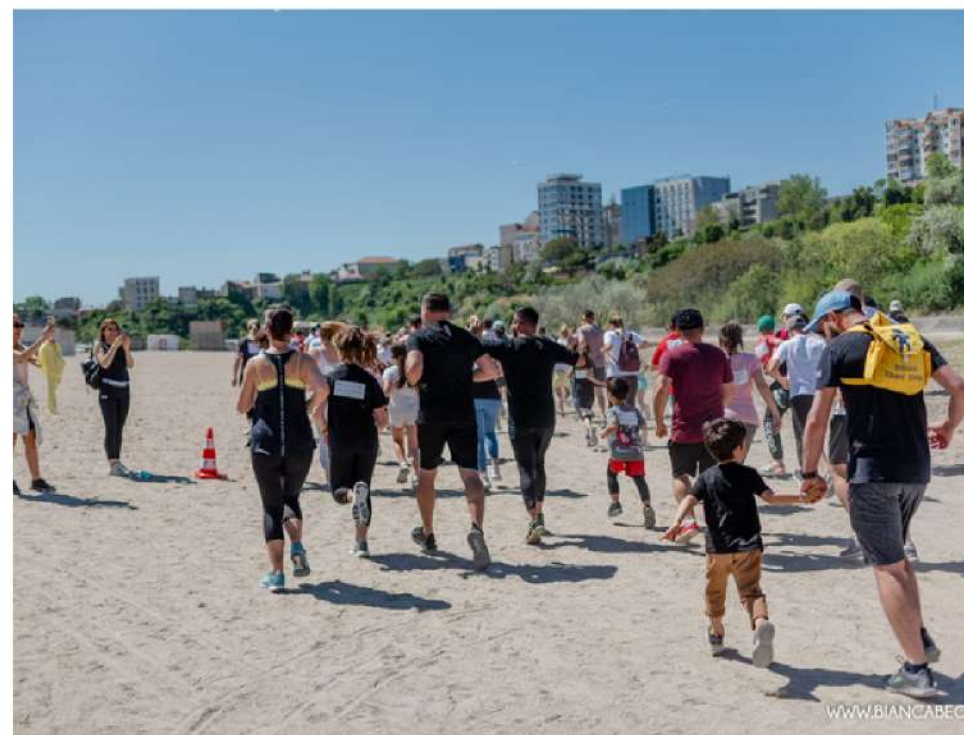


## THE SAND MARATHON - THE FAMILY RUN

The Sand Marathon is an old tradition in Constanța, as is the Family Run, which for several years has been held in support of our Association's projects.

In 2022, 80 families - children and their parents - ran on the beach, and had fun whilst supporting children with serious illnesses included in our projects.







# SWIMATHON

Our team met all of its goals again this year. 509 donors contributed to help cover the costs, for three months, for our programme of home treatments for children with cancer.

Collected little by little, 100,200 lei is a great achievement. There is money, but there are also smiles from children who stay at home instead of going to the hospital. There are tears of joy in the eyes of mothers who breathe a sigh of relief that, at least for one day, they don't have to go on the road with a seriously ill child.

How do we succeed? It is not difficult for us. All these children with serious illnesses and all their families bear the burden. We are here for them, to listen to them, to communicate further their needs and to bring together all those who want to help.



509 donors



100,200 lei  
donations







# CHRISTMAS CHARITY CONCERT

When we thought of reviving the tradition of the Christmas concert, after 2 years burdened by the overwhelming uncertainty induced by the epidemic, we did not know how the idea would be received. But we trusted that at least our friends would be there; we had the unconditional support of several partners from Constanța, and in our hearts we held the wish to celebrate this festive season with joy.

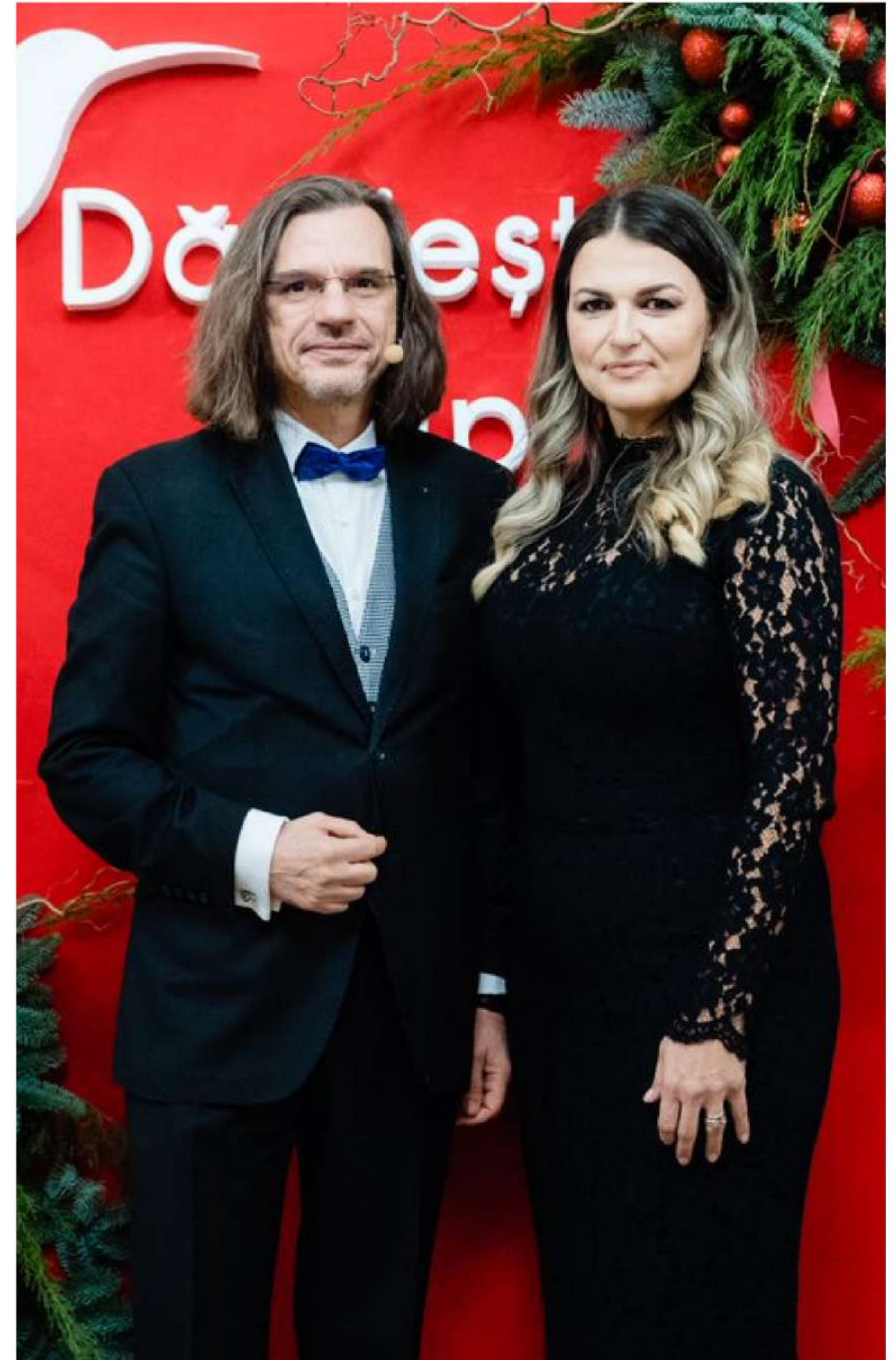
And, dear friends, we were not disappointed! The concert was attended not only by our friends, but by the whole community!

In fact, there were so many attendees that the concert hall of the "Oleg Danovski" National Theater of Opera and Ballet in Constanța suddenly seemed very small. People sat not only on the chairs but on the stairs while others were standing. There were many hugs, many kind words were said, we laughed and smiled to last a lifetime.

Almost 400 people shared the same spirit of goodness, joy, and hope for all the families who fight every day for their children.









## IN 2022 WE INVESTED IN:

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**96.130 EURO**

home treatments for children with cancer

**158.670 EURO**

innovation in paediatric oncology

**596.665 EURO**

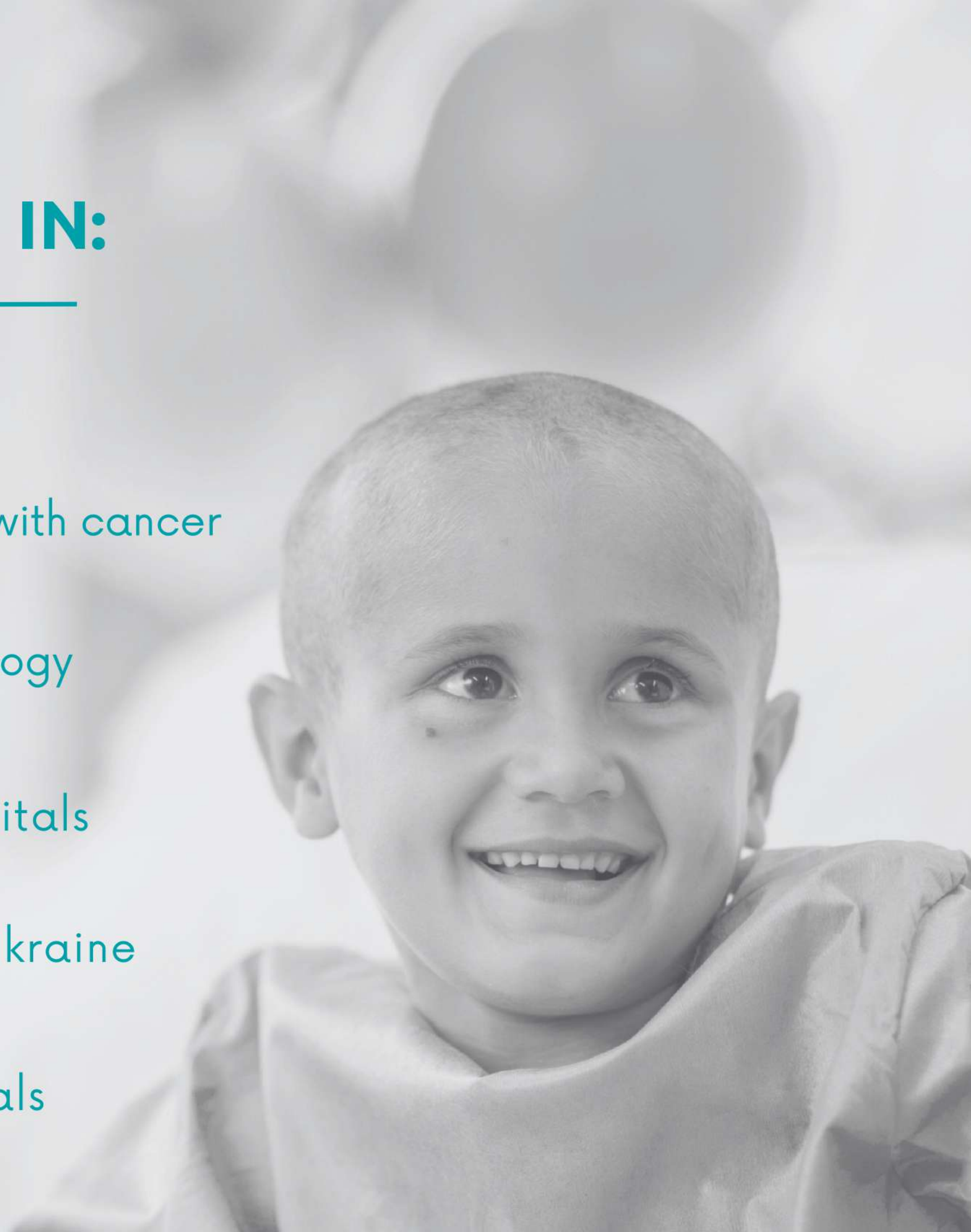
medical equipment for hospitals

**99.770 EURO**

emergency intervention in Ukraine

**300.000 EURO**

investments in public hospitals





# FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

**87%**

PROJECTS

**3%**

COMMUNICATION,  
FUNDRAISING &  
EVENTS

**8%**

SALARIES

**2%**

ADMINISTRATIVE



# CREDENTIALS, AFFILIATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS



- ✓ Strategic partner of the Romanian Society for Paediatric Onco-Haematology
- ✓ National contact point for Childhood Cancer International (CCI)
- ✓ Member of the European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC)
- ✓ Member of the Children and Young People with Cancer Coalition



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

## STRATEGIC PARTNERS



## SPONSORS





# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

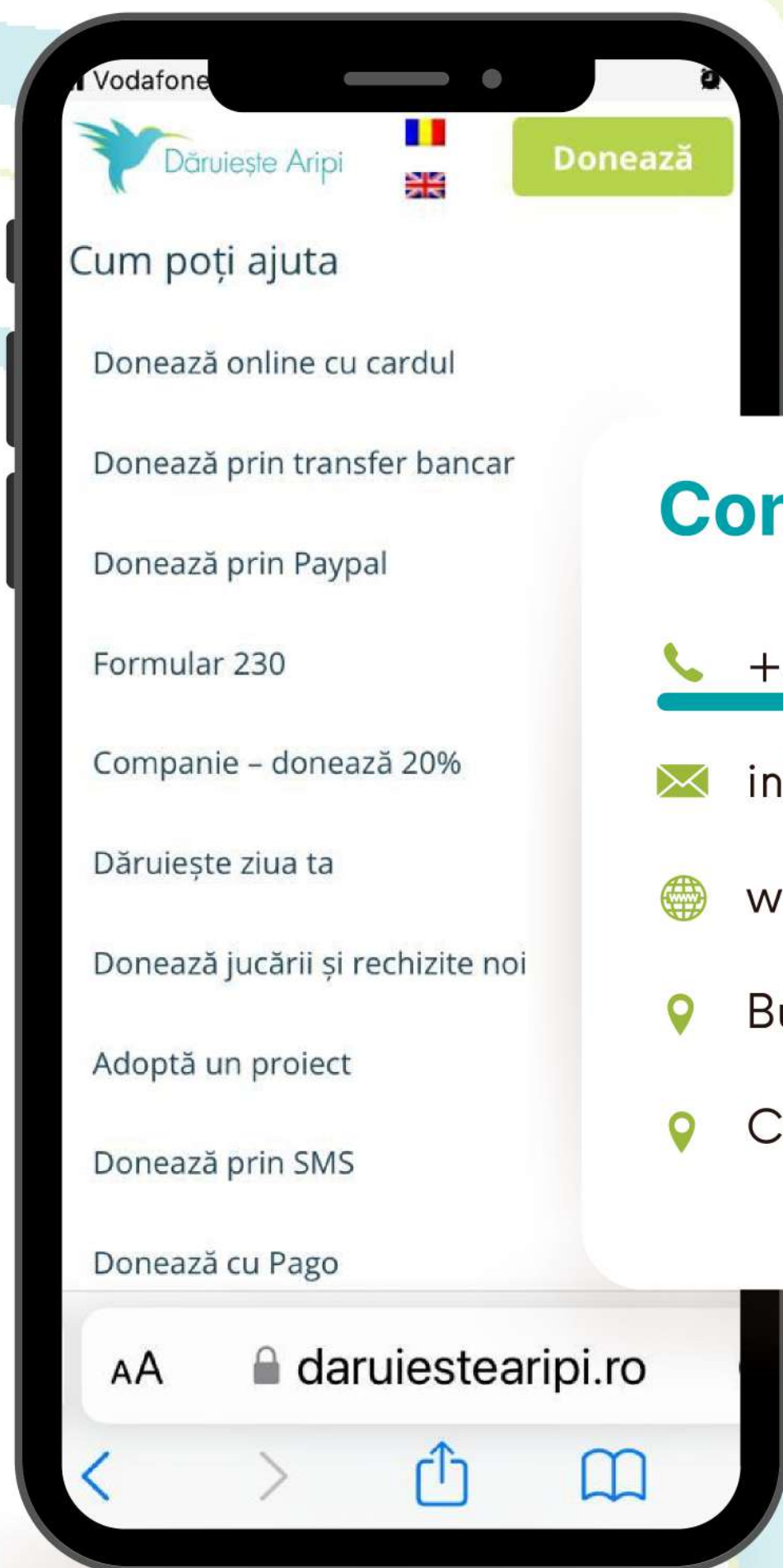
## SPONSORS

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UP ROMANIA  
WATERMOTA  
ZEN HOLZS





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