



## **ONGOING MEDICAL SYSTEM COMPARISONS OF LIVING IN SPAIN**

It has been suggested that I might like to continue with the comparisons between Spanish and French healthcare. As I know that some of our readers spend their winters in several locations along the Spanish Costas, I'm happy to continue. Much of it is still new to us but we are lucky to live in a community where there are many helpful people. Like us, most of them have healthcare needs.

In the Autumn 2018 issue, I spoke about having a translator attend medical appointments with you and that is very important, especially in the predominantly Spanish towns such as the one where we live. It is up to the patient to organise their translator and incur the costs themselves. Ideally, the translator should be a natural Spanish speaker; we use a lovely Spanish lady, Maria. She charges 15€ per attendance whether it is for one or both of us at the same time. She will also arrange appointments although we now have an 'app' to do this and because she does other work, we always have early morning appointments; our next appointments are at 08.16 and 08.47! We have recently had 2 friends who have been admitted into 2 different hospitals. Both were treated reasonably well by English-speaking doctors and principal nurses. Unless you are entirely alone, your family and friends are expected to assist with your dietary and personal hygiene needs. The hospital and nursing staff do take care of your basic meals and will keep you clean; like many hospitals, food is always a topic of conversation for all the wrong reasons.

Prescriptions (long-term, repeat ones) are issued for 3 months and show the dates on which they should be presented to the *farmacia* (usually on a bi-weekly basis depending of dosages). There is a small charge amounting to 10% of the total cost of the medications dispensed. Care is needed though if you miss a prescription date, as it can be cancelled if a date is not dispensed. After a recent emergency visit to the UK, this is almost what happened to me but once I produced my boarding passes on my Smart Phone proving I was out of the country, I was able to overcome that with our very kind and understanding pharmacist (*farmacéutico*). Prescriptions can be dispensed from any *farmacia* within the issuing authority area. At a cost, most normally prescribed medications can be brought over the counter, including the addictive Tramadol with Paracetamol!

If you are retired and in the system, there is no top-up requirement which is unheard of here. If you are not retired, then full medical insurance is necessary. Nowadays though, for those seeking their *residença*, it is important to provide private medical insurance that is acceptable to the issuing authority. It remains difficult to acquire with pre-existing conditions. Private Insurance can be very expensive, so there is something to be said for being retired!

Eye and dental care are not too dissimilar to that in France. I have recently had a full retinopathy which took place just before I became part of the system - ouch! That cost 200€ at the International (private) hospital. However, it made me realise that the annual retinopathy I had been having in France was nowhere near as thorough. Dental care can be expensive but compared to France, treatments such as implants can be about half the cost. Unlike England, it is very easy to get onto a dentist's list; there are many private dental clinics along the Costas but I'm not sure about the general healthcare dentistry system yet. Accessing dental treatment is relatively quick and easy.

I'm holding off about BREXIT until there is more certainty which we may know more about for the next issue. If space allows, I will write a piece about care groups for cancer, Alzheimer's and elderly care here as well as what happens when death occurs. Having recently lost one of our friends here (an ex French resident), we have first-hand knowledge about this.

*Margaret York, Editor*

## SPRING MARKET

Surprisingly, our Spring Market was a great success despite the very cold and windy weather. We were really grateful to all those who came along to browse and buy.



Also a huge *Thank You* to the stoic Stall Holders who, although accustomed to being at markets, remained cheerful and supportive all day long.



We were delighted that a number of *La Ligue* colleagues were present at their Stall, including the local President, Dr. Tricot.

We will once again be making a donation to *La Ligue* in support of the work they undertake locally and the national research into cancer, which benefits all who live in France and are affected by this disease.

As usual our wonderful Tea, Coffee and Cake Stall raised a vast amount, followed by the Book and Plants Stalls



The overall total after the deduction of expenses cleared **2000€**, which was more than the Spring Market last year when we had beautiful weather; this has delighted us all.

Janet and her team are to be congratulated, once again, for all their hard work.

Not only is there a lot to organise but 'person power' is needed for setting up and clearing away after such events which is one of the reasons we are attempting to attract more members and volunteers to help share the load. (see Awareness Raising articles.)

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### **AWARENESS-RAISING IN GOURDON**

On a very cold and windy Saturday in early May, Vice President, Anna, Active Listener Coordinator, Philippe and President, Heather, stood by their Stall beside the Gourdon Saturday Market. We had hoped to replicate the success of last Mays' Awareness-Raising Stall at the Montcuq Sunday Market. Unfortunately, there were few English-speakers abroad on this Saturday and so we attracted no new members.



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### **WORKSHOP 'WHAT DO WE DO'**

The Gourdon Workshop did not attract sufficient people to make it viable to run at this time.

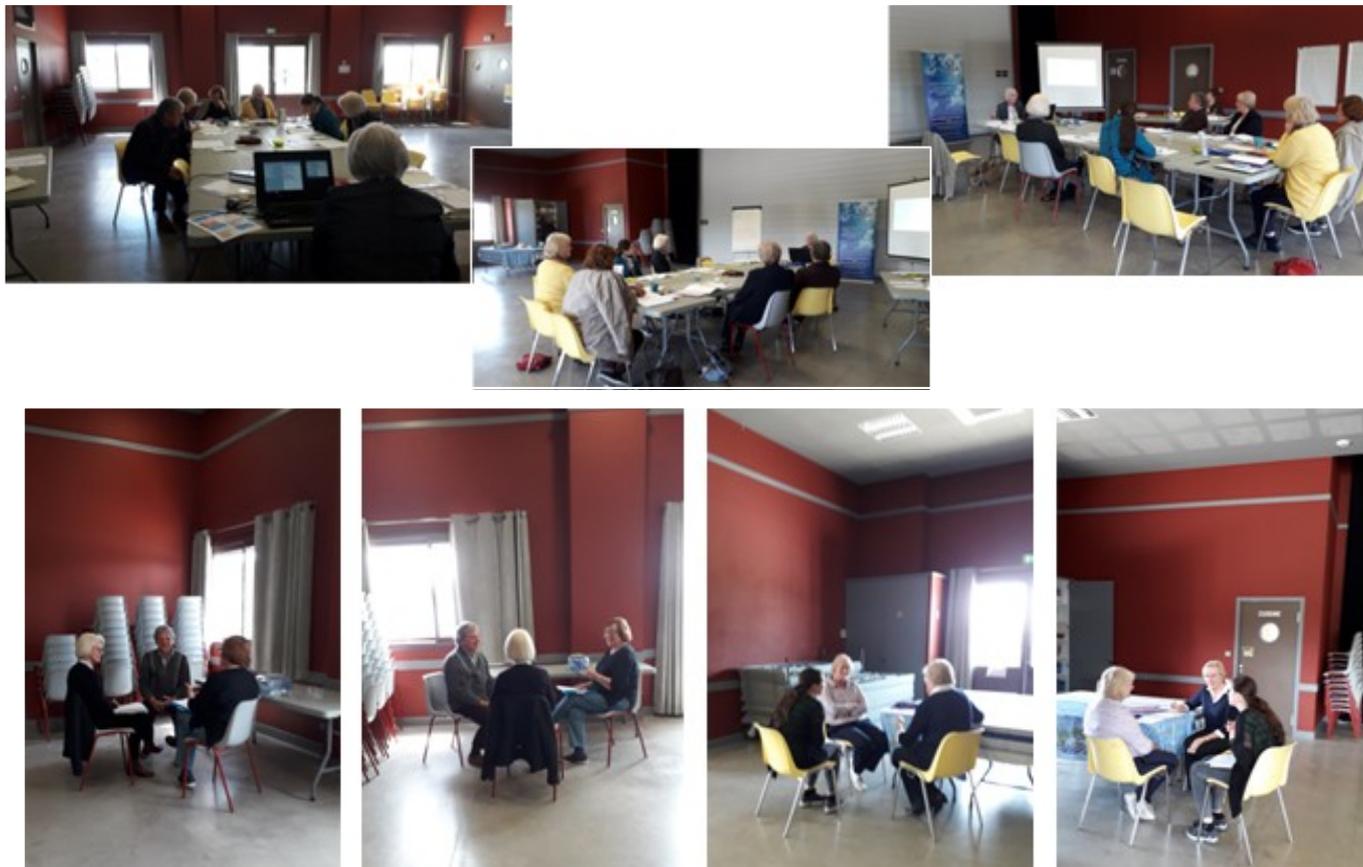
However, we do intend to run this Workshop in different areas of our region from time to time and will be improving our publicity to ensure more interest.

The area our Association covers is large and we want to encourage a wider membership as well as attract new volunteers as well as people who may be interested in training as Active Listeners.

## ACTIVE LISTENER INITIAL TRAINING COURSE

A two-day Active Listener Training Course was held at L'Ostal, Lavercantière in early May. The trainers were our local colleagues, the CSF National President, Pat Lockett and our Association President, Heather.

Two Trainees were from our Association and the other four Trainees were from different CSF Associations within France.



One of our own colleagues who is to undertake Trainer Training this autumn, was an Observer during the first day and on the second day, we welcomed as Observers, the President and Trainer from Haute Vienne Association.

All Trainees will undertake the third day of training in a few weeks.

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## CANCER SUPPORT FRANCE ANNUAL CYCLE FOR LIFE 2019 - Submitted by Pat Lockett, Nat. President

On Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May, an intrepid group of cyclist lined up for the start of this year's *Cycle for Life* in Mazamet, in the department of the Tarn.

Following months of planning and coordinating, CSF National past President, Penny Parkinson, had successfully brought everyone together on the right day, at the right place and off they set along the scenic *Voie Verte de Haut Languedoc*, heading south towards Badarieux riding over two days. Volunteers from CSF Sud de France and CSF Languedoc made sure everyone was well fed and watered en-route.



My husband Barry and I, joined them (in support, not on bikes!) on Day 3 and as you'll see from the photographs, we endeavoured to be of use. They started at Béziers and rode in the most awful wind and rain to arrive soaked at Gruissan ready for hot baths and *vin chaud*, rather than a glass of something cool and refreshing.

We met up with Elizabeth and Curtis who joined us again from New York to cycle the first 3 days.

They took part in the 2018 event and travel over from the USA completely at their own expense to participate and to raise money for CSF. This year again, Dordogne Est & Lot, asked members to support them and you have - to the tune of over **1000€** ! Thank you so much for that.



Coffee stop at Port la Nouvelle



Lunch on the beach



Elizabeth and Curtis joining us again

The centre of Gruissan was the start of Day 4, the longest day with 60kms ahead of them; thank goodness it was sunny but still with a breeze. Dordogne Est & Lot Secretary, Cathy and husband Gus, joined us and we made an excellent team of marshals, servers and shifters. Some cyclists struggled a bit but the sense of camaraderie was wonderful and no-one was left behind at any point. We picnicked on the beach part-way towards Barcares and found a sheltered spot where the cyclists lingered over lunch... now that's what cycling in south west France should be about!

Finally, Day 5 brought even better weather as the cyclists gathered on a warm and calm morning on Barcares plage for their final 20kms, finishing in the centre of Perpignan. Volunteers from Penny's Association, CSF Sud de France, appeared with a host of goodies and the jubilant cyclists enjoyed a little wine, a little cheese and a lot of laughter.

Photographs were taken, certificates presented, speeches of thanks given and away they headed to their transports home shouting... "SEE YOU NEXT YEAR..." "Oh 'eck" said Penny to me afterwards, "better put thinking caps on". The hope is to set the ride in a different part of France. So, anyone with an interest in leisure cycling who would be willing to help by offering ideas, planning the ride or offering support during the ride please, please do contact me, *Pat Lockett, National President and Dordogne Est & Lot, Training Coordinator* - [president@cancersupportfrance.org](mailto:president@cancersupportfrance.org)



The '5-Dayers' reaching their destination



Pat Lockett - marshal, server and shifter

## **OTHER NEWS**

**CAKE CLUB FUNDRAISING GROUP** - Our Association received a donation from the CLOTHES SALE that this Group held at the end of March.

**CATUS CRICKET CLUB** - The Quiz Night on May 23<sup>rd</sup> was raising money for research into illnesses that affect the brain and also our CSF Association.

**SOIRÉE MUSICALE** - on June 11<sup>th</sup> where the proceeds from the Raffle will be donated to our CSF Association.

**AN EVENING OF MUSIC in LAUZERTE** - on June 5<sup>th</sup> for a good cause. This event was organised by a CSF National colleague in her own garden with a local Band to entertain whilst enjoying your picnic. Funds raised are for CSF National and also our Association.

All these varied and interesting events take a lot of organising and we are really most appreciative of the support by these organisations to our Association. Thank you.

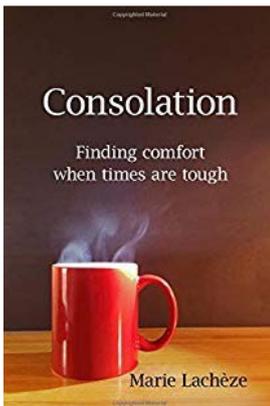
## **LA LIGUE CONTRE LE CANCER**

Our local *La Ligue* is celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. One of the events that has been organised is :

***Randonéz Pédestre Caritative Sunday June 30<sup>th</sup> at  
Espace Murat Complexe Sportif Polyvalent in Labastide-Murat***

CSF maintains an 'Open' Office at *La Maison des Aidants, L'Oustal, Ave Cavaignac, 46300 Gourdon* on Mondays 14h – 16h **BUT** this will be closed during **JULY and AUGUST**. Should you wish to meet with a CSF colleague then please telephone our Helpline **06 35 90 03 41** to make an appointment .

## **CONSOLATION - FINDING COMFORT WHEN TIMES ARE TOUGH by MARIE LACHÈZE**



This book was recently recommended to me by one of our volunteers, after attending a talk given by the author.

The book is not specifically related to cancer but to those times in our lives when we are at a loss to find adequate support.

It also addresses rarely discussed issues, such as how to cope entirely on your own and how to deal with those well-meant, but sometimes misguided, efforts of others to help.

*(Reasonably priced and available from Amazon)*

*Heather Moorhead - President, Dordogne Est & Lot*

**Contacting  
CSF DORDOGNE EST & LOT**

**LOCAL 24 HOUR HELPLINE NUMBER:**

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**[www.cancersupportfrance.org](http://www.cancersupportfrance.org)**

**The Forum -  
Follow the link to the Forum  
via the National website**

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