

Therapeutic Knitting University Hospital Centre Rijeka's Department of Hematology Croatia



Therapeutic knitting in Rijeka, Croatia started in June 2025 at the Ministry of Health's Reference Centre for Supportive Treatment and Quality of Life of Patients with Hematological Diseases at the University Hospital Centre Rijeka's Department of Hematology (Clinic for Internal Medicine). The Centre is headed by Duška Petranović MD, PhD. First, 20 therapeutic knitting kits were supplied, and then 150 more wool balls were provided.

Cancer survivor Marija Bašić leads the Therapeutic Knitting sessions once a month. She is a Croatian crochet and knitting teacher and founder of Pletenje.net. She discovered the therapeutic power of fibre crafting and now shares it with others through her workshops and online community. She explores sustainable fibres and inspires others to find calm, strength and joy in every stitch, and connection through handmade crafting.

Therapeutic knitting and crocheting were very well received by both patients and hospital staff. Sometimes a specialist, such as a hematologist, physiotherapist, or psychologist, supports the sessions.

The uniqueness of the program that is held for individuals with extremely sensitive immune systems. Sometimes patients who are receiving immunosuppressive and chemotherapy treatments would rather knit in their rooms than socialize. This was supported by the placement of a TK kit box in the corridor, which is regularly restocked. Patients may simply grab the kits from this box and put their completed work in it.

A common blanket is being made at the day-care centre where patients usually spend 2-3 hours while receiving treatment, This common blanket can be picked up by each patient, who will then add a few rows to it before someone else continues.

Many patients would like to continue knitting and crocheting after being discharged from the hospital. An online community is being considered to support them because they are dispersed throughout the region, including on islands, making commuting to the hospital impossible. We started a collaboration with Woono to use local Croatian wool to run this project. <https://ewe.network/projects/wool-ball-info-cro/>



