

Impact Report 2020/21



Making a difference



Charles Alexander

Charles Alexander
Chairman
The Royal Marsden
Cancer Charity



Antonia Dalmahoy

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Managing Director
The Royal Marsden
Cancer Charity

A message from our Chairman and Managing Director

Over the past year, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a considerable impact on the charity sector as a whole, and The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity has been no exception. With so many of our events being either cancelled or postponed, we have adapted, innovated and maximised every opportunity to continue to support the work of The Royal Marsden.

Our supporters have truly risen to the challenge and found imaginative ways to fundraise from their own homes and fully embraced our new virtual events, as well as virtual versions of our traditional events. We are very grateful to every single person who has supported us, in what has been one of the most challenging years for all of us.

The result is, The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity raised £30.9 million this year, exceeding our target by £3.3 million. We have also provided a total of £39.1 million in grants to the hospital. This fantastic achievement has not only helped the staff and patients during the pandemic, but will continue to make a vital difference to patient treatment and care for years to come.

Looking back on the last financial year, we raised £2 million from our COVID-19 emergency appeal launched in March. This funded psychological support for staff, iPads and Wifi boosters to help patients stay in touch with loved ones, research into the impact of COVID-19 on cancer treatment, and COVID-19 testing equipment to help keep patients

safe and continue running services throughout the pandemic.

We also saw the first patients treated on the new Charity-funded Cyberknife radiotherapy machine at The Royal Marsden in Sutton. We committed a further £5 million to research, and reached the £65 million mark in our appeal for The Royal Marsden's new treatment and research facility, the Oak Cancer Centre.

The Charity also continued to fund imaging equipment to ensure patients can receive the fastest and most accurate diagnosis. In December, a new MRI 3T scanner was installed at The Royal Marsden in Sutton, with two further machines being upgraded in 2021.

In October we welcomed The Royal Marsden's President, HRH The Duke of Cambridge, to the hospital to officially break ground for the new Oak Cancer Centre and to launch the public phase of the fundraising appeal. Due to be completed in late 2022, the centre will bring together world-leading researchers in spaces designed for collaboration, to speed up the development of new cancer treatments.

As we look ahead, the impact of COVID-19 will continue to be felt by all of us, personally and professionally. We are however confident that, thanks to our committed and loyal supporters, we will continue to support the world-leading work of The Royal Marsden, while it recovers from the pandemic and forges ahead, to continue saving and improving the lives of everyone affected by cancer.

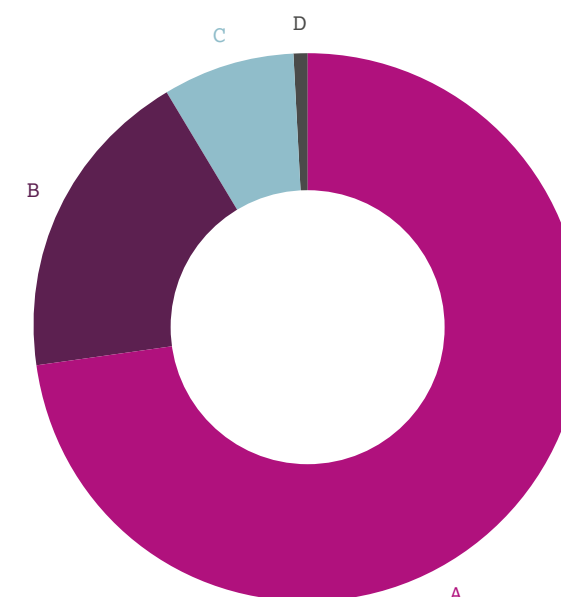


Medical Laboratory Assistant Farsab Nadeem, using the Cepheid COVID-19 testing machine

Financial highlights

Together, we raised £31.5 million including £30.9 million from donations and legacies in 2020/21. Thank you to all our inspirational and generous supporters who made this possible and ensured we could continue to support the groundbreaking work of The Royal Marsden for the benefit of patients across the UK and around the world.

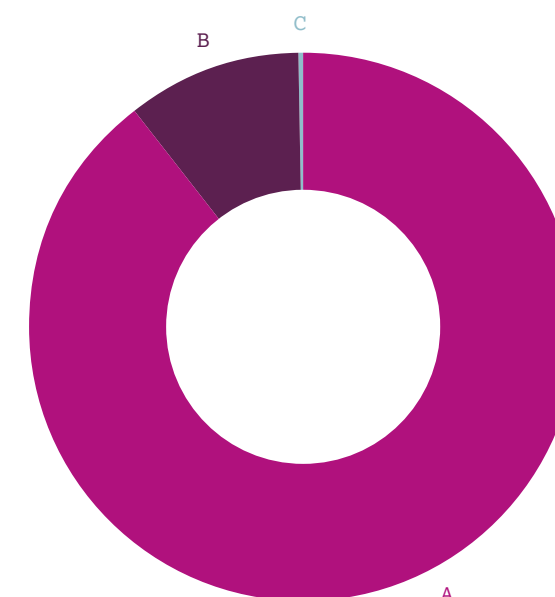
What we raised



Total income
 Donations **£25.1m**
 Legacies **£5.8m**
 Grants and gifts in kind **£0.4m**
 Trading **£0.2m**
Total income raised £31.5m

Investment **£1.2m**
 Other **£0.2m**
Total income £32.9m

How we spent your money



Total expenditure
 A. Charitable support of the hospital **£43.4m**
 B. Raising funds **£5m**
 C. Investment and property management **£0.1m**
Total £48.5m

Money raised by our supporters means The Royal Marsden can make a vital difference to the lives of cancer patients. With this support the Charity can fund life-saving research, enable hospital teams to provide world-leading treatment and care, invest in the latest equipment and fund modern patient environments.



Mia's story Patient



Fifteen-year-old Mia Rumbold has been under the care of the CHAMP team for chronic pain after being treated for Hodgkin lymphoma.

Her mum, Sarah Rumbold, said: "Six months after treatment finished, instead of getting better, the side effects became worse. Eventually the pain just ended up taking over her whole body and she became dependent on a wheelchair. By the time we had hit rock bottom she was unable to wash herself or feed herself without support. She would shuffle along on her knees or her bottom as the pain in her feet and legs was too much. Even her skin was painful to touch.

"When we met the CHAMP team, they all came together and listened to what Mia was saying. They unpicked everything and talked through step by step what we could do, and gave her manageable steps to recovery.

"I can't put into words the gratitude I have for what the team has done for us."

Mia said: "The CHAMP team saved me. They gave me a plan and I stick to it and do my exercises every day. If I don't, I can feel it straight away. I love baking, but at the start of lockdown last year I couldn't open the oven. Now, I am making homemade lasagne and lots of yummy cookies and cakes."

Spring

Helping children live life to the full

Young Royal Marsden patients who experience persistent pain during and after treatment can now benefit from a new service run by an expert multidisciplinary team.

The Centre for Holistic Approach to the Management of Paediatric Pain (CHAMP) clinic is held weekly for patients in the Oak Centre for Children and Young People. The team, which is funded by The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, employs a holistic approach that encompasses the physical, psychological and emotional needs of patients in each consultation.

The team's physiotherapist and psychologist have pivotal roles in supporting the patient to manage their pain, attend school, connect with friends and engage in activities they enjoy. Consultant Paediatrician Dr AK Anderson, who leads CHAMP, said: "The clinic can help patients manage their pain through a combination of different strategies."

One such young patient is Mia Rumbold, who has been under the care of CHAMP since 2018. Dr Anderson said: "Mia is a wonderful example of how we can help patients to understand their pain experience, listen

to their body and use physical and psychological strategies to overcome the challenges."

Dr Emma Porter, Clinical Psychologist for Paediatrics and Young People, said: "The significant pain and mobility issues Mia experienced post treatment were impacting on her emotional wellbeing, ability to attend school and maintain friendships.

"As a team, we worked with Mia and her parents to understand what was going on in her body, build up her physical strength and develop her skills at managing feelings of pain and worry. We also worked with her school to develop a graded transition plan back into learning that felt achievable and built up her mobility and confidence at her own pace.

"Mia now attends school full time, is mobilising freely, has reconnected with friends and has said 'goodbye' to her wheelchair. She has worked very hard to get where she is now and it's lovely to see her enjoy life."

Pioneering COVID research

During the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers at The Royal Marsden launched several studies to investigate the impact of COVID-19 on cancer treatment and care.



CAPTURE study lead, Dr Samra Turajlic

Funds from the emergency appeal, including donations from long-term supporters of the Charity, The Lady Garden Foundation and The Henry Oldfield Trust, made this research possible.

Professor David Cunningham, Consultant Medical Oncologist and Director of the NIHR Biomedical Research Centre, said: "We are uniquely placed to look at COVID-19 in a cancer setting.

Our teams worked at pace to establish studies with a focus on immediate impact through to longer-term understanding of this novel virus. Thanks to funding from The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity and the NIHR

BRC, we hope this research will have a national and international impact."

Hundreds of patients have been recruited to six studies and thousands of samples have been analysed.

The CAPTURE study, led by Dr Samra Turajlic, aims to understand the biology and interactions between COVID-19, immunity, cancer and cancer treatment among patients and hospital staff.

Preliminary data, presented at the American Association of Cancer Research conference in April 2020, has shown that a wide range of antibody levels and COVID-19-specific T-cells were detected, but the potential impact of cancer type on their immune response must be considered for further analysis.

The OCTAPUS-AI study, led by Dr Richard Lee, is analysing over 900 cancer patient scans using artificial intelligence. The aim is to provide clinicians with information on whether changes in the lung are due to COVID-19, another infection or a side effect of treatment.

An additional part of this study will be to diagnose subtle changes of lung cancer recurrence earlier so that it might be treated earlier and more effectively.

Shiona's story Patient



Shiona Ramage is a patient at The Royal Marsden receiving treatment for melanoma skin cancer. In January 2021 she signed up to participate in Dr Samra Turajlic's CAPTURE trial.

Shiona says: "I decided to take part in the study because I wanted to help. At the time I had just received my first vaccine against COVID-19 and the team were particularly keen to monitor my antibodies as a result.

"As part of the study I need to have additional blood tests and fill out questionnaires about symptoms and risk factors for COVID 19. Every three months I need to do a swab test, which tests for the virus. All of these tests have been organised to fit around my regular consultations. This means I don't have any additional visits to the hospital, which is great.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has had such a huge impact on cancer patients and there is still so much unknown. This is why studies like this are so important, to help understand how best to protect patients, and answer vital questions such as whether certain cancer treatments can affect immunity against the virus. The Royal Marsden is at the forefront of this type of research and I feel very excited to be involved."

Spring

Lockdown fundraising

Royal Marsden Cancer Charity supporters raised money in inventive ways during the lockdown.



Balcony marathon runner, Chris Spencer

GP Dr Emma Watts and her daughter Sienna were devastated when the Devizes to Westminster International Canoe Race was cancelled. Instead, the pair set up two paddling machines in their back garden and raised a fantastic £5,649.

Similarly, when the 40th Virgin Money London Marathon was cancelled, Chris Spencer – who was undergoing treatment for advanced

melanoma – ran the distance by doing a dizzying 8,440 lengths of his five-metre balcony.

He then took on an Ironman triathlon, which included another balcony marathon, 3.8km on a rowing machine and 180km on a static bike. In October, he ran the virtual London Marathon in his local park. His impressive efforts raised £3,280.

Numerous supporters took on the 2.6 Challenge on the day the Virgin Money London Marathon was scheduled to take place. Students and staff at St Paul's Girls School in west London attempted challenges of 26 leg crunches while in a headstand, and 26 tennis volleys using frying pans – raising a fantastic £5,863.

Also taking on the challenge was six-year-old Felix Haslov Dancey. He ran 2.6km and cycled 2.6km twice for his friend Angus, who is receiving treatment at The Royal Marsden for acute leukaemia. He raised an amazing £1,336.

Famous artists and authors such as Sir Quentin Blake, Axel Scheffler and Dame Jacqueline Wilson donated artwork to a secret postcard auction in June 2020 to raise thousands of pounds for The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.

The eBay auction was held in memory of Sophie Maria Taylor, a budding artist who lost her life to cancer in 2017, aged 12. It was organised by Sophie's devoted art teacher, Miranda Pennington of St Richard's Catholic College in East Sussex, and raised more than £31,000.

Shining a light on nurses

2020 saw the celebration of the International Year of the Nurse, marking the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale. Nurses across The Royal Marsden are supported by The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, helping them to provide outstanding levels of treatment and care.



Lead Nurse for Paediatric Oncology Research, Tracey Crowe

Tracey Crowe, Lead Nurse for Paediatric Oncology Research at the Oak Centre for Children and Young People, is one of those nurses. Over the last year, as part of her Charity-funded role, she has helped ensure that paediatric research trials could continue.

She said: "The pandemic meant changes to the way we operate clinical trials. Although recruitment had to be paused at the start of the pandemic, the team worked tirelessly to ensure trials got back on track safely as soon as possible.

"A key focus was ensuring we could continue to collect tissue samples for research, including the Stratified Medicine Paediatrics (SMPaeds) programme, which enables young patients to be matched with early-phase trials based on the molecular characteristics of their disease.

"We also found different ways of working to reduce footfall in the hospital and help patients who live far away from having to travel in lockdown. We worked with local hospitals to support them in managing some of our patients' appointments, so they could stay closer to home. This worked so well, it could be incorporated into future clinical trial designs to increase recruitment to trials and make them available to patients who live further away."

Davina's story

Patient



Davina Colton, 58, from Devon, was one of the first patients to be treated on the new CyberKnife machine in Sutton, and the very first to access a brand-new feature of the machine, the multileaf collimator (MLC) which has more than halved her treatment session time.

She said: "After seven years of being cancer-free following my original diagnosis of ovarian cancer, I was told it had returned in my lymph nodes and that having radiotherapy on the CyberKnife would be the best way to target any remaining cancer cells that couldn't be removed through surgery.

"Knowing that my treatment sessions were only about 20 minutes long rather than an hour, and to be able to have such focused sessions over three days made a huge difference. The robot arm looked very futuristic – like something from a film! I was nervous at first, but treatment on the CyberKnife was pain-free, straightforward, quick and the team were all amazing, so thorough and kind, they made me feel at ease the entire time and even played Motown music for me during my last session!"

Summer

Pinpoint accuracy

In summer 2020, The Royal Marsden began treating patients on its new, world-leading Cyberknife radiotherapy machine funded by The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.



Cyberknife radiographers Helen Taylor and Hannah Austen

The installation of a second Charity-funded CyberKnife at The Royal Marsden, Sutton, which was completed in summer 2020, means that even more patients can now access the very latest in precision radiotherapy.

The Royal Marsden is the only hospital in the UK to have this model of CyberKnife. The additional feature, currently exclusive to our hospital, is a multileaf collimator (MLC) head, which can deliver larger doses of more precisely targeted radiotherapy treatment. For patients, this means shorter treatment times, fewer fractions and less risk of damaging the healthy tissue around the tumour, therefore reducing the risk of side-effects.

The new CyberKnife will also be the focus of further research to improve radiotherapy treatments across a range of cancers, supported by The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity in partnership with the the Institute of Cancer Research, London (ICR). For example, the PACE C trial, supported with additional funding by gifts in Wills left to The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, is researching whether prostate cancer can be cured in as few as five treatments.

In 2011, The Royal Marsden was one of the first hospitals in London to install a CyberKnife machine. Funded by The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, it has treated over 3,000 patients and been the focus of international research.

The future of research, now

The Royal Marsden, together with its academic partner the ICR, is ranked in the top three centres for cancer research and treatment worldwide. The Royal Marsden has a history of pioneering new and improved treatments which are then rolled out across the NHS. When The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity funds research to save, extend and improve the lives of people with cancer, the effects are felt by patients not just at The Royal Marsden, but everywhere.



Consultant Radiologist Dr Christina Messiou

In September 2020, we committed an additional £4.6m over the next two years, boosting the five-year, £15 million grant we gave in 2017, to fund translational research projects and essential facilities and equipment needed for research.

The additional funding will fund the establishment of an Early Diagnosis Hub, a Centre for Cancer Biotherapeutics Research, an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Hub for Imaging, and a Perioperative and Surgical Research Unit.

Dr Christina Messiou, Consultant Radiologist and AI Imaging Hub co-director at The Royal Marsden, believes imaging data can be greatly enhanced by the use of AI – generating knowledge, improving efficiency and leading to better diagnostics and treatment decisions.

Dr Messiou said: "The new funding will enable us to realise the full potential of imaging data for early diagnosis and precision medicine, helping to reveal the location and extent of a patient's disease and providing insights into the biological behaviours of cancers. Our innovative approaches will support treatment and care that is adapted to the individual patient. The future is hugely exciting."

Professor David Cunningham, Director of Clinical Research, says: "Thanks to the Charity and its supporters, we are at the forefront of developing more targeted, personalised treatments for patients. "The extra funding for the next two years will allow us to further our research in areas that could be truly transformative in improving treatments for cancer patients."

Summer

Keep on running

In September 2020, The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity held The Marsden Marathon, its first ever virtual running event. It saw hundreds of people, including Royal Marsden patients and staff, take to the streets, running machines and local parks to run 26.2 miles across 26 days.



Marsden Marathon runner, Amy Van Wyk

One of the runners taking on the challenge was Amy Van Wyk, who was diagnosed with low grade serous ovarian cancer in 2018. Amy said: "September, when I ran The Marsden Marathon, marked two years since being urgently referred to The Royal Marsden for major surgery, which was then followed by chemotherapy and radiotherapy."

"After being so unwell and struggling to even walk, being able to run The Marsden Marathon at my own pace and across the month felt very poignant. Today, I remain stable and don't need any more treatment. I continue to be monitored because I am not cancer free, but The Royal Marsden saved my life. The Marsden Marathon

was a chance for me to pay back what the staff at this very special hospital have done for me. It was a challenge, but was well worth it."

Dr Fernando Carceller, Consultant Paediatric Oncologist at The Royal Marsden's Oak Centre for Children and Young People, also took part. He said: "I love running, and being able to take part in The Marsden Marathon with my two eldest daughters made this challenge even more special. We wanted to support The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity because without their financial support, we would not be able to provide the highest standards of care that children and young people with cancer deserve".

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After being so unwell and struggling to even walk, being able to run The Marsden Marathon at my own pace and across the month felt very poignant.

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Amy Van Wyk
Runner, The Marsden Marathon

New hope for children's cancers

The world-leading Oak Paediatric and Adolescent Drug Development Unit (OPDDU), which has been funded thanks to supporters of The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity including Oak Foundation, continues to find new and improved drugs to treat children and young people with cancer.

With more trials open to children and young people than anywhere else in the UK, the unit's aim is to improve survival for young patients by accelerating access to novel treatments.

This year, the team opened a new multi-arm, international study called ESMART. The trial tests the benefits of several new drugs and treatments that were previously unavailable for children and young people. Patients with relapsed cancers were recruited via the successful molecular profiling study SM PAEDS, developed by The Royal Marsden and the ICR.

The OPDDU team also expanded its research programme by creating a new post for a two-year paediatric sarcoma fellowship, made possible thanks to Charity supporters George and the Giant Pledge.

Researcher Dr Ajla Wasti began the fellowship post in September 2020. She is running a pilot study in collaboration with the ICR to determine if DNA from a tumour, detected in a simple blood test (circulating tumour DNA or ctDNA), can give an early indication of relapse in young patients with rhabdomyosarcoma.

Dr Wasti said: "One of the goals is to see if we can detect active disease before it would show up in routine images. This would mean we can take action as quickly as possible in patients who have relapsed. We have seen the value of this in adult cancers and are hopeful that this simple blood test can offer young patients similar benefits. If the pilot study is successful, it may lead to an international, multi-centre clinical trial that would aim to determine at which points through the course of treatment we should look for circulating tumour DNA."

Dr Wasti's role also involves helping Dr Julia Chisholm analyse clinical trial data from centres in Europe and North America.

Dr Wasti explains: "In rare diseases such as childhood cancer, collaborating internationally means we get access to clinical information from a much larger group of patients, potentially enabling us to identify predictors of response or survival."

Ethan's story Patient



Ethan Holliman was 12 years old when his family discovered he had a type of thyroid cancer caused by a rare genetic disease. Ethan underwent major surgery to remove his thyroid and was then referred to The Royal Marsden where scans revealed the cancer had spread. At this point Ethan was losing weight and was very tired.

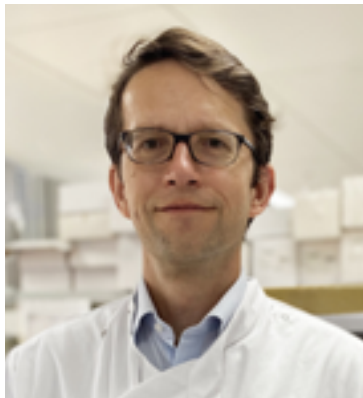
Through the Oak Paediatric Drug Development Unit and their expertise in developing new targeted drugs for rare children's cancers, Ethan was able to access a type of 'inhibitor' drug which targeted his cancer's ability to grow.

"There was an instant change in Ethan after starting treatment. He felt much better and had lots of energy," his mum Jane said. "Scan results continue to show that most of his tumours are slowly but steadily shrinking. It has given Ethan back his hope and a chance of life. It's not a cure, but it has given him time, and it's given us our boy back. We can see how much he continues to improve. He has been able to play football and ride his bike again. None of that would have been possible without the Oak Paediatric Drug Development Unit and the inhibitor drug. The team have been life savers."

Autumn

20 years of Ralph Lauren Pink Pony

Ralph Lauren's global Pink Pony fundraising and cancer awareness initiative celebrated its 20th anniversary in October. With a theme of 'More Conversations, More Love', the anniversary campaign focused on how love and support form part of a cancer patient's journey.



Head of the Ralph Lauren Centre for Breast Cancer Research, Professor Nicholas Turner

The annual Pink Pony Walk went virtual, while The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity benefited from the entire purchase price of each pink 'Live Love' T-shirt sold and 25 per cent of the purchase price of all other items in the Pink Pony Collection.

Antonia Dalmahoy, Managing Director of the Charity, said: "We can't thank Ralph Lauren Corporation enough for their ongoing support of The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity. They have helped establish the Ralph Lauren Centre for Breast Cancer Research at The Royal Marsden in Chelsea, funded a fast turnaround COVID-19 testing machine to enable patients to continue treatment safely at the height of the pandemic, and are funding the creation of the Ralph Lauren Research Zone in our upcoming Oak Cancer Centre. The Pink Pony campaign has been an enormous part of our partnership, bringing staff and customers together each year to raise vital funds for the Charity."

Ralph Lauren Corporation is a longstanding partner of The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity. Highlights of our partnership include:

2014

Ralph Lauren pledges to support a new breast cancer research facility

2016

HRH The Duke of Cambridge opens the Ralph Lauren Centre for Breast Cancer Research at The Royal Marsden, alongside Mr Lauren

2019

£1 million pledge to fund a Research Zone within the Oak Cancer Centre is announced

2020

Thanks to a United Way Worldwide grant on behalf of the generosity of The Ralph Lauren Corporate Foundation, The Royal Marsden installs a rapid turnaround COVID-19 testing machine to test patients who need urgent treatment.

Building work begins

HRH The Duke of Cambridge, President of The Royal Marsden, attended a socially distanced breaking ground ceremony in October 2020 to mark the start of building works for the Oak Cancer Centre, our new cancer research and treatment facility in Sutton.



HRH The Duke of Cambridge lays a foundation stone

Following in the footsteps of his mother, The Duke laid a foundation stone for the OCC 30 years after Diana, Princess of Wales, laid a ceremonial stone at our hospital in Chelsea to commemorate the building of the Chelsea Wing. He also launched the public phase of The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity's appeal to make the Oak Cancer Centre a reality.

In his speech, The Duke said: "It was an honour to launch the private phase of The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity's appeal in November 2015. Thanks to the generous support of donors, an incredible £62 million has been raised already. I'd like to personally

thank everyone who has donated, including Oak Foundation, for whom the building is named, Mr Basil Larsen, the Kuok Group Foundation, The Charles Wolfson Charitable Trust, Alex Beard and Emma Vernetti – as well as Mike Slade, Chair of the Oak Cancer Centre Appeal Board, and the rest of the board for their support.

"I am also delighted to launch the public appeal to raise the final millions needed to make the Oak Cancer Centre a reality. I am in no doubt that the wonderful supporters of The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity will ensure that it won't be long before you reach that target."

Dame Cally Palmer, The Royal Marsden's Chief Executive, says: "Our Sutton hospital remains an outstanding hospital, but it's now time to modernise and build a state-of-the-art facility to help us meet some of the most pressing challenges in cancer research and treatment today.

"I am delighted that our President joined us to mark the breaking of ground on this centre and the new generation of cancer treatment. I'd also like to thank The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity and all its supporters for making the Oak Cancer Centre a reality. Without them, this wouldn't be possible."

The public appeal will continue throughout 2021 and 2022, and with so many events cancelled in 2020, we'll be making up for lost time and calling for our army of supporters to help us reach our £70 million target.

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I am delighted to launch the public appeal to raise the final millions needed to make the Oak Cancer Centre a reality.

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HRH The Duke of Cambridge
President, The Royal Marsden

Gifts in Wills



A patient at The Royal Marsden, who was the first in the world to take part in a Phase 1 clinical trial, left a gift in her Will to The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.

Karen Childs was the first patient to receive acoustic cluster therapy, an innovative new treatment for patients with advanced cancer. It involves injecting microscopic clusters of bubbles and liquid droplets along with chemotherapy drugs. Ultrasound scans are then used to activate the clusters which 'pump' the drugs directly into the tumour.

By better targeting the chemotherapy to the cancer site, it is hoped one day patients could have reduced doses of chemotherapy and fewer side-effects.

Unfortunately, Karen's disease progressed and she died in January 2020. Her sister Julia said: "Karen made a brave decision to go on the trial and we got to see the amazing work at The Royal Marsden. She decided to leave a gift in her Will to The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity as both a thank you and to give something back. She believed in The Royal Marsden and was incredibly proud to be part of this trial."

Acoustic cluster therapy is being trialled at the Oak Foundation Drug Development Unit, a joint unit of The Royal Marsden and Institute of Cancer Research which is funded by The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.

Autumn

Celebrate a Life goes virtual

The annual 'Celebrate a Life' campaign encourages supporters to make a donation to name a star which is then placed on one of the 20-foot Christmas trees outside the hospital in Chelsea or Sutton during December.

Usually hundreds of people gather at two Celebrate a Life carol services outside the Chelsea and Sutton hospitals. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020 this wasn't possible and so the event went virtual.

Over 350 people tuned in to the live stream on Facebook to watch performances from local choirs and bands, prayers and a very special reading from guest speaker, Jonathan Pryce CBE.

Despite not being able to hold the physical event, the campaign raised a record-breaking £112,838, with over 2,700 stars named this year. As well as the physical trees, there was also a virtual tree displaying the named stars on the Charity's website.

Supporters chose to dedicate stars for many different reasons, including in memory of someone special, to say thank you to a member of staff who supported them at the hospital, or to celebrate themselves or the people in their lives.

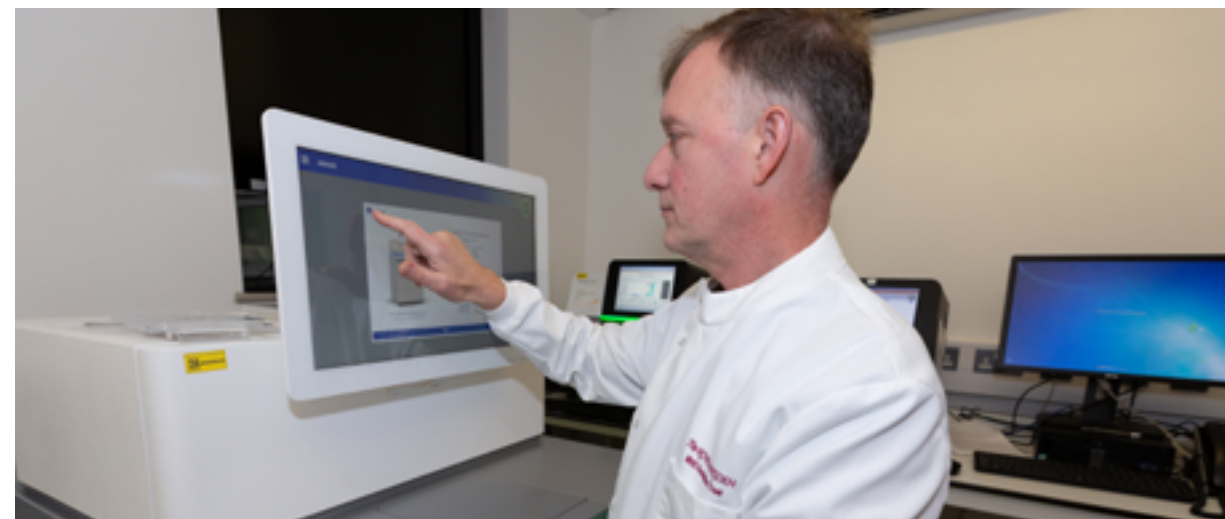
Barry Symons has named a star after his wife, Ann, who was treated at The Royal Marsden

for breast cancer, each year since she passed away in 2014. He said:

"Celebrate a Life is a lovely event. We take part because it's a way of remembering and connecting with Ann, who loved Christmas, and giving back too. This year's virtual service was beautiful. I can't thank The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity enough for the opportunity to share a special time remembering not just Ann, who I know was watching from above, but others affected by cancer too."

Antonia Dalmahoy, Managing Director of The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, said:

"We know how important Celebrate a Life is to patients, their loved ones and our staff. We were all disappointed not to be able to gather together at the hospital. However, the virtual service was a huge success and we're incredibly grateful to everyone who named a star and joined us virtually to celebrate the lives of those affected by cancer."



Director of Clinical Genomics Professor Mike Hubank, in the Centre for Molecular Pathology

Transforming lives with genetics

Patients with Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma are receiving a more accurate diagnosis and tailored treatment thanks to new research led by The Royal Marsden, published in December 2020.

Over 100 patients from 14 different centres were enrolled onto the four-year ENABLE-NGS trial, which enabled researchers to analyse up to 70 different genes at once in order to more accurately diagnose the different sub-types of Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma. The Royal Marsden's molecular diagnostics team analysed all the participants' blood samples using the next generation DNA sequencing machine, the NovaSeq 6000, funded thanks to a very generous donation of £1 million from the Denise Coates Foundation to The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.

Dr Matthew Cross, Clinical Research Fellow at The Royal Marsden whose role

is funded by The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, presented the research at The American Society of Haematology (ASH) virtual conference.

He said: "Previously, tests for Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma have only been able to look at one gene at a time to explore mutations. By using next generation sequencing technology, researchers in this trial analysed up to 70 different genes at the same time to identify multiple mutations relevant to the patient's diagnosis.

Identifying these genetic changes can be key to assigning a specific category in certain Non-Hodgkin Lymphomas, which

then leads to a range of new targeted treatments becoming accessible for the patient."

Les Hereward, 71, from Cornwall, a patient on the trial, said: "I was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma in 2016, but after a barrage of tests it still wasn't clear what sub-type I had. It was very frustrating as it meant my treatment options were very limited. I was delighted to be asked to join this trial at The Royal Marsden last year. Knowing I have follicular lymphoma has made a huge difference to my life in so many ways – I am now on a targeted treatment with a much better outlook. I feel better than ever before. I can live my normal life and have been able to join support groups specific to my condition. Taking part in this trial has been a hugely beneficial life experience. The level of care I've received at The Royal Marsden has been outstanding."

Winter

Stepping up to the COVID challenge

The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity provided vital support to patients and staff at The Royal Marsden throughout the COVID-19 crisis. Following the launch of our emergency appeal at the beginning of the pandemic, the Charity raised over £2 million, thanks to the generosity of the public and supporters, who responded at pace.

Donations from the appeal made a huge difference, for example by funding additional psychological support for staff, thanks to Bridgepoint. For the past five years The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity has funded a service that provides expert guidance and counselling to any members of staff who need support. Donations to the emergency appeal allowed the team to recruit additional counsellors and specialist support to help provide more of this vital service to staff at a time when they needed it most. Funds also went towards a virtual support project which patients and their families could access online to help manage cancer-related psychological distress.

The emergency COVID-19 appeal also funded digital resources across the hospital, for example WiFi upgrades on hospital wards, the rollout of a number of iPads and laptops for clinicians to carry out virtual consultations, and specialist software for patients to access

virtual visiting apps so they could stay in touch with family and friends whilst visiting was suspended. Donations have also paid for new online resources to prepare patients for surgery, as well as the innovative HoloLens Device and Remote Assist (HLRA) technology. This enables consultants and clinical teams to run virtual ward rounds with their patients.

The appeal also helped to fund The Royal Marsden's Mobile Chemotherapy Unit (MCU) service. The MCU travels to supermarket car parks and parks in Sutton, Epsom and Croydon so that patients can receive chemotherapy and maintenance treatments closer to home and avoid travelling into hospital. The Charity funding has enabled the MCU to continue to be there for patients, and has enabled the team to offer additional treatment regimes on the MCU, with some patients who are receiving immunotherapy now able to have their treatment on board.

Earlier and more accurate scanning

By December 2021, a new imaging facility in Sutton will house four MRI scanners, with The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity giving almost £8 million to fund the purchase, installation and infrastructure associated with running these state of the art machines.

The first of these – a brand-new MRI 3T scanner – was installed in December 2020 and scanned its first patients in January 2021.

Mikki Summers, Radiology Services Manager at The Royal Marsden, said: "Generous investment in MRI systems ensures that our patients can benefit from the latest imaging technology. Our new scanners, which have whole-body imaging capability, speed up the imaging process, provide high quality images and enable us to diagnose and detect cancer earlier and more accurately. The new equipment will also support our wide research portfolio, which endeavours to improve the survival of cancer patients everywhere."

X-ray vision for young superheroes

Paediatric patients being treated in the Oak Centre for Children and Young People often need to receive some treatment in the main areas of the hospital, including radiotherapy and imaging.



Superintendent Radiographer Louise D'Costa

Occasionally, young patients are too ill to move out of their bed or need to remain in isolation. Thanks to funding from The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, a new mobile X-ray machine can now provide fast, reliable and high-quality imaging from the comfort of patients' beds.

Louise D'Costa, Superintendent Radiographer at The Royal Marsden said: "The new mobile X-ray machine has made a big difference for patients and the diagnostic radiology team. It means we can take quick action X-ray imaging while the patient remains in their bed or sitting in a chair.

It is much lighter and easier to manoeuvre compared to other mobile X-ray units we have used in the past. It uploads high quality images immediately onto the screen, which means medical teams can get the results more efficiently. The equipment also has software features that mean lines and tubes in the child's body can be seen on the X-ray without any increase to the radiation dose.

The machine has two imaging plates attached with a smaller plate specifically for paediatric patients which makes the X-ray more comfortable for children. We were also keen to make the machine look as friendly as possible, so the team has decorated it with pretty stickers which has gone down really well with the children."

Winter

Bright ideas

The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity is always looking for new ways to improve the lives of patients at The Royal Marsden and beyond. The Innovation Den enlists the help of hospital staff in order to do just that.



This project brought together scientific, technical and clinical colleagues from The Royal Marsden and the ICR

Loosely based on TV's Dragon's Den, the Innovation Den is a forum in which staff from every area of the hospital are encouraged to put forward their ideas to help enhance patient experience and safety.

After an initial application process, the shortlisted entrants present their ideas to a panel, who decide which ideas should receive a Charity grant of between £5,000 and £60,000.

One of the recent projects helps radiotherapy patients drink more, as well as reducing the amount of plastic wastage. When patients have radiotherapy, they need to drink a certain amount

of water in order to fill their bladders before treatment. Previously, the Radiotherapy Department provided single-use plastic cups alongside the water fountains for patients to use. Patients were told how much water to drink, and signs in the department reiterated this.

Therapeutic Radiographers Gillian Smith and Helen Barnes had the idea of giving patients specially designed, reusable water bottles with measurements on them that would help patients drink the right amount of water, improve their general hydration and be kinder to the environment.

Patients began using the bottles in June 2020 as part of the Go Green and Drink Clean! pilot project.

Another Innovation Den idea involved using 3D printing technology to make face shields for patients undergoing electron radiotherapy. The aim was to replace the complex and manual method of using thick sheets of lead, with an innovative 3D-printing process using CT scans and computerised design. A prototype has been made and the shields will be available soon. This project brought together scientific, technical and clinical colleagues from The Royal Marsden and the ICR.

Therapeutic Radiographer, Gillian Smith



Looking ahead



The Oak Cancer Centre is quickly taking shape and is on track to open in late 2022

Building hope, brick by brick

We're incredibly excited to see the Oak Cancer Centre taking shape. The construction team has made impressive progress and plans are on track to open at the end of 2022.

At the same time, our ambitious and dedicated supporters have been donating to the appeal and taking part in challenges to get us to our fundraising target.

Named in recognition of our biggest-ever single donation of £25 million from Oak Foundation, the Oak Cancer Centre will revolutionise research into cancer treatments, improve patients' experience and help save more lives.

The Kuok Group Foundation Research Centre will bring together over 400 researchers

in spaces designed to encourage collaboration between those working in different cancer types to accelerate the development of new treatments.

The Charles Wolfson Rapid Diagnostic Centre on the lower ground floor will house the very latest in imaging technology so we can diagnose more cancers at an earlier stage, when treatment is more likely to be successful.

The centre will also provide patients with modern, peaceful and spacious environments to have treatment in.

Transforming head and neck cancer treatment

To accelerate research and improve outcomes for head and neck cancer patients, The Royal Marsden is launching the International Centre for Recurrent Head & Neck Cancer (IReC) in 2021. The centre has been made possible thanks to donations to The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity from Charles Wilson and Dr Rowena Olegario and Keith and Isabelle McDermot.



Consultant Surgeon and Director of IReC Professor Vinidh Paleri

“

IReC would not be possible without the generous donations to the Charity.

”

Professor Vinidh Paleri
Director of IReC

Head and neck cancer is the eighth most common form of cancer in the UK, with incidence increasing by 20 per cent in the last decade. Head and neck cancer treatments can have substantial impact on the day-to-day function and quality of life for people with this disease.

Right now, between 20 per cent and 40 per cent of cases return, and successfully treating these recurrent cancers requires multi-specialty expertise as well as access to the latest drugs and surgical technology. However, patients with recurrent cancer across the UK face inconsistent access to treatment. A lack of national data means a full picture of the number of people diagnosed and their outcomes is missing.

IReC will bring together a team of talented clinicians and researchers to create a centre of world-wide excellence and set international standards in the curative treatment, palliation, and supportive care of recurrent head and neck cancers.

Professor Vinidh Paleri, Director of IReC and Consultant Head and Neck Surgeon at The Royal Marsden, said: “IReC is now a reality and this would simply not be possible without the generous donations to the Charity. Our ambitious objectives, from creating a national patient registry and tissue bank, to conducting research into novel treatments and training future specialists, have the potential to utterly transform patient outcomes with recurrent head and neck cancer.”

Thank you

All of us at The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity would like to thank everyone who has supported us over the last year.

Your unbelievable dedication and generosity enables us to support so many people with cancer so they can receive the very best care, benefit from the latest research and have treatment using the most advanced equipment.

We would especially like to thank the following supporters, as well as those who have chosen to remain anonymous.



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Without the generosity and passion of our dedicated supporters, The Royal Marsden would simply not be able to help so many cancer patients and their loved ones. But we cannot stand still. More and more people are diagnosed with cancer every year, and we must ensure that cancer patients everywhere can receive the latest treatment.

This year, your support is more important than ever to enable The Royal Marsden to continue to provide the very best treatment and care during the coronavirus pandemic, throughout recovery, and beyond.

There are so many ways you can help us continue to make a difference to the lives of those affected by cancer. Whether you choose to take part in an event, fundraise for us, make a donation, or leave a gift in your Will – your support, however big or small, has the potential to save lives.

Find out more
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020 7808 2233

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Some of the photographs in this issue were taken prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and do not reflect current social distancing guidelines.

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