



Impact Report
2019/20



Making a difference



Charles Alexander

Charles Alexander
Chairman
The Royal Marsden
Cancer Charity



Antonia Dalmahoy

Antonia Dalmahoy
Managing Director
The Royal Marsden
Cancer Charity

A message from our Chairman and Managing Director

There was much to celebrate over the last financial year as we continued our fundraising with great success, raising £31.7 million from donations and legacies alone thanks to the support of our wonderful donors, volunteers and staff. We must also recognise however, that there was a challenging end to the year with the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic across the world.

Through 2019/20, the Charity continued its support for children with cancer, through a new £3.6 million grant. This will ensure staff at the Oak Centre for Children and Young People can provide paediatric and teenage patients with the very best treatment and care, including access to the latest clinical trials. This is additional to the Charity's ongoing support for the work of the Oak Paediatric and Adolescent Drug Development Unit which, through the development of breakthrough drugs and treatment, continues to make a life-changing difference to children with cancer all over the world.

The second CyberKnife machine funded by the Charity was installed at The Royal Marsden this year, at our hospital in Sutton. This means even more patients can benefit from advanced radiotherapy for tumours which move or very small brain tumours.

Fundraising for the Oak Cancer Centre, our biggest ever appeal, reached £61.5 million this year. As well as two very generous seven figure pledges this year, we also benefited from

a once-in-a-lifetime concert, 'Music for the Marsden', at the O2 Arena in March 2020. A line-up of music legends performed their biggest hits in front of thousands of fans, raising £1 million for the Oak Cancer Centre appeal.

However, it has been a challenging end to the year. The coronavirus pandemic has had a considerable national and international impact, including on patient treatment and care at The Royal Marsden. The coming months will likely be very difficult for everyone, and the Charity will be working hard throughout the year to adjust as much of our fundraising activity as possible.

We need support now more than ever, as cancer patients at The Royal Marsden and beyond adapt to a very different healthcare system. We saw how generous our supporters are, even in these difficult times, when we launched our emergency appeal at the end of March 2020 to support Royal Marsden staff and patients, amidst the uncertainty brought on by COVID-19. In just a month we raised over £1 million, a fantastic amount of money for which we are truly grateful. These vital funds had an immediate benefit for both staff and patients.

Covid-19 will pose unprecedented challenges for the third sector, including at The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity. We are confident however that we can continue to support the world-leading work of The Royal Marsden thanks to your generous support, ensuring that throughout the next year The Royal Marsden will continue to deliver the very best research, treatment and care, helping patients not just here, but everywhere.



Front cover: A supporter at the Ever After Garden, London (read more on page 15)

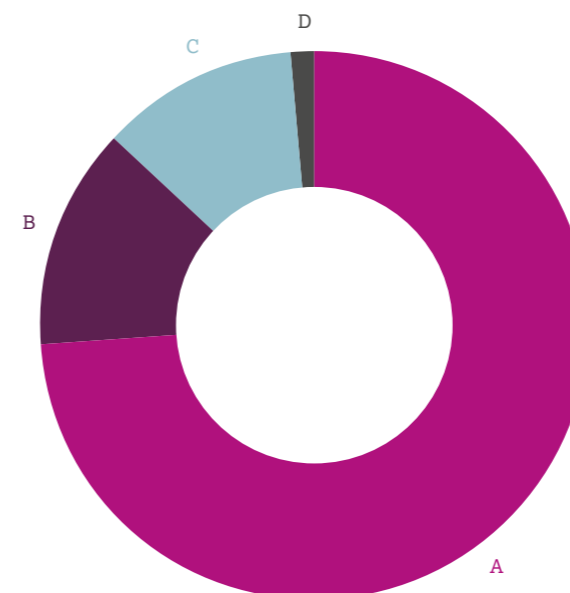
Senior Staff Nurse, Tahmina Ali in the Outpatients Department, Chelsea



Financial highlights

Together, we raised £32.5 million including £31.7 million from donations and legacies in 2019/20. 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



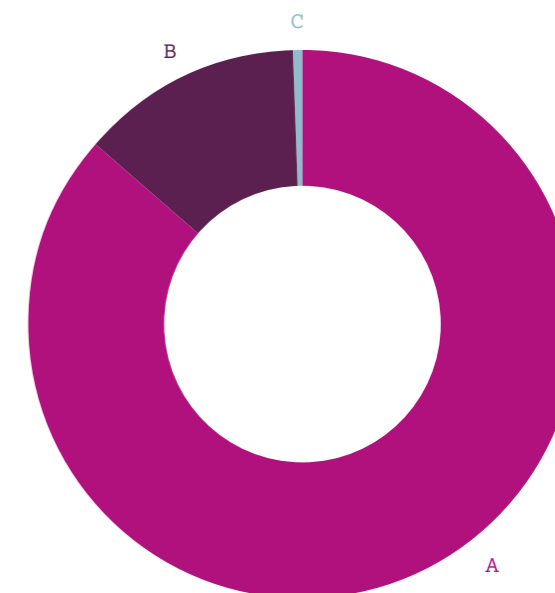
- A. Individuals, trusts and corporates **£24.1m**
- B. Legacies **£4.2m**
- C. Community **£3.8m**
- D. Trading **£0.4m**

Total income

Donations **£27.5m**
 Legacies **£4.2m**
 Grants and gifts in kind **£0.4m**
 Trading **£0.4m**
Total income raised £32.5m

Investment **£0.5m**
 Other **£0.2m**
Total income £33.2m

How we spent your money



Total expenditure

A. Charitable support of the hospital **£36.9m**
 B. Raising funds **£5.6m**
 C. Investment and property management **£0.1m**
Total £42.6m

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.

William's story Patient



William Runicles, now aged seven, was diagnosed with a rare brain tumour as a baby leaving him with severe visual impairment. After standard treatment stopped working, he was referred to The Royal Marsden's Oak Paediatric and Adolescent Drug Development Unit in 2016 to take part in a three-year clinical trial.

His mum Ursula said: "We have spent so many nights in hospital with William, but thanks to the trial we haven't been an inpatient for over a year and a half. Within months of going on the trial, scans showed significant reduction in the disease, and after the introduction of a more targeted drug last year, William continues to do well. He is a happy and content little boy and loves going to school."

"There is a different mindset at The Royal Marsden. The team are always willing to try new things, always learning and making progress. They have not only been a huge support to the whole family, they give us hope."

Spring

Leading the way for young cancer patients

The world-leading Oak Paediatric and Adolescent Drug Development Unit (OPDDU) offers one of the largest portfolios of innovative treatments in Europe thanks to support from The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.

The unit's ambition to improve survival of childhood and adolescent cancer by accelerating drug development in clinical and translational research for children and young people has been supported with funding from The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity since 2005.

The OPDDU has grown significantly over recent years. This was partly due to a pilot molecular profiling study developed at The Royal Marsden and The Institute of Cancer Research. This study tested children and adolescents with solid tumours for genetic mutations using a gene panel to help personalise their cancer treatment with novel drugs.

The study set the foundations for the Stratified Medicine Paediatrics programme,

a national paediatric tumour profiling study for patients with relapsed solid tumours.

Due to the emphasis of OPDDU's work on molecular profiling, The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity funded Dr Sally George this year to establish stronger links between the laboratory and the clinic.

Dr George said: "There has never been a greater need to have someone with one foot in the laboratory and another in the clinic. It is an exciting time in translational development, seeing the science move into the clinical setting. I split my time between both worlds and believe some of the best research ideas come directly from patients."

Pioneering immunotherapy trial

In spring 2019, The Royal Marsden was approved by NHS England to deliver a new type of immunotherapy for patients with relapsed or refractory diffuse large B-cell lymphoma or relapsed or refractory B-Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia.

Chimeric antigen receptor T cell (CAR-T cell) therapy uses the patient's own immune system to fight cancer. It involves collecting the patient's own T cells and genetically modifying them to enhance their ability to target and kill cancer cells, and then reinfusing them into the patient. In 2019, a phase 3 trial at The Royal Marsden, ZUMA-7, compared CAR-T therapy to the current standard of care for relapsed/refractory DLBCL. In January 2020, following the completion of the original trial, the hospital has been accredited to treat patients with two kinds of CAR-T treatments.

The immune system has a key role in controlling the development and growth of tumours in the body. Tumours have developed multiple mechanisms to escape and evade recognition by the immune system. T cells are important effector cells – activated cells that defend the body in an immune response – that are central in controlling tumour growth in the body.

Dr Emma Nicholson, Consultant Haematologist at The Royal Marsden, said: "CAR-T cell therapy has shown effectiveness in patients with multiply relapsed diffuse large B-cell lymphoma who are resistant to standard chemotherapy and have limited curative options.

"We are incredibly grateful to have the support of The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity for our research programme, with a number of our research team members funded by the Charity. Our first patient treated on the ZUMA-7 trial remains in complete remission over eighteen months post-treatment, which demonstrates the amazing effect of Charity support on cancer patients."

The Royal Marsden is expanding the use of T cell therapies with a number of clinical trials recruiting for treatment for patients with solid tumours.

Thomas's story Patient



Thomas Romain was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma aged 26. His daughter Olivia had just turned one at the time. Thomas was referred to The Royal Marsden in late 2018 and entered onto a study where he received CAR-T cell therapy.

"When I found out I was eligible and that the trial could give me a chance to go into remission it felt like I had won the lottery. I couldn't believe something like this was possible.

The trial also meant I could avoid harsher treatments that were not proven to be overly effective.

"I was really proud to be the first person to receive CAR-T at The Royal Marsden. I had so much faith in the medical staff around me and the treatment itself.

"Months after starting the trial I received the incredible news that the treatment had worked. It had put me in remission. It is hard to put into words what that's like to hear. It was like a huge weight had been lifted.

"Going through this has given me a new sense of what's important in life. I want to live life to the full, to see the world with my family, embrace the small things and eat plenty of ice cream with my daughter Olivia."

Spring

Marching as one

On 19 May 2019, almost 4,000 supporters took part in The Banham Marsden March, walking between The Royal Marsden's Chelsea and Sutton hospitals to raise money for The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity. The event went ahead slightly later than planned, after it was rescheduled due to high winds on the original day in March.



Walkers ready to start The Banham Marsden March

Despite the change in plans, dedicated walkers raised more than £1.7 million to help patients and their families and friends, not just at The Royal Marsden but across the UK and around the world. Antonia Dalmahoy, the Charity's Managing Director, said: "The response we received when we asked supporters about rearranging the event was overwhelming and we were delighted to be able to reschedule it.

"It was an amazing day, and I want to thank everyone who joined us to walk, volunteer or support their family and friends. I also want to thank all those who were unable to make the rearranged date but organised their own walk in order to support the Charity. We're also incredibly grateful to Banham for their continued sponsorship and support of this event which is now in its ninth year."

To read more about the 10th anniversary of The Banham Marsden March due to take place on 23 May 2021, see page 22.



Dr Darina Kohoutova (second from left) and Endoscopy Unit colleagues in the endoscopy suite

Inside information

The Royal Marsden's Endoscopy Unit helps diagnose a range of cancers at the earliest possible stage. Different types of test, including gastroscopies, colonoscopies and endoscopic ultrasounds, all involve looking inside the body with a flexible tube that has a camera and a light on the end of it. The Endoscopy team use these tests to provide further information to aid diagnosis.

Dr Darina Kohoutova, a Consultant Gastroenterologist who is part-funded by The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, says: "As well as diagnosing cancer earlier, it's important we ensure our patients can continue to enjoy their lives after cancer treatment."

This year, the Charity funded a new piece of equipment for the Endoscopy Unit. The Endoscopic ultrasound (EUS) combines ultrasound technology with endoscopy to produce detailed images of the inside of a patient who may have upper GI cancer. This is particularly crucial for cancers which are difficult to

diagnose early and often don't cause symptoms until they have already spread. It is essential that clinicians have the best equipment to detect cancer as early as possible to give patients the greatest chance of survival. The tip of the EUS has a small ultrasound probe that can identify tumours that may have been missed on CT scans.

Biopsies can also be taken via EUS and, when used with fine-needle aspiration, a type of biopsy procedure, it can be a minimally invasive alternative to exploratory surgery.

Russell's story Patient



Russell Davis lost his father, grandfather, great grandfather and great uncles to bowel cancer and was himself diagnosed with Lynch syndrome, which genetically predisposes him to bowel cancer. He started having regular colonoscopies at The Royal Marsden in 2009.

He says: "As early diagnosis makes such a huge difference to survival in bowel cancer, I was having colonoscopies every 18 months to catch it early."

In August 2018, the Endoscopy Unit discovered small growths called polyps on Russell's bowel wall. Some of the polyps were cancerous. After further investigation, he underwent keyhole surgery to remove part of his bowel.

Russell says: "Sadly, in losing my father I saved my life: finding out about the inherited condition meant I was closely monitored and was able to catch this early. I have peace of mind now that we've stopped history repeating itself, and my two-year-old-son, Freddie, will be able to be much more aware and monitored as he gets older."

Graham's story

Patient



Graham, 70, was diagnosed with prostate cancer in July 2018 and referred to The Royal Marsden for treatment under the care of Mr. Declan Cahill.

"I knew right from the start that I was in excellent hands. I was given a choice of treatment and chose robotic surgery using the Da Vinci Xi.

"I was so excited to get in and get it done. It was very quick, and because of this incredible machine the procedure is done through keyhole surgery rather than open surgery. I was home the following day with two weeks to put my feet up.

"I am a keen horse rider. Declan knew this and told me that I should be back riding my horse, DiNozzo, eight weeks after surgery. And he was right.

"Nearly two years down the line my PSA is now undetectable. It feels incredible, and it is all thanks to the wonderful team at The Royal Marsden. I am a lucky man!"

Summer

Robotic fellows

With a sixth surgical robotic fellow starting at The Royal Marsden in 2020, the Charity's funding for the robotic surgical programme continues to make a vital difference.

Consultant Urological Surgeon and lead for the Da Vinci Xi Surgical Robotic Fellowship, Mr Pardeep Kumar, said: "We introduced our da Vinci robotic surgical systems in 2007, and started the Fellowship in 2017. Since then, five surgeons have completed the programme and taken their skills to other hospitals, sharing best practice and expertise to benefit cancer patients everywhere."

Traditionally, surgeons develop one area of expertise, either one organ or a small group of organs. However, cancer is not restricted by such boundaries, often spreading from its original site to nearby organs. The Robotic Surgery Fellowship provides the opportunity to learn across three specialty departments of urology, colorectal surgery and gynaecological oncology.

Ms Ailin Rogers is the most recently appointed Fellow at The Royal Marsden, starting in summer 2020, after working as a colorectal surgeon at St James Hospital in Dublin.

"Traditionally surgeons have been trained separately in gynaecology, urology and proctology. However, the pelvis

doesn't obey those rules – cancer can spread from each of these areas to the other so it's incredibly useful to be able to operate on patients across different areas, within the same procedure, enabling patients to undergo shorter, less invasive surgeries.

Ms Manou Kaur will shortly be leaving The Royal Marsden after two and a half years to take up a consultant post at the Liverpool Women's Hospital.

"The Fellowship at The Royal Marsden has provided me with a unique opportunity to learn new surgical skills and techniques. I'm delighted to be able to take this experience and knowledge to my new post in Liverpool where I will be setting up their new robotic programme. This means that even more patients across the country will benefit from the latest robotic surgery, thanks to the training I received at The Royal Marsden, generously supported by The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity."

Help at hand

HRH The Duke of Cambridge visited The Royal Marsden in July 2019 to speak to patients and staff about the impact of cancer treatment on their mental health and psychological wellbeing. The hospital offers a programme of psychological and emotional support for staff and patients, which is funded by The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.



HRH The Duke of Cambridge meets colleagues of Professor Martin Gore (top) and Royal Marsden staff members (bottom)

The Duke spoke to Julie Gallagher, who received psychological support from The Royal Marsden team following her second diagnosis of throat cancer in 2018.

"I really struggled mentally and emotionally when I relapsed," she says. "The team were so supportive and really helped me get to a place where I can learn to live with what has happened, and see a future for myself and my family."

The Duke also spoke to members of staff about their experiences. Working in a cancer hospital can bring with it some harrowing and emotional experiences. Matron Aly Foyle was diagnosed with stress, depression and compassion fatigue in December 2017. She spoke to The Duke about the support she received from The Royal Marsden while on sick leave, and on returning to work.

"It was a very upsetting and difficult time, but with the support of my family, GP and The Royal Marsden team, I came back stronger than ever," she says. "I use any opportunity to talk about it – if I can help one person, it makes my experience more worthwhile."

During the visit, The Duke also met Pauline Gore, widow of Professor Martin Gore, an oncologist at The Royal Marsden for 40 years and Trustee of The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, before he died suddenly in January 2019. Alongside Pauline, The Duke spoke to close colleagues of Professor Gore about the impact of his loss.

Cally Palmer, Chief Executive of The Royal Marsden, says: "It was a privilege to welcome The Duke back to The Royal Marsden, and in particular to share with him our approach to supporting staff and patients' psychological and mental wellbeing, as it is a topic so close to his heart."

The next generation

The Biobank continues to play a pivotal role in The Royal Marsden's research programme and is now, thanks to funding from The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, inspiring the next generation of biomedical scientists.

Last year, the Biobank developed a six-month training programme after identifying graduates applying for starter roles lacked the skills required.

The training offered the graduates experience working in different areas of research, biomedical science and biobanking and focused primarily on optimal ways to integrate them into the workplace.

Janine Salter, Biobank Manager, said: "We have noticed that candidates coming forward for jobs were not equipped with the skills for the role. Most needed development on their troubleshooting skills and ability to lead projects.

"With the national focus on the 100,000 Genome project and the direction cancer research is heading, we need to continue training the next generation of scientists to carry on our work in the future.

The success of The Royal Marsden's pioneering research in circulating tumour DNA (ctDNA) programme, coupled with the drive to find molecular biomarkers to monitor response to therapies and predict outcomes for patients, has prompted the Biobank to move towards UKAS ISO accreditation. This is a new standard that will help expedite the integration of novel therapies into practice through accredited pathways. A new Operations and Quality Assurance Manager, Alison MacDonald, was recruited last year (2019), also funded by The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, to ensure Biobank processes meet the standards.



A scientist in the Tissue Bank at the NIHR Centre for Molecular Pathology

“

It was a fascinating programme that gave both the graduate and us valuable experience. We have used the programme's learnings as a blueprint on how to train up our existing workforce in the future.

”

Janine Salter
Biobank Manager

Summer

Personalising treatment for patients

Thanks to funding from The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, a translational immuno-oncology laboratory has been established in the world leading NIHR Centre for Molecular Pathology (CMP). The new lab is helping researchers to develop knowledge on how cancer works at a molecular level to enable a more refined diagnosis and the development of more tailored and personalised treatments for patients.

Led by Dr Katharina von Loga, Consultant Molecular Pathologist, whose role is funded through a generous donation to The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity by the Moodie Davitt EGB Cancer Research Bursary, this new facility provides leading digital imaging technologies and artificial intelligence to monitor and study interactions between the immune system and cancers.

The main element of this new facility is the Polaris digital imaging platform which was set up in August 2019. This pioneering scanner has a range of special features which can create high quality images to provide clinical teams new insights into tumour behaviours.

Dr Katharina von Loga said: "In contrast to a normal slide scanner, this pioneering new platform allows staining of eight specific cell markers for example immune cells on a single tissue section, that can be visualised

simultaneously. This means that a minimum amount of tissue can provide a comprehensive picture of immune and cancer cell relationships and interactions.

"We need to better understand how the immune system interacts with cancer and how cancer cells 'hide' from it. Development with immunotherapy treatments is based around understanding what immune cells are in and around the cancer and if there is something that we can target with drugs to reactivate the immune system."

"Using this new technology to understand what cells we can see and by using artificial intelligence (AI) to build algorithms, we can work to identify cancers with specific immune cell patterns that are likely to respond to immunotherapy and to define new biomarkers. This will help us to develop more targeted and personalised treatments to ensure the best outcomes for our patients."

Leaving a legacy

In July, The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity won Legacy Campaign of the Year at the National Fundraising Awards for our first legacy fundraising campaign, 'Give Back to the Future'. The suite of communications developed for the campaign raises awareness of how a gift left in a Will can benefit patients years into the future.

Gifts left in Wills to The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity help to boost the hospital's pioneering research. One such example is a groundbreaking project into Central Nervous System (CNS) lymphoma, which is set to revolutionise what we know about this rare sub-type of lymphoma cancer.

There has been limited research into this disease due to the small numbers of patients affected. But as The Royal Marsden is a specialist referral centre for CNS lymphoma, we can conduct research with enough data to draw meaningful conclusions.

This generous support will enable researchers to develop liquid biopsies to diagnose patients. They will also help launch a pilot study of a special scanning technique called MRI sequencing and allow us to look for genetic mutations in tumours that may be treatable with targeted drugs.

Dr Ian Chau, Consultant Medical Oncologist, said: "These gifts will create a true legacy for patients with CNS lymphoma."

Autumn

Tomorrow's research, today



Professor Sanjay Popat

The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity is providing major funding for crucial research projects.

The past decade has heralded an era of targeted drugs for many cancer types, including lung cancer. These drugs target genetic mutations in tumours in order to stop cancer at a molecular level. Professor Sanjay Popat, Consultant Medical Oncologist, says: "We look at a sample of tumour cells to see which genetic mutations lung cancer patients have and which ones are likely to drive tumour growth, then we match them to a drug that targets this mutation."

Targeted drugs have meant that these patients survive three or four times longer and have an improved quality of life. Research is now under way to compare the effectiveness of different targeted drugs and, under Dr Anna Minchom, a Consultant Medical Oncologist funded by the Charity, to identify other genetic markers that could be targeted with drugs.

Dr Minchom is running a number of early-phase trials involving experimental drugs in the hospital's Oak Foundation Drug Development Unit. She says: "We've made great progress in treating the disease in recent years, but we need to develop new

treatments for patients in whom existing drugs no longer work and for those with types of lung cancer that are difficult to treat."

A second major research project is underway, investigating the use of artificial intelligence to benefit patients with cancers of the lower oesophagus/stomach – a particularly aggressive type of cancer. Researchers hope the pioneering science will help to better identify patients who may benefit from a chemotherapy drug, and those who may not.

This will hopefully overcome a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to treatment, and instead develop a personalised approach to the management of such aggressive cancers.



Dr Anna Minchom

City of light

Last December, thousands of beautiful white roses lit up Mayfair's Grosvenor Square as part of a light installation to support The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.



The Ever After Garden at Grosvenor Square

Thanks to those who dedicated an illuminated rose – either in person or online – the Ever After Garden raised £94,000.

The idea for the garden came from fashion creative and writer Camilla Morton and designer Anya Hindmarch, in memory of the late production designer and art director Michael Howells.

It became a reality with the support of Grosvenor Britain & Ireland and Korean creative group Pancommunication and its Light Rose Garden.

Anya Hindmarch said: "The Ever After Garden was born out of the need to pay tribute to those we have lost during the year, and was personal to everyone. For me, it was also in memory of my Aunt Elizabeth Hindmarch. My wish was for this to be a place to reflect at Christmas in amongst all the festive cheer, and in doing so raise money for the incredible institution that is The Royal Marsden."

“

The Ever After Garden was a beautiful and touching display, and a lovely way for people to come together and remember those special to them. We are so grateful to everyone who made it a reality and raised vital funds for The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.

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Antonia Dalmahoy
Managing Director
The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity

Julie's story

Patient



Julie has attended our Celebrate a Life events ever since completing treatment at The Royal Marsden for bladder cancer in 2016.

"I first heard the carol concert from my hospital bed. I was determined that I would be there the following year, and I was. I have been going every year since.

"It is an emotional event for me. It is very humbling to stand outside the hospital that saved my life. It is now four years on, and my scans still show that I have no signs of cancer. I only need to come for check-ups annually too which is just amazing.

"Every year I name a star for myself to celebrate the fact that I'm still here, I'm still fighting and I'm so grateful to The Royal Marsden for everything they've done for me.

"There is so much to celebrate too. My youngest son has had a daughter, so I am now a grandma. Myla is now two and we are very close. My daughter is pregnant and will be getting married next year too. All you want is to see your children settled with nice partners and happy. It makes me feel very emotional. I didn't think I would live to see all of this and it is all thanks to this wonderful hospital."

Reach for the stars

Autumn

Our Celebrate a Life campaign last Christmas raised more than ever before with over £103,000 being donated over the festive season.



Celebrate a Life service at Chelsea

The annual Celebrate a Life campaign encourages supporters to make a donation and have the name of someone special handwritten on a star and hung on one of the Christmas trees outside the hospitals in Chelsea and Sutton, during December. Last Christmas there were more stars on the trees than ever before with over 3,000 being named.

The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity Managing Director Antonia Dalmahoy said: "I'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who supported our Celebrate a Life campaign. Not even heavy rain could hold back our incredible supporters from attending the carol services, many of whom have incorporated Celebrate a Life into their Christmas traditions. It was humbling to see the thousands of

stars across the Christmas trees each shining brightly for a life that has been touched by cancer."

Supporters choose 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 just to celebrate themselves or the people in their lives.

Now in its 16th year, Celebrate a Life sees two carol services take place in December where supporters can come to the hospital and sing carols alongside a choir, watch the Christmas tree lights switched on and find their special star on the tree.

The campaign has grown substantially over the years and has more than doubled the amount it's raised since 2012.



Professor Nicholas Turner

Liquid detectives

Breast cancer is the UK's most common cancer, with around 55,000 women and 350 men being diagnosed each year. Blood tests known as 'liquid biopsies' could represent a major step forward in our ability to detect and monitor breast and other cancers.

In 2019, the CHEMOne trial found a 'liquid biopsy' could detect the return and spread of breast cancer on average 11 months before tumours became visible on scans or patients developed symptoms. The test, developed by scientists at The Royal Marsden and The Institute of Cancer Research was found to work in all types of breast cancer, and could detect the early signs of the spread of the disease around the body (outside of the brain).

It received funding from The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, thanks specifically to the generous support of Le Cure. Le Cure, a cycling event across the Alps, was set up to raise money solely for breast cancer research at The Royal Marsden.

Professor Nicholas Turner, Head of the Ralph Lauren Centre for Breast Cancer Research, and Consultant Medical Oncologist at The Royal Marsden says: "These new blood tests can work out which patients are at risk of relapse much more accurately than we have done before. We hope that by identifying relapse much earlier we will be able to treat it much more effectively than we can do now, perhaps even prevent some people from relapsing. But we will now need clinical trials to assess whether we can use these blood tests to inform treatment decisions for patients."

Going above and beyond

The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity is fortunate to be supported by an incredibly committed group of volunteers, who support events and activities both inside the hospital and out in the community.

Over the past year, almost 200 active volunteers gave up over 13,750 hours of their time to support the Charity.

At The Banham Marsden March in May 2019, 200 volunteers helped with the marshalling, at the start and finish lines, as well as cheering walkers on along the route. They also assisted in the preparation of the event to help make the event a success.

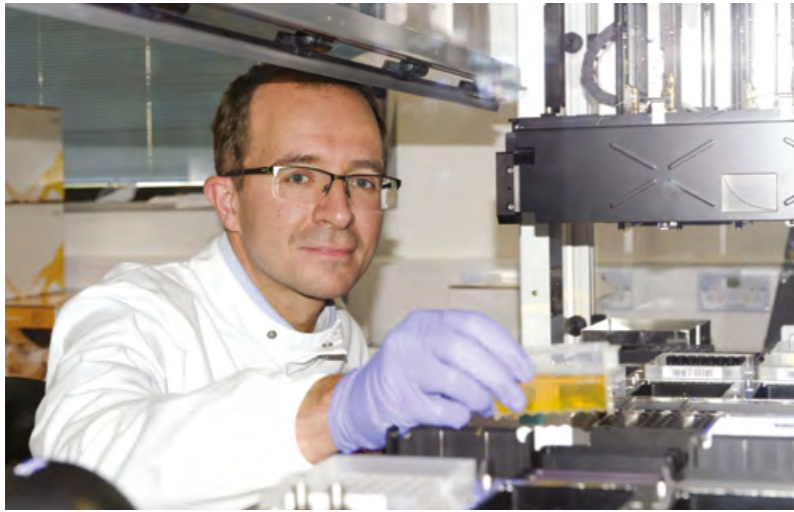
This year, The Royal Marsden appointed a new Head of Volunteering, Barry Pridmore, funded by the Charity, who will develop a wider strategy for volunteers across The Royal Marsden and identify further ways in which volunteers can best support patients, staff and supporters.

Barry says, "We hugely value the time volunteers are able to give to support people affected by cancer and with their support we are able to provide additional resources and services to enhance the patient and supporter experiences."

Winter

All in the genes

Thanks to funding from The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, work is ongoing in the NIHR Centre for Molecular Pathology (CMP) to develop and introduce new genomics methods into standard NHS practice, to benefit cancer patients across the country.



Dr Andy Feber in the Centre for Molecular Pathology

Dr Andy Feber was recently appointed as Deputy Scientific Director at the CMP in Sutton. This Charity-funded role sits within the Clinical Genomics research team and will work closely with the Clinical Genomics Diagnostics Team and the NHS England Genomics Lab Hub. Dr Feber's research focuses on understanding the genomics of cancer development and the development of biomarkers for cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Dr Feber will be focusing on diagnostic work and translational research, working with the clinical teams on developing novel procedures for early cancer

detection and monitoring of residual disease. This work will help to identify whether curative surgery or treatment has been effective for a patient whilst also identifying any recurrence early, so that the appropriate treatment can be given as early as possible to ensure the best outcomes. Identifying those patients who need chemotherapy and those who don't will ensure that only patients who will benefit from further treatment will receive it.

Early diagnosis is also one of Dr Feber's key areas of interest within his role – diagnosing cancers earlier is vital and saves

thousands of lives every year. Dr Feber will be working with teams to develop a circulating tumour DNA (ctDNA), minimally invasive blood test which could be used in a community setting, such as in GP surgeries, to help diagnose cancers earlier. These tests could also be used for patients during their standard treatment to monitor progress, reducing the need for patients to come into hospital for regular scans.

Thanks to Charity funding, the CMP is now home to a new state of the art robot – the Hamilton STAR advanced liquid handling platform. With the ability to handle up to 96 samples at a time, this new machine is allowing lab teams to automate sample processing and has increased capacity to process samples from 48 samples in two days to 192 samples in just one day with minimal hands-on time and supervision, freeing up staff to perform other tasks. This new system will be central to many laboratory workflows for years to come, improving accuracy and efficiency and ultimately improving patient diagnosis, treatment and survival.

Rocking the night away

Some of the world's greatest artists rocked the night away this spring at Music for the Marsden, raising an amazing £1 million for The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.



Eric Clapton performing at 'Music for the Marsden'

A stellar line-up of music legends, including Sir Tom Jones, Van Morrison and Bonnie Tyler, performed their biggest hits in front of thousands of fans at the O2 Arena in early March. Gary Brooker, of Procol Harum, was Musical Director of the show and brought together this line-up of great artists. A host of celebrities were also in attendance to introduce the acts, including 'Whispering Bob' Harris, Chris Moyles and Alexander Armstrong.

Funds raised from the concert will go towards building The Royal Marsden's brand-new, state-of-the-art treatment and research facility, the Oak Cancer Centre.

Rock icon Eric Clapton, who also performed on the night, said: "This is a great cause and I'm honoured to be part of the efforts to raise money for The Royal Marsden. I've known Gary Brooker for many years so to have the chance to be back working together, along with other great artists and band mates was one I couldn't say no to. It was a fantastic evening providing much needed support for this pioneering hospital."

Winter

Purchase of mammography machine

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in the UK, with around 55,000 women diagnosed each year. Thanks to new treatments developed over the last 40 years, more women than ever are surviving the disease. However, breast cancer is still the second leading cause of cancer death in women in the UK.

Early diagnosis is critical to increasing the chance of successfully treating the disease and saving lives. Mammography is the most widely utilised breast imaging tool for the detection of breast cancer, for monitoring treatment and to detect disease relapse.

At The Royal Marsden's Rapid Diagnostic and Assessment Centre (RDAC) in Chelsea, clinical teams see over 10,000 women annually.

A new Hologic 3Dimensions mammography machine was installed in the RDAC this year which is able to produce three-dimensional (3D) images. These images help to detect even the smallest tumours, rather than the old 2D images therefore eliminating the need for additional scans or biopsies.

The machine is designed to be suitable for all breast sizes, with smooth rounded edges and interchangeable compression paddles to aid a more comfortable experience. The reduced pressure also means a more comfortable experience for women undergoing a scan.

The new machine was funded through a generous donation from Henry Wyndham, renowned auctioneer and ex-Sotheby's Chairman, who raised almost £600,000 for the Charity after hiking more than 185 miles along Offa's Dyke. Henry's walk enabled the purchase of the new mammography machine and also a suite of endoscopy equipment for the hospital (read more about this work on page 9).

Looking to the future

At The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, we are constantly looking for new ways to improve patients' experience and safety. Through our funding, The Royal Marsden has been able to run projects across the hospital, supporting patients at every stage of their cancer journey.

A new grant funding extra initiatives to ensure quality research for the future includes support for the Pre-Doctoral Fellowship programme. This programme will help nurses and health professionals begin their career as a clinical academic. Investing in the clinical academics of the future is vital to pioneering advances in cancer treatment and care, driving practice forward and improving outcomes for patients.

Following an interview process, four candidates from The Royal Marsden were chosen in February this year to be awarded a place on the Pre-Doctoral Research Fellowship programme. Applicants were asked to identify an important research question that will make an impact on patient care within the Trust, surrounding communities and the wider NHS.

Support in a crisis

The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity provided vital support to patients and staff at The Royal Marsden during the Covid-19 crisis, launching an emergency appeal in March. The public responded at pace, with £1 million raised in just a month.



Nurses and ward staff on Burdett-Coutts Ward, Chelsea

Donations from the appeal, as at September 2020, stood at £1.8 million including generous donations from the G&K Boyes Charitable Trust, Oak Foundation, The Reuben Foundation and The Syncona Foundation. They made a huge difference including funding psychological support for staff and digital resources across the hospital including iPads for doctors to carry out remote consultations. Donations also enabled the upgrading of WiFi on hospital wards, which meant patients could keep in touch with their loved ones during visitor restrictions, and stay connected when they most needed to.

New Covid-19 testing equipment has been installed to support patients during and beyond the pandemic. This was made possible thanks to a United Way Worldwide

grant to The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, on behalf of The Ralph Lauren Corporate Foundation. The equipment enables the hospital to find out within a couple of hours whether patients have the virus or not, and ensure they are cared for in the most appropriate way.

The funds raised are also supporting a number of critical research studies to investigate the impact of Covid-19 on cancer patients. The Charity had generous donations from The Lady Garden Foundation and The Henry Oldfield Trust to support these studies.

Managing Director of the Charity, Antonia Dalmahoy, said: "It's thanks to our supporters that we're able to keep looking for ways to improve the lives of people affected by cancer, even during the most challenging of times."

“

Knowing we had the continued support of the Charity meant so much to us especially when we were nursing in some of the most difficult conditions any of us had ever experienced. Psychological support was, and still is, on hand to help us if we needed it, which makes such a difference to us and our patients.

”

Rose Asoro
Oncology Matron
The Royal Marsden

Looking
ahead

Together we walk

We are due to celebrate the 10th anniversary of The Banham Marsden March in May 2021 after we unfortunately had to postpone the 2020 walk due to the ongoing impact of the coronavirus pandemic.



Supporters taking part in The Banham Marsden March

We plan to celebrate our first decade in style, with more walkers than ever before in May 2021. We're aiming to raise £2 million for a very special cause, the construction of the Oak Cancer Centre in Sutton – read more about this exciting new centre on the opposite page.

Laura Isaacs, who has walked The Banham Marsden March every year, says she'll be walking for the 10th time to show her support for the hospital who treated both her and her grandad. "I will always feel gratitude towards The Royal Marsden.

Both my grandad and I have received first-class treatment from this amazing hospital. I'll never forget how they supported me through treatment for acute myeloid leukaemia almost 12 years ago and saved my life. Since then, I have wanted to give something back by raising money for The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.

My mum, my dad and I have completed all of the walks, often in fancy dress. We love taking part and supporting the work of The Royal Marsden – real-life superheroes!"



An artist's impression of the Oak Cancer Centre

A vision for the future

The Royal Marsden in Sutton will soon look very different as the new Oak Cancer Centre starts to take shape. Building work started in autumn 2020 on our new state-of-the-art facility.

Named in recognition of our biggest-ever single donation of £25 million from Oak Foundation, the centre will speed up the translation of research into breakthroughs in treatment and care, and will vastly improve patient facilities, transforming the lives of cancer patients at The Royal Marsden and beyond. To date, The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity has raised £61 million of a £70-million target to make the Oak Cancer Centre possible.

A public appeal will now support fundraising over the next two years, launching in autumn 2020 as we celebrate breaking ground for the new centre.

We will be asking the public to pledge their support by running marathons, holding cake sales, climbing mountains or doing whatever they can to help us reach our £70m target and open this new facility in 2022.

Over the past year we have seen some incredible fundraising and donations towards the appeal.

Ralph Lauren Corporation pledged £1 million towards the OCC appeal in October 2019, which will fund a Research Zone within the new building, accommodating teams of researchers. Support for the pledge will come from a range of activities involving staff and customers across Europe; from product sales and in-store donations to employee fundraising events.

A team of more than 20 bankers from 18 different firms took on an abseil challenge down the UK's tallest sculpture, the ArcelorMittal Orbit, and raised more than £250,000. The team was led by Richard Cormack, Managing Director of Goldman Sachs and member of the OCC Appeal Board, a highly committed board of volunteers who are generously giving their time to help us raise the £70 million needed to build the Oak Cancer Centre.

Following the death of sports journalist and Royal Marsden patient Vikki Orvice in February 2019, her family and friends hosted a gala evening at Lord's Cricket Ground in London in November 2019. Ian Ridley, Vikki's husband, said: "There were so many tributes to such an amazing woman and I'm delighted we could raise over £100,000 in Vikki's memory."

Over 100 of our supporters attended 'A Night at Annabel's' in October, which raised over £500,000 for the Oak Cancer Centre. TV presenter Sian Lloyd kindly hosted the evening. Speeches from Olympian sailor Sir Ben Ainslie and patient and supporter Alex Green, and music from Dire Straits bassist John Illsley made the night one to remember.

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 or 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.



The David Adams Leukaemia Appeal Fund
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Alex Beard & Emma Verneti
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Rhys Manning
Jack Morgan
Vikki Orvice
Stuart Rouse
David Withers Wilkinson

Get in touch

Without the incredible 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
royalmarsden.org
 020 7808 2233

Fundraise
royalmarsden.org/support
 020 8770 0279

Volunteer
royalmarsden.org/volunteering
 020 8661 3391

Donate
royalmarsden.org/donate
 020 7808 2233

Gifts in Wills
royalmarsden.org/giftsinwills
 020 7811 8032

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 (From 1 October 2019)

Richard Turnor
Elected Trustee

Dr Nicholas van As
 Medical Director
 The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust
Appointed Trustee
 (From 11 June 2019)

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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