

The difference
you make



Wes Mulder, running the
Royal Parks Half Marathon 2023.



In 2023/24, The Royal Marsden has been able to achieve so much thanks to you and fellow supporters of The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.

Your support helps to fund the incredible work carried out by teams at The Royal Marsden, which transforms the lives of people with cancer and their loved ones.

We hope as you read this report you can see how your support has made a vital difference to cancer patients across the UK and around the world.

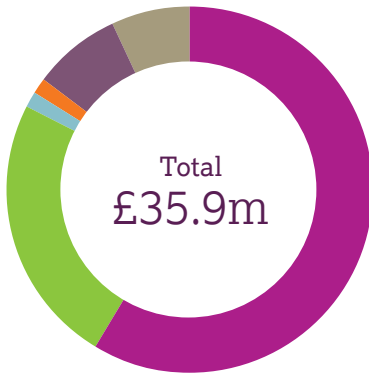
Front cover: Sam Suriakumar, patient at The Royal Marsden, in the Olayan Day Unit in the Oak Cancer Centre.

2023/24 Financial highlights

Together, we raised £35.9 million, including £29.7 million from donations and gifts in Wills. Thank you to all our inspirational and generous supporters who made this possible and ensured we could continue to support the ground-breaking work of The Royal Marsden, for the benefit of cancer patients across the UK and around the world.

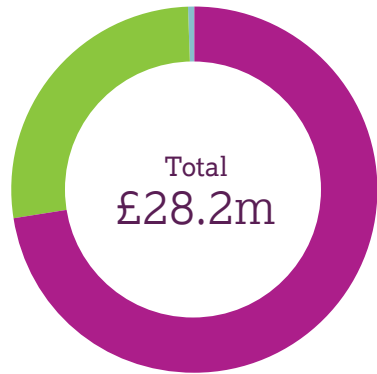
The Charity funds life-saving research, enables hospital teams to provide outstanding treatment and care, purchases the latest equipment and funds world-class patient environments.

What we raised



- **£21.1m** Donations
- **£8.6m** Gifts in Wills
- **£0.5m** Gifts in kind
- **£0.5m** Trading
- **£2.8m** Investment
- **£2.5m** Other income

How we spent your money



- **£20.5m** Charitable activities
- **£7.6m** Raising funds
- **£0.1m** Investment and trading costs

Income received in 2023/24 exceeded money spent which means we are able to invest in vital new projects coming up in the future.

Over 75p of every £1 donated was available to spend on life-saving research, the latest equipment, patient environments and treatment and care.

Louise D'Costa, Superintendent Radiographer, and Emily Holland, Senior Radiographer, in a mammography room in the Oak Cancer Centre.



Equipment

Faster diagnosis and personalised treatment using the latest technology

Last year we provided a £5.1 million equipment grant to the hospital as well as a £1.39 million grant to support the digitisation of the hospital's histopathology service. These grants enable more patients to receive the very best treatment and a swift and accurate diagnosis.

The equipment grant has funded a new linear accelerator to introduce the most recent advancement in radiotherapy technology, known as online

Adaptive Radiotherapy (oART). This technology enables treatment to be adapted daily in real time for each patient, depending on the position of the tumour and anatomy. Targeting the tumour more precisely minimises damage to healthy tissue and helps to reduce side effects for patients.

In May 2023, a new mammography machine was installed in the Charles Wolfson Rapid Diagnostic Centre in the Oak Cancer Centre. The machine, funded through a previous grant, enables potentially life-saving mammography examinations, lower doses of radiation and improved rates of breast cancer detection.

The £1.39 million Digital Histopathology grant has supported the digitisation of the histopathology department where patients' tissue samples are processed and examined. With our funding, the hospital has purchased and installed state-of-the-art scanners and slide printers, integral to the transformation of this service.

Patients' tissue samples can now be collected on slides and converted into digital images using the scanners, then viewed and analysed as high-resolution images alongside other data, to help with a swifter diagnosis. Furthermore, images can easily be sent to colleagues around the world to share learnings and expertise.

The Charity's investment in digital histopathology also supported groundbreaking research carried out by the Integrated Pathology Unit (IPU) at The Royal Marsden and the Institute of Cancer Research, London (ICR). Under the leadership of Professor Manuel Salto-Tellez, the team is harnessing the combined power

of digital pathology and artificial intelligence (AI).

AI can be used to detect patterns and vital information, such as levels of key cancer proteins shown on the digitised scans. Gathering more insight about specific types of cancer will then help to develop more personalised treatments for patients that are more effective.



A strong digital pathology diagnostic service with a comprehensive digital database is a foundation stone to opening up many more avenues for our research, so we can enable patients to live longer and better lives.

Prof Manuel Salto-Tellez,
Clinical Consultant at
The Royal Marsden and
Professor of Integrated
Pathology at The Institute
of Cancer Research, London.



Alex Roche, patient at The Royal Marsden.



Alex's story

Alex Roche was diagnosed with breast cancer in March 2024 after undergoing tests in the hospital. The cancer was detected using the new mammography machine, funded by the Charity.

“When I first found a lump in February 2024, I went to my GP to get it checked out. The GP initially thought it might just be a nodule on my ribs. She gave me a thorough examination and referred me to The Royal Marsden for further investigations.”

“I’ve had mammograms, CT scans, MRI scans and an MRI guided biopsy in the Oak Cancer Centre. The staff use every available tool to give you an accurate diagnosis and it can all be done on the same day.”

“I was put under the care of Miss Rachel O’Connell and when my biopsy results came through and my exact diagnosis was confirmed, she took me through her plan of action - she was amazing.”

Alex underwent surgery known as a wide local excision to remove the cancer, followed by a course of radiotherapy.

“I feel like I’ve had the absolute best treatment and care at The Royal Marsden. I can’t fault anything. You put your trust in the staff, and they take that really seriously.”

“

What The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity does is absolutely priceless. I don’t think I can ever say thank you enough to the hospital and the Charity.

Alex, patient at
The Royal Marsden.

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Treatment and care

Helping patients to live well with, and beyond, cancer

Last year our £1.14 million Quality of Services grant and our £756,000 Innovation and Education grant supported a range of initiatives and services which improve the experience of patients at The Royal Marsden and across the UK. The grants funded holistic support for patients, including complementary therapies, psychological support and the hospitals arts programme.

The broad range of complementary therapies available to patients include massage therapy and reflexology. This service provides vital support to patients with complex symptoms, from pain and anxiety to altered body image, throughout their treatment journey.

Charity funding through the Innovation and Education grant has also continued to support the hospital's arts programme, which features accessible arts projects, such as Vocal Beats. The Vocal Beats project gives young cancer patients the opportunity to participate in music-making while in hospital which helps to boost their confidence, mental health and physical wellbeing.

“

Cancer takes so much from you, so feeling like yourself again is a huge milestone. The Vocal Beats team has helped me hugely with this - they continue to be my biggest supporters.”

Marie, patient at
The Royal Marsden.

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Jurga McLean, Clinical Pharmacist.



Last year, the Innovation and Education grant also continued to fund the Pre-Doctoral Research Fellowship Programme, enabling staff to carry out their own research to improve patient treatment and care.

Clinical Pharmacist, Jurga McLean, is undertaking a two-year Fellowship on incorporating patient needs into pharmacist education.

We may see patients for whom English isn't their first language, or other patients who don't have the confidence to ask questions if they are unsure about their chemotherapy regimen.

Jurga's research is focused on evaluating and improving how information about chemotherapy is communicated to a diverse population of patients. The aim is for her findings to then be integrated into education for pharmacists across the UK and as such benefit thousands of cancer patients.

“

We have a diverse population of patients and we want to ensure that information about cancer treatments is relayed to everyone in a way that they understand.

Jurga, Clinical Pharmacist.

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Jon's story

Jon Organ received treatment at The Royal Marsden following his diagnosis of stage four laryngeal cancer (a type of throat cancer) and cancer of the vocal cords.

He underwent total laryngectomy surgery - which removed all of the larynx, the area of the throat containing the vocal cords – as well as chemotherapy and radiotherapy. He has since had to learn how to talk and eat again.

Jon, 57, has benefited hugely from the psychological support team at The Royal Marsden, which is supported by funding from the Charity, as part of his post-surgery rehabilitation.

“When you first get a cancer diagnosis, you don't really understand it. But once you're going through the process and particularly once your treatment is over, this is when you really need mental health support, especially if you're non-verbal.”

“Patients can't be expected to go through surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy and then just return to their normal lives, disfigured and struggling. Intimacy has changed, home life has changed, everything is so different.”

“Some of the biggest battles with cancer are in your head. I've learnt that one of the bravest things you can do is ask for help, it's not a weakness to ask for help if you're struggling.”

“I contacted my clinical team to tell them I felt down and low. They referred me to the psychological support team, and I did a six-week, online mindfulness course with them as part of the support they offered me. The support I've had from this team has calmed me down and helped me to find myself again. It's amazing that this is something the hospital offers.”

Jon Organ, patient
at The Royal Marsden.

“

Teams like psychological support are so vital, and I'm really thankful to the Charity for funding this service that has helped me so much and all The Royal Marsden teams for saving my life.

Jon, patient at
The Royal Marsden.

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Research

Pioneering breakthroughs to transform the lives of cancer patients

Last year the Charity supported the hospital's ambitious research programme with a £4.2 million grant, covering vital areas such as precision therapeutics and diagnostics, early phase drug development, early diagnosis and data science. This will help to improve diagnosis and develop innovative treatments for the benefit of cancer patients at the hospital, across the UK and around the world.

Our investment in cellular immunotherapeutics research at the hospital has supported the C-144-01 clinical trial, a global study involving multiple cancer centres. At The Royal Marsden it was led by Dr Andrew Furness, Consultant Medical Oncologist, who is part funded by the Charity.

The trial explored the use of a treatment called Lifileucel in patients with advanced melanoma. Lifileucel is a type of Tumour Infiltrating Lymphocyte (TIL) therapy, where T-cells from the patient's own immune system are used to attack cancer cells.

More than a third of patients on the study responded well to this innovative treatment, and the results show that TIL therapy could help to extend patients' lives, providing a new form of treatment to those who currently have no other options.

This international research collaboration has led to the US Food & Drug Administration granting accelerated approval in February 2024 for Lifileucel to be provided for advanced skin cancer patients in the US, making it the first T-cell treatment to be approved for solid tumours. This paves the way for the treatment to be approved elsewhere around the world.

Dr Irene Chong,
Head of Clinical Oncology,
in the Oak Cancer Centre, Sutton.



The Charity also continued to invest in precision therapeutics, including supporting the research of Dr Irene Chong, Head of Clinical Oncology, whose role is part-funded by the Charity.

One study, led by Dr Chong analyses the genes in the blood and tissue of rectal cancer patients, to help predict sensitivity and resistance to radiotherapy. Identifying the genetic material responsible for this could give some patients the option to avoid surgery and a permanent stoma.

Dr Chong is building on the work of Dr Diana Tait, Consultant Clinical Oncologist at The Royal Marsden, who pioneered the groundbreaking Deferral of

Surgery study at the hospital, which offered some rectal cancer patients who completely respond to chemotherapy and radiotherapy the chance to avoid surgery which would leave them with a permanent stoma.

Having a stoma bag can significantly affect a patient's quality of life, so having a system of close monitoring for some patients can make a real difference and allow them to live without a stoma for longer.

Dr Chong's research in this area is supported by Red Trouser Day and The Syncona Foundation, through The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.

Breast cancer research

Last year we supported the TRAK-ER trial led by Professor Nick Turner. With funding from our research grant, as well as Pfizer, Invitae and Le Cure, the trial aims to identify signs of relapse in breast cancer patients using circulating tumour DNA (ctDNA) blood tests. These tests can detect very low levels of a tumour's

genetic material in the blood, enabling clinicians to identify the risk of relapse at the very earliest stage before cancer can be seen on a scan. From there, treatment can be adapted to try and prevent relapse from happening.

Jo Lee, patient at
The Royal Marsden.



Jo's story

Jo Lee was diagnosed with lobular breast cancer when she was just 39 years old. After having surgery and radiotherapy elsewhere, Jo joined the TRAK-ER trial at The Royal Marsden.

“When I first heard about TRAK-ER, I thought what an incredible opportunity to have this type of surveillance – a way to keep my mind at ease,” said Jo.

“At my first consultation at The Royal Marsden, they told me the TRAK-ER trial would involve making a ctDNA test for me – a blood test which was specifically designed for me and my cancer.”

However, to Jo's shock, in June 2023, her first ctDNA test showed cancer in her system. “The team called me with my results, and I couldn't believe it.”

Jo has now moved onto the treatment phase of the trial. She says “I know that The Royal Marsden is one of the top cancer hospitals in the world and I feel honoured to be a patient there. There is always someone at the end of the telephone to speak to at the hospital – the support is amazing.”

Jo is an avid runner and took part in the TCS London Marathon last year to support the Charity as a way of giving back.

“

Knowing that The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity is funding research is so reassuring. Research to me gives me hope that people might not have to go through a cancer diagnosis at a later stage, that early detection can pick things up before it gets to the stage where it's life threatening.

Jo, patient at
The Royal Marsden.

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Patient environments

Driving research advances to transform patient care

With your support, the Charity funds world-class facilities at The Royal Marsden. From providing surroundings which enhance wellbeing and recovery, to enabling groundbreaking research which leads to the development of new treatments, your support is helping to transform cancer care globally.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of supporters to The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity's £70 million appeal, we reached a major milestone in June 2023 with the opening of the Oak Cancer Centre by His Royal Highness Prince William, Prince of Wales.

The state-of-the-art treatment and research facility brings together more than 400 researchers from a range of specialties, under the same roof as patients and clinicians, supporting the hospital's ambitious research efforts and helping to speed up the development of new treatments.

The Oak Cancer Centre has been specifically designed to enhance patient experience and provide our staff with the best facilities to conduct their life-saving and innovative work, which will transform the lives of patients at The Royal Marsden, across the UK and beyond.

Since its opening, the Oak Cancer Centre is already making a significant difference to cancer patients. Tens of thousands of patients have benefitted from expert treatment and care in the comfortable and modern environment in the centre.

Over 170 new research studies have been launched by 20 different teams based in the Kuok Research Centre within the Oak Cancer Centre, investigating different tumour types. These studies are helping to transform the lives of cancer patients around the world.

The opening of the Oak Cancer Centre was a landmark moment in the history of The Royal Marsden and The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity. We are hugely grateful to everyone who helped make it possible.

Oak Cancer Centre.



Patient Drop Off Only

OAK CANCER CENTRE

Amesbury Parkway 10 11
Car Park 10 11
Morpeth Centre 12

Sam Suriakumar, patient at The Royal Marsden.



Sam's story

Dad-of-two, Sam Suriakumar was diagnosed with an inoperable diffuse brain tumour in 2020 when he was 34 years old, after collapsing on his way home from work.

“I woke up in hospital two days later. Through scans, it became clear that there was a low-grade tumour in my brain. My neurosurgeon explained that it was more of a web structure rather than a big mass. Therefore, he couldn't easily remove it so sadly surgery was not an option. We decided to take a 'watch-and-wait' approach with anti-seizure medication, as the tumour wasn't affecting my memory or my daily life in general.”

Sam had regular scans to monitor the tumour but three years later, in August 2023, when abnormal growth was detected, he was referred to The Royal Marsden.

Through September and October 2023, Sam underwent 30 sessions of radiotherapy on a linear accelerator, which was funded by The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.

Sam then started chemotherapy in December 2023 and is being treated in the Olayan Day Care Unit in the Oak Cancer Centre.

“Everyone at the hospital is fantastic. Every single person I've met has made me feel so comfortable. Every time I've gone there, I've gone in petrified, and I've come out just feeling a little bit more at ease.”

“

The wonderful team of nurses and staff welcome you with the warmest smiles and deliver exceptional care. Chemotherapy is a hard process, but the Olayan Day Care Unit makes such a big difference.

Sam, patient at
The Royal Marsden.

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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 enable us to support people with cancer, so they can receive the very best care, benefit from the latest research and have treatment using the most advanced equipment.

Whether you took on a challenge, made a donation, included us in your Will or helped us in any other way, thank you so much for your support.

Find out more
royalmarsden.org

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