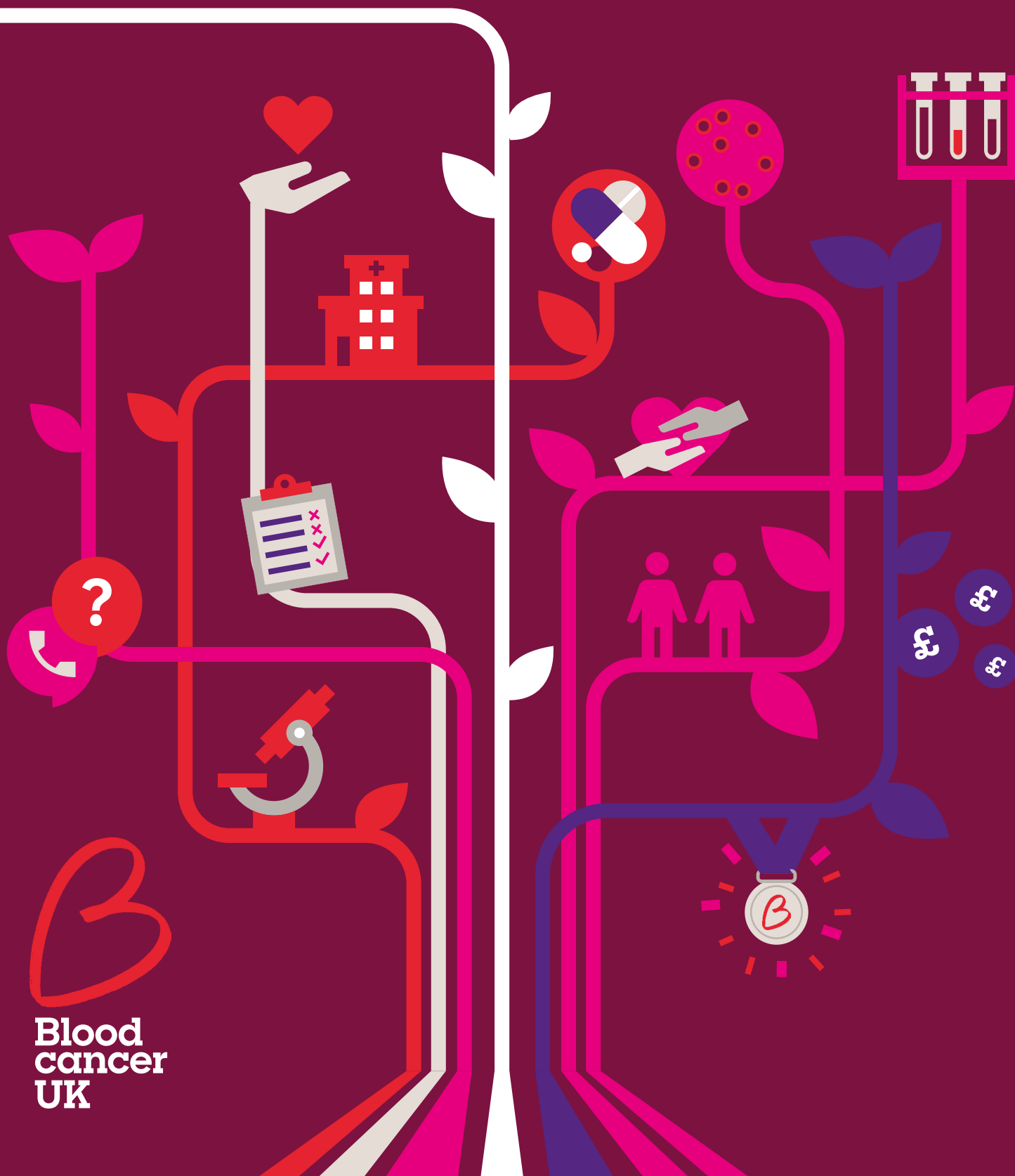


Because we're closer than ever

Impact Report 2025



Blood
cancer
UK



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Introduction

There has never been a more exciting time for blood cancer research.

When I speak to the scientists who dedicate themselves to beating blood cancer, I can't help but be filled with hope. Over the past 10 years I've witnessed their research progress faster than ever before – and it's my privilege to share some of these incredible developments with you in this report.

Behind every world-first treatment, every groundbreaking clinical trial, and every life saved is our community. It's their

collective effort that fuels the successes we see in laboratories and hospitals around the country.

But even against this backdrop of rapid progress, there is still more to do. From blood cancers where survival rates remain stubbornly low to treatments with toxic side-effects – I hope that, by reading about some of the impact we've had so far, you'll be inspired to help us get the job done.

Our goal is to get to the day when no one dies of their blood cancer or treatment.

That day is closer than ever.

Helen Rowntree,
Chief Executive



Our impact at a glance

We've invested over
£500 million
into research over
65 years

£

£

£

Total **value of grants**
awarded over the last
10 years by disease area:

In total:
£63,184,222

Leukaemia:
£25,151,085

Lymphoma:
£7,029,883

Myeloma:
£8,580,097

Multiple
blood cancers:
£15,592,868

Other types of
blood cancer:
£6,830,288

Over
£65 million

invested in studentships
and fellowships, directly
supporting the careers of

468 scientists



£11 million

invested in the Trials
Acceleration Programme
(TAP), to create...



20
clinical
trials

involving
1,200
people with
blood cancer

In 1960 just **1 in 10 children**
diagnosed with the most
common childhood
leukaemia survived for
five years after diagnosis.

**Today, 9 in
10 children
survive**

Survival rates for chronic
myeloid leukaemia (CML),
chronic lymphocytic
leukaemia (CLL)
and follicular
lymphoma are now

over 85%

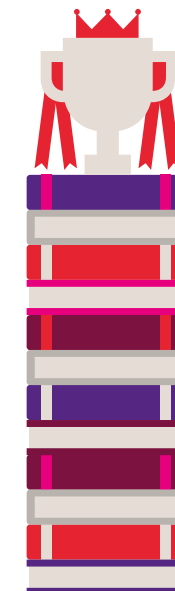
Support services:



Over
**16,000
people**
supported
since launch

Online health
information – over
**5.1 million
users** since 2020
(when the website launched)

Printed health
information reached over
435,000 people



Launched
the first
**UK Blood
Cancer
Action
Plan**

Informed by insight from
569 members
across all parts of our community...
and **supported
by a taskforce**
made up of researchers, healthcare
professionals and those affected

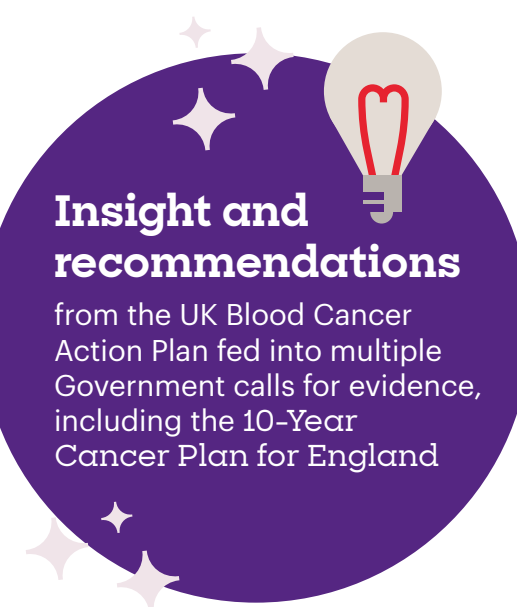


Leading to...

**Over 70
parliamentarians**
across the UK pledged their
support for the UK Blood
Cancer Action Plan

**Insight and
recommendations**

from the UK Blood Cancer
Action Plan fed into multiple
Government calls for evidence,
including the 10-Year
Cancer Plan for England



Our impact is gaining momentum

From one family in 1960 to a community of thousands today, here are just some of the impact highlights we've achieved so far.



1961

First childhood leukaemia research unit opened and the first Professorship in leukaemia research in the UK



1970s

Antibody treatments for cancers laid the foundations for many treatments commonly used today



1990s

Minimal residual disease test developed to detect tiny numbers of cancer cells in children after treatment for ALL – this type of testing is now used worldwide for multiple blood cancers



2004

The Haematological Malignancy Research Network founded. Database of blood cancer patient data from 14 NHS hospitals established, providing world-leading information for important research such as the UK Childhood Cancer Study



2009

First CAR-T project funded. Investment in this research has since grown to £4.8 million



2011

Trials Acceleration Programme set up to ensure we deliver better treatments for blood cancer, faster



2020

Covid pandemic support, research and campaigning led to better protections for people with blood cancer and met unprecedented demand on our support services



2020

Clinical trials support service set up – the first of its kind in the UK, providing guidance from specialist nurses



2019

CLARITY clinical trial discovered a highly effective treatment combination for people with CLL



2015

RAPID clinical trial changed clinical practice worldwide for people with Hodgkin lymphoma, showing PET scans could determine who can be spared additional radiotherapy



2015

Support line and policy work launched in response to our Patient Need survey



2023

MAJIC trial leads to new treatment for polycythaemia vera (PV). Ruxolitinib was approved by NICE for the treatment of PV due to the positive results of the MAJIC trial



2024

Launch of our UK Blood Cancer Action Plan to improve survival, access to treatment and care for those living with blood cancer



2024

First direct patient referral received from North Midlands University Trust into Blood Cancer UK's support services



2025

Transformational Research Awards with a total of £4.9 million for clinical research – our largest investment in a single scheme for over a decade



2025

Strategic clinical trials investment to fund radical improvements in outcomes for hardest to treat blood cancers



Transformative research that saves lives

Because beating blood cancer is within our power.

Research starts with an idea to test, a dream to make reality. With determination and the right support, that idea leads to advances that exceed our expectations.

The progress we've made with blood cancer in just the last ten years would have seemed unbelievable when our charity began in 1960.

Our research has led to new treatments – developed in labs, tested in clinical trials – that are not just improving survival, but helping people live.

This progress proves to us that it is possible to stop blood cancer deaths within a generation.

But it is not only this momentum that will carry us to our goal – it's our community. Scientists, healthcare professionals, policymakers, our supporters, and – most important of all – people affected by blood cancer.

Only a few years ago, the COVID pandemic tested this community like never before. But we rose to the challenge – we supported each other, we transformed our work, we stepped up, and we led the way.

And today, we are stronger than ever. Thanks to this community, we could soon achieve things that until recently seemed impossible – like preventing some people from getting blood cancer at all.

65 years ago, the family that started Blood Cancer UK dared to dream of a day where no one will lose a loved one to blood cancer. And now, that day is closer than ever.

Read on to learn about the progress we've made that makes this possible.

£11 million

invested in the Trials Acceleration Programme (TAP) to create 20 clinical trials involving 1,200 people with blood cancer

Over **£500 million** invested in blood cancer research since 1960

Over £65 million

invested in studentships and fellowships, directly supporting the careers of 468 scientists



Lab discoveries that drive research forward

Every blood cancer treatment we use today began its life in a lab. Supporting science allows ideas to be tested and developed to become the treatments that will save people's lives in the future.

We have invested over £360 million into early-stage and pre-clinical research, which has led to treatments and innovations that are saving lives across the world.

Spotlight on CAR-T cell therapies

One example of how investing in science leads to life-saving therapies can be found in CAR-T cell therapies. In the last decade, CAR-T therapies have gone from experimental treatment to mainstream blood cancer care. Developments like these show us how quickly and significantly research can change lives.

We helped create a life-saving CAR-T therapy for T cell leukaemia

T cells are a part of the immune system that kill unhealthy cells in the body. CAR-T therapies train a person's own T cells to kill blood cancer, and are currently used to treat some blood cancers that affect B cells.

But cancers affecting T cells have proven more difficult. The problem is that training CAR-T cells to kill cancerous T cells just leads to the CAR-T cells killing each other.

But, thanks to our support, Prof Waseem Qasim has found a way to overcome this hurdle – and helped develop a revolutionary cancer therapy.

During his Clinician Scientist Fellowship, Prof Qasim tested a method to modify the CAR-T cells to prevent them from

attacking each other – and destroy the leukaemia cells instead.

This breakthrough came at the right time for Alyssa, who was diagnosed with T-cell acute lymphoblastic leukaemia. At just 13 years old, all the treatments available had failed to stop her cancer.

Alyssa was the first person in the world to receive a CAR-T therapy based on Prof Qasim's research in a clinical trial – and just four weeks later, she went into remission. She later received a second stem cell transplant, and is now back with her family and doing well.

Another breakthrough that Prof Qasim's technique has pioneered is that it uses a healthy donor's T cells to create the CAR-T therapy for multiple people. This 'universal CAR-T' approach significantly reduces the cost and time needed, meaning many more people can benefit from the therapy – and could be applied to other cancers too.

Our support for Prof Qasim was pivotal in getting this groundbreaking therapy into clinical trials. His work shows that investing in lab research can create life-saving treatments for people with blood cancer like Alyssa.

"You meet the consultants [and nurses] and they're brilliant, but there's also so many people behind the scenes that have made this happen, people in their labs, like Professor Waseem ... they're the unsung heroes."

Kiona, Alyssa's mum



We've supported scientists to take therapies to the next level

Our support for world-leading scientists leads them to discoveries that attract commercial investment – bringing new treatments to people with blood cancer sooner.

One such scientist has helped develop the technology used by a leading biotech company, which has since developed CAR-T therapies that are improving lives on both sides of the Atlantic.

Blood Cancer UK funded the clinical research training fellowship of Dr Lydia Lee. Working with Prof Kwee Yong and Dr Martin Pule at University College London, Dr Lee helped test a new type of CAR-T therapy.

And though this therapy did not succeed in its first clinical trial, the evidence Dr Lee generated helped Dr Pule – a world-leader in CAR-T therapies – to develop

more effective CAR-T therapies through a spin-out company he had recently established called Autolus.

Autolus has gone on to develop next-generation CAR-T therapies, including one called obe-cel which has been approved for use in the USA and UK. Obe-cel is helping thousands of adults with B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukaemia delay further progression – giving them more time to live.

This is just one example of why we support scientists to help them take their research forward, wherever it may lead. Because by building a strong research community, and attracting further investment, we will beat blood cancer.

Since 2009 we've funded

15 CAR-T projects

to develop lifesaving new therapies

Clinical trials that bring hope

Because clinical trials are vital
for beating blood cancer.

Clinical trials give people access to new treatments for their blood cancer – and may provide them with another option when all existing treatments have failed. Trials also provide the evidence doctors need to give each person the best treatment possible.

We have invested nearly £35 million into clinical trials to help people live longer, and bring forward the day that we beat blood cancer.

Delivering clinical trials faster than ever before

We created the Trials Acceleration Programme to cut the time it takes to open new clinical studies. This means people with blood cancer get quicker access to new treatments. Scientists get the answers they need sooner. And together, we're bringing forward the day that research beats blood cancer for good.

We've helped people with polycythaemia vera live longer

Over 1,100 people every year in the UK are diagnosed with polycythaemia vera (PV). This rare blood cancer causes blood clots, and can develop into

aggressive cancers like myelofibrosis and acute leukaemia. Treatment options for PV are limited, and people whose cancer doesn't respond to the standard treatment have a shorter life expectancy.

But we've provided an alternative treatment that gives people another chance at a full and healthy life.

The MAJIC trial, funded by the Trials Acceleration Programme, tested the potential of ruxolitinib – a medicine already used to treat other blood cancers. The Trial Acceleration Programme meant the MAJIC study could open to patients in just 10 months – less than half the time it normally takes (24-30 months).

The trial, led by Prof Claire Harrison, showed that ruxolitinib is better at controlling PV than other available therapies. The drug kept the cancer at bay, helping people live for longer.

Thanks to the MAJIC trial, ruxolitinib was approved for use on the NHS in 2023. Together, we've given people with PV more time with their loved ones – and shown that we can deliver life-changing drugs to people quicker than ever before.

**£35
million**
invested in
clinical trials



“We are deeply grateful to Blood Cancer UK for their support, which [...] brought a much needed new treatment to PV patients in the UK and elsewhere.”

Prof Claire Harrison, Primary Investigator
for the MAJIC trial

“Immediately everything improved. My blood metrics came under control and have remained so now for nearly 11 years. [...] Ruxolitinib literally changed everything for me and my family.”

Mark Hill, first patient to take
ruxolitinib in the MAJIC trial

We've given people with chronic lymphocytic leukaemia another lifeline

Chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL) is a slow-growing but incurable cancer, and the most common form of leukaemia. The key to treating CLL is to find multiple options that can control the disease for as long as possible.

And thanks to our generous donors, our scientists have found another option that is helping people with CLL keep on living.

The CLARITY trial, supported through our Trials Acceleration Programme, tested the combination of two existing drugs, venetoclax and ibrutinib. The aim

was to see if the combination was safe and effective for people with CLL whose disease had come back after treatment.

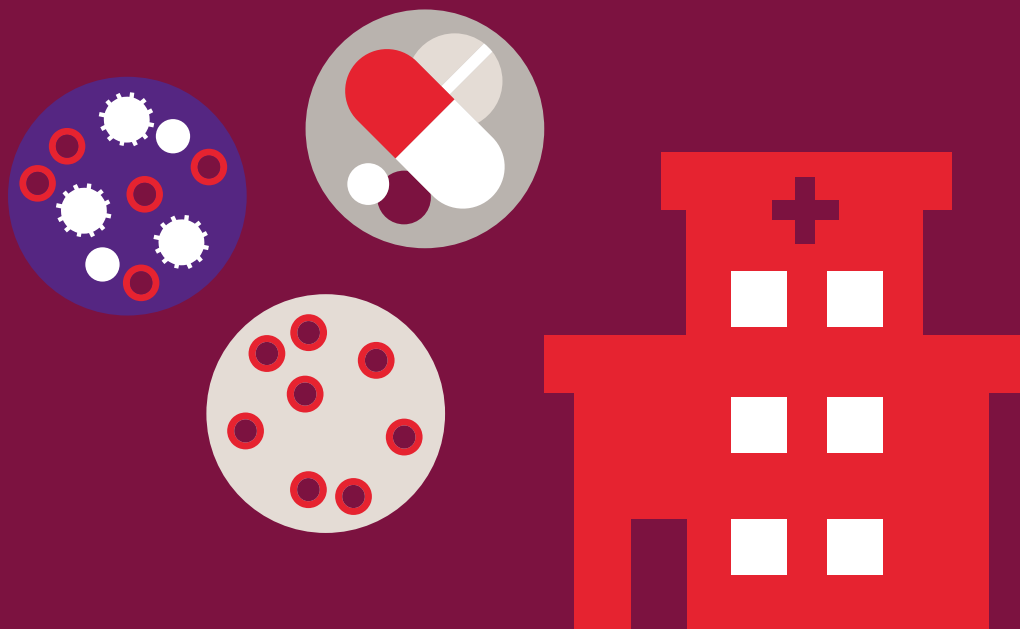
Almost all the people in the CLARITY trial responded to this treatment combination, and nearly half saw their cancer become undetectable – keeping their disease at bay for longer.

Based on the results from CLARITY and follow-up trials, the combination of ibrutinib plus venetoclax was approved for use in the NHS in May 2023, as a first-line treatment for CLL.

Together, we've changed the lives of thousands of people diagnosed with CLL. And we've proven again that one of the keys to beating blood cancer may lie in the drugs we already have.

“I've been able to keep working five-and-a-half days a week in my job as a motor mechanic and I don't worry about the leukaemia – I can put it to the back of my mind. I might not still be here if it wasn't for the CLARITY trial and I'm really grateful that I was able to go on it.”

Brian, living with CLL in Leeds, who took part in the CLARITY trial



“The CLARITY Trial has moved from concept to meaningful results extremely rapidly, demonstrating the importance of the [Trials Acceleration Programme] in enabling the UK to remain at the forefront in the development of new therapies for CLL and other blood cancers.”

Prof Peter Hillmen, Primary Investigator of the CLARITY trial

Supporting scientists

Because life-saving research comes from a strong research community.

In our 65-year history, we've supported the careers of some of the most influential scientists in the UK, whose work has changed the lives of countless people with blood cancer. So we know how important it is to back scientists and enable them to do their best work.

To date, we've invested over £65 million to support the careers of 468 scientists – including Prof Waseem Qasim, Dr Lydia Lee, and Prof George Vassiliou mentioned elsewhere in this report. Our funding has helped them advance their careers and their vital research, and given them opportunities to collaborate with others to accelerate change.

Together, we're creating a strong research community that is ready to take on the challenge of beating blood cancer.



Supporting Dr Richard Dillon to improve AML treatment

Acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) is an aggressive form of blood cancer with many subtypes that behave differently. For some people, their leukaemia cells carry mutations in a gene called NPM1, which can make their cancer resistant to chemotherapy and more difficult to treat.

But work funded by Blood Cancer UK may have found an alternative option. With funding we awarded in 2016, Dr Richard Dillon discovered that NPM1-mutated AML responds differently to some drugs, including a new treatment called venetoclax.

His findings have now led to a clinical trial, funded in collaboration with Cancer Research UK, to test venetoclax in people with NPM1-mutated AML and compare it to standard chemotherapy. The trial is due to announce its results in 2026.

This is not the first time we've supported Dr Dillon. We funded his PhD studentship in 2012 to help him make the transition from medical doctor to an independent clinician-scientist.

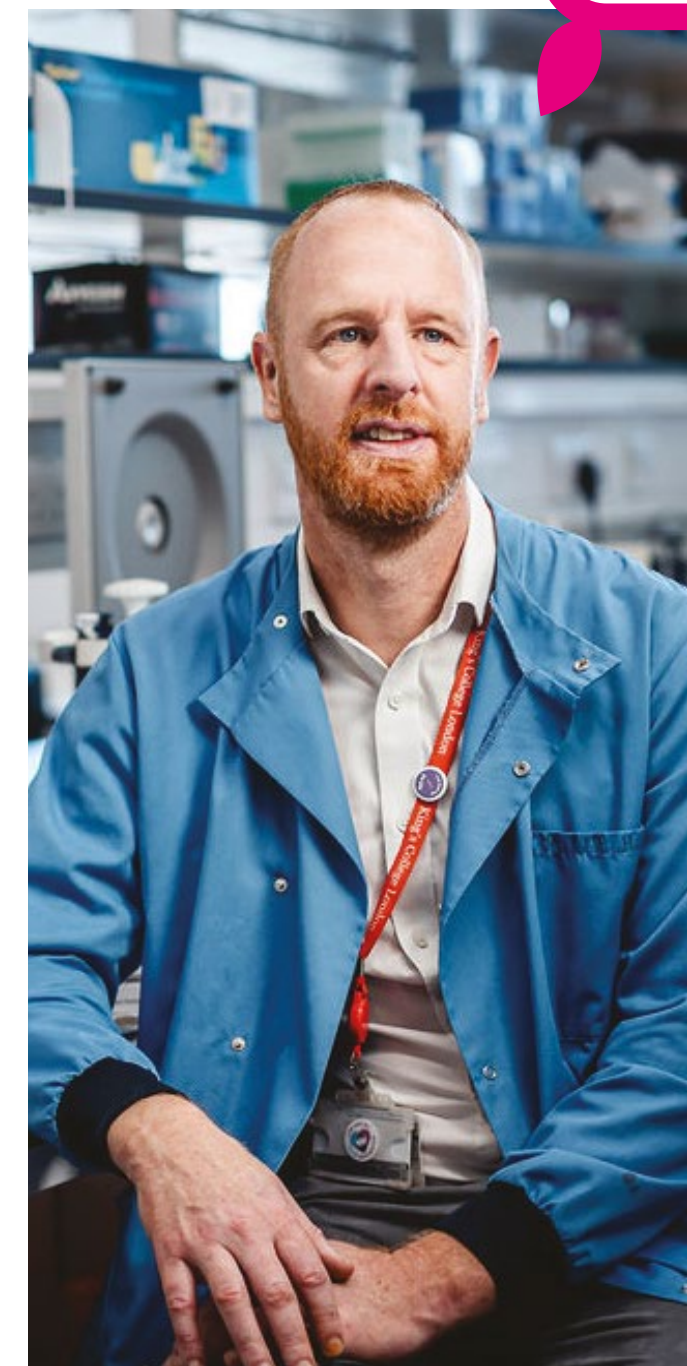
We also supported a trial led by Dr Dillon which showed that for certain people with AML, regular bone marrow tests can spot early signs of their cancer coming back, long before it appears in blood tests. This provides an opportunity to change their treatment sooner, and help them live longer.

And his story is not over – his research may lead to better testing and treatments to help people with AML live for longer.

Dr Dillon's work is just one example of why we support scientists' careers. Because giving our backing to scientists will help them beat blood cancer for good.

“Without being on the clinical trial, and specifically part of the trial that Blood Cancer UK funded, I wouldn't be here today.”

Jane Healy, who took part in the bone marrow testing trial led by Dr Richard Dillon



Partnerships for progress

Together, our community has achieved so much.

And we can do so much more by collaborating with other organisations and combining our expertise.



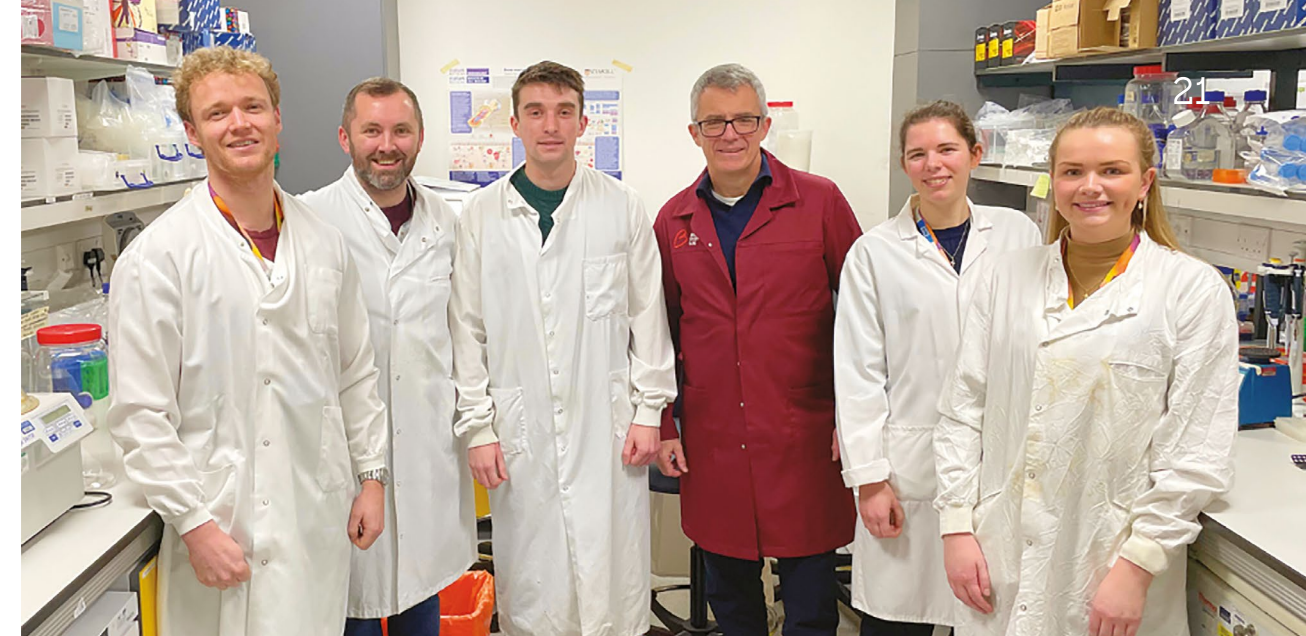
In the last 10 years we've established...

8
research
partnerships



with **5**
different
organisations

bringing in
£14
million
of additional
investment
to beat
blood cancer



Making blood cancer prevention a reality

When we work with others who share our goals, we can achieve incredible breakthroughs.

And breakthroughs are what we desperately need for myeloid blood cancers – like acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) and myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS) – which combined kill more than 11,000 people in the UK every year.

But what if, as well as finding better treatments, we could prevent these cancers entirely?

That's what Prof George Vassiliou and his team in Cambridge are trying to achieve. They have already found ways to identify people at risk of myeloid blood cancers. And what's more, the team have recently found that the diabetes drug metformin might prevent AML for some people at high risk.

We could soon see a routine screening and prevention service focused on these blood cancers – thanks to a partnership between Blood Cancer UK and the US nonprofit The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

During a five-year, £4 million research project, Prof Vassiliou and his colleagues are creating a screening programme within the NHS to identify people at high risk of these deadly cancers. The team will then test metformin and other medicines to see if they could stop these people from getting cancer – which would save many lives.

We're finally at the point where we have the research knowledge, and the groundswell of support from our generous donors, to establish this landmark partnership.

And together, we will finally achieve a breakthrough which once seemed out of reach – to prevent some people from getting blood cancer at all.

“This funding collaboration between Blood Cancer UK and The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society marks a significant stride towards advancing research, treatment, and prevention strategies for myeloid blood cancers on an international scale.”

Dr Lore Gruenbaum,
Chief Scientific Officer at
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society



Our response to the COVID pandemic

Together, we helped each other through the biggest health crisis our community has ever faced.

The COVID-19 pandemic was an incredibly worrying time for people living with blood cancer, whose compromised immune systems put them at risk of developing life-threatening COVID.

At Blood Cancer UK, we saw it as our duty to inform, protect, and advocate for people affected by blood cancer during the pandemic. This was only possible thanks to our generous supporters, who stepped up for the whole community during this challenging time.

Our community's rapid response to COVID shows that we can make radical change happen when we work together.



We protected our community with COVID vaccine research

Working with others, we pivoted our research focus to quickly give people with blood cancer the answers they needed.

From early in the pandemic, there was so much uncertainty about how COVID-19 would affect the blood cancer community. Even once vaccines were available, we weren't sure how many doses would give people with blood cancer the protection they needed.

But we quickly got to work to find out. Partnering with over 70 organisations – including charities and pharmaceutical companies – together we funded £1.7 million of research to better understand the effectiveness of COVID vaccines for people with blood cancer.

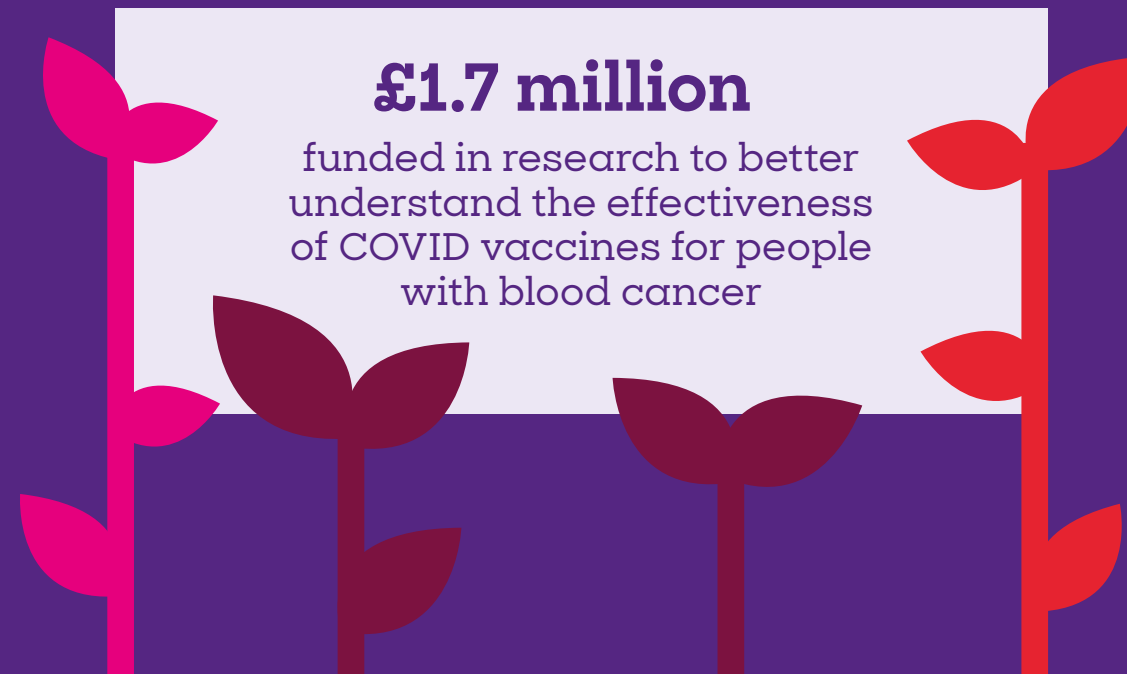
Research we supported directly informed guidance from the World Health Organization, which recommended that all immunocompromised people, including people with blood cancer, should receive booster jabs to increase their protection against COVID-19. This recommendation undoubtedly saved the lives of many people with blood cancer.

“Blood Cancer UK have consistently led the field as major funders for the pandemic response into cancer and blood cancer patients. They have been incredible and critical facilitators to enable research to happen as fast as the pandemic evolved.”

Dr Lennard Lee, leader of UK Covid Cancer Programme, medical oncologist, University of Oxford

£1.7 million

funded in research to better understand the effectiveness of COVID vaccines for people with blood cancer



We helped our community through COVID

We came together like never before to support our community, and each other, through the pandemic.

People with blood cancer were worried about their risk and struggling with the impact of lockdowns, self-isolating, and shielding. Calls to our support line skyrocketed, and at points were seven times higher than normal.

We responded by extending the opening hours to include evenings and weekends. In all, we answered more than 3,700 COVID-related enquiries between March 2020 and April 2023.

The COVID-19 section of our website made Government health advice relevant for people affected by blood cancer, and had nearly 200,000 views in its first year alone. We also quickly shared information on vaccines and post-exposure treatments, who was eligible and how effective they were. This information helped people decide how to protect their health, and stand up for themselves to get what they were entitled to.

We stood up for vulnerable people

Together, we made sure the voices of people with blood cancer were listened to throughout the pandemic.

Though we knew that COVID vaccines were probably less effective for people with blood cancer, the Government failed to communicate this effectively. This meant some people believed they were fully protected by the same number of vaccine doses received by the general public, when in fact they weren't.

To get this message across, we led a coalition of charities representing all people with compromised immune systems. Together we made sure that, in the future, the needs of immunocompromised people will feed into Government decision-making and communications.

We successfully campaigned for household members of immunocompromised people, and younger people with blood cancer, to be included as a priority group for vaccination.

And as lockdowns ended and more people returned to their workplaces, our campaign ensured that the workers most vulnerable to COVID-19 would still be offered furlough to protect them if they couldn't work from home.

To this day, we continue to campaign for equitable access to COVID vaccines and post-exposure treatments for people with blood cancer, particularly for those from ethnic minorities.

"I was so afraid of getting Covid-19 and then afraid what the impact would be. The information campaign Blood Cancer UK did [...] allayed a lot of fears and provided answers where there were none."

Jess, living with Waldenström macroglobulinaemia

"During this pandemic, Blood Cancer UK have been there every time that I have needed them. The support that I have received has been exemplary and invaluable to me. Thank you."

"My wife has chronic leukaemia, and I was desperate to ensure the Covid third jab of Pfizer was OK as she had only had AstraZeneca for two jabs. Your website was the only source of this information I have found. Very well done and thank you."





Helping people through blood cancer

Because we help people not just survive, but live.

One day, blood cancer will be nothing to fear. Until that day, and beyond, we're here for everyone affected by blood cancer.

The blood cancer community drives everything we do. It's this community that makes our scientific advances possible. And we support each other in our shared goal to beat blood cancer.

Just like we invest in scientists' careers, we help healthcare workers across the country deliver the best possible care for their patients. Their medical care is what saves lives – while our support gives patients the space to better understand their condition, the treatments that are right for them, and how to navigate the healthcare system.

We listened to our community through a Patient Need survey in 2015, and responded by setting up our core support services.

Our support line helps people feel heard. Our forum is a safe space for people to talk with others in the same situation. Our accredited health information helps people feel in control.

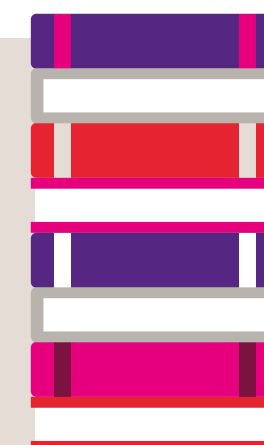
Because supporting each other is what community is all about.

Read on to find out how we've helped people affected by blood cancer in the last ten years.

Support services over 10 years since launch...

We have provided one-to-one support to over

16,000 people

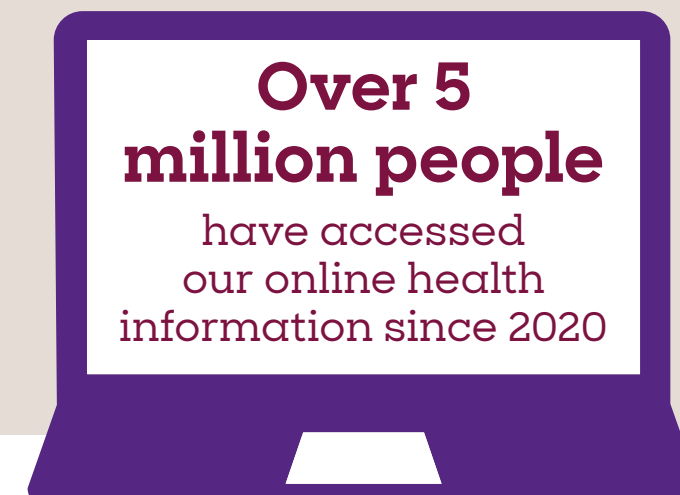


Over 435,000 people

have benefitted from our printed health information

Over 5 million people

have accessed our online health information since 2020





Support for everyone affected by blood cancer

Because everyone should feel like they have someone to talk to.

Whether someone is newly diagnosed, or living with blood cancer long-term. Personally affected, or caring for someone going through it. Living in remission, or grieving after losing a loved one.

We're here for everyone affected by blood cancer – no matter what they're going through, or what the future holds.

Our support line: providing expert information and guidance

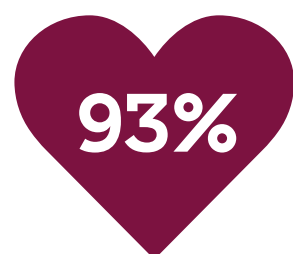
Going through blood cancer can be overwhelming. When people feel bombarded with information, are making important decisions, or receiving difficult news, they need someone they can talk to.

Our Support Line is there for people affected by blood cancer, to listen and help them navigate this world.

For the last ten years, our dedicated team of nurses and support officers have provided free advice by telephone or email. Today, this is now available in 170 languages through an interpreter service.

One of the users of our Support Line is Annie, who calls on behalf of her mum who lives with blood cancer. "Our calls to Blood Cancer UK are always on time, friendly – we always come away feeling lighter and reassured we can call anytime and there will be support at the other end of the call," Annie explains.

"We called to update on mum's progress and the nurses are incredibly friendly and professional – always offering practical, measured advice to manage side effects and general management of a blood cancer diagnosis. This was not the first call, and I am certain it will not be our last – I cannot praise this service and the Blood Cancer UK nurses highly enough."



feel more confident talking to their healthcare team



feel better able to manage their health and wellbeing



of those caring for someone with blood cancer feel better able to support them

We've created a safe space for people to support each other

Going through blood cancer can feel lonely. But knowing that someone is in your corner – someone who knows first-hand what you're dealing with – can make a world of difference.

Since 2017, our online community forum has provided a way for people affected by blood cancer to connect and share their experiences. People talk about all kinds of things, from being recently diagnosed, to going through treatment,

living beyond blood cancer, and supporting loved ones.

Rebecca explains what the forum means to her: "The Blood Cancer UK Forum has become a second family to me. It's a place I can visit knowing that no matter my mood, fears and experience, someone will always understand what I'm going through, and do their utmost to lift and support me; and it's a place where I can try to turn the horror I faced into something positive, by supporting others too. There's nowhere like this in real life, and I'm so grateful to my second family."

Almost

5,000 people

on the forum

91%

say they feel less alone

"The Blood Cancer UK Forum has become a second family to me."

Rebecca,
Online Community Forum member



Helping more people access clinical trials

Clinical trials offer people a chance to access new treatments for their blood cancer. For some, they can be their last hope where all other treatment options have failed. This is why it's not only vital we fund trials, but also make sure people can find the right one for them.

To help people do this, we launched the Clinical Trials Support Service in 2020 – the first service of its kind in the UK. Highly experienced research nurses offer reliable information and compassionate support, helping people to find the right clinical trial for them or someone they love.

The aim of the service is to increase awareness of and access to clinical trials, particularly for people where a trial could provide treatments that are better than the current treatments available.

We know that certain groups of people at higher risk of blood cancer are often less likely to access a trial. So, we have also invested in programmes to better understand why this is the case, and work with these communities to find ways to overcome the barriers that exist.

Together, we are helping more people access clinical trials, so that they can get treatments that may benefit them, and support research that will bring forward the day we beat blood cancer.

“One of the elements of experience of what you're going through is that you always feel incredibly alone. And the way that [the Clinical Trials Support Service nurses] conducted themselves made me feel as if they were on the journey with me.”

User of the Clinical Trials Support Service



90%

feel more confident in having conversations with their healthcare team

90%

would recommend the service to others

We helped Sandra find a trial to help her live well

Sandra was diagnosed in 2010 with Waldenström macroglobulinemia, a type of lymphoma.

Sandra received eight cycles of chemotherapy, which didn't work for her. When she found out about a new clinical trial, she was apprehensive. But after reaching out to our Clinical Trials Support Service, she decided to take part. “It allowed me this space

to really think through all the important things, rather than just getting caught up in the flurry of paperwork involved in getting on a trial.”

Sandra has been on the trial for four years now. “I'm as well as I have ever been since before my diagnosis 14 years ago”. She hopes more people will be offered the chance to take part in life-saving clinical trials. “The fact these drugs only exist because of clinical trials has made me so much more reassured.”



“I was terrified before starting my clinical trial, until I talked with a nurse at Blood Cancer UK. She was so calm, so caring. It felt like she was holding my hand in a way that my treatment team couldn't.”

Sandra, living with Waldenström macroglobulinemia

Supporting healthcare workers

Because together, we can make sure everyone gets the best care possible.

Healthcare professionals are a crucial part of our community. They play a pivotal role in our goal to stop people dying from blood cancer.

So we provide healthcare professionals with guidance and training to help them improve the care they give every day. We run professional networks so that they can share best practice with each other. And we give them a simple route to refer people to Blood Cancer UK for additional support.

We've made sure more people get support from day one

Nearly 6 in 10 people with blood cancer are not aware of the support available to them. But people can find it difficult to ask for help. And with the NHS under strain, healthcare professionals have less and less time to provide the emotional and practical support their patients need.

We don't want anyone with blood cancer to feel like they're alone. So in 2024, we created the Blood Cancer UK Referral service – a simple way for healthcare professionals to refer their patients, with their consent, to Blood Cancer UK.

We tested the idea with the University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust. After just one year, they had referred 195 people with blood cancer or their carers to us for support. As of June 2025, 14 more hospitals have joined, bringing the total of referrals to over 400.

Our goal is that this referral service will be standard care in every hospital in the UK, ensuring everyone with blood cancer gets the support they need.

“Patients have told us that having immediate access to a charity that understands their condition has made a real difference in helping them come to terms with their diagnosis.”

Zoe Kelsall, Lymphoma Clinical Nurse Specialist at the University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust



We've helped healthcare professionals provide better care

Thanks to research, treatment for blood cancer is improving rapidly. Healthcare workers need to quickly learn and adapt how they care for people with blood cancer.

In 2017, we created an online course for healthcare professionals who are joining a blood cancer ward for the first time. The free course gives newly qualified doctors, nurses and other healthcare

workers a solid understanding of the key concepts related to the diagnosis and treatment of blood cancer.

Over 10,000 healthcare professionals have accessed the online training since it was first launched. The course has been well received by participants, and 86% have said it has improved how they look after people with blood cancer.

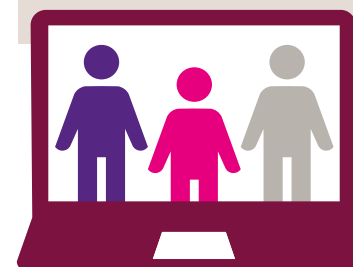
This is just one of the ways we are making sure that everyone with blood cancer gets the specialist care they deserve.

Over 10,000

healthcare professionals across the UK have accessed our online learning

86%

of participants said it has improved how they care for people with blood cancer



“I am now more confident in identifying these complications and emergencies in the patients I am caring for.”

“In my unit we do chemotherapy and then send patients to other facilities for stem cell transplant. The course has explained better to me what [a] stem cell transplant is about and how to care for post-transplant patients better.”



Our plan to beat blood cancer

Because we're closer than ever to our goal.

As a community, we have already achieved so much. And that's why we know we will overcome the remaining challenges ahead.

Here, we share our plans for the years to come, and how together, we will be the generation that beats blood cancer.



How we'll support people through blood cancer

We will continue to make sure everyone affected by blood cancer feels less alone, and more in control. Because supporting each other is what community is all about.

We'll continue to provide accredited health information people can depend on. We'll make sure everyone has someone to talk to, through our support line and forums. And we will focus on expanding four programmes of work:

We will extend our direct referral service to other hospitals, so that every person with blood cancer in the UK gets the support they need from day one.

We will expand our Clinical Trials Support Service to increase the number of people taking part in clinical trials – particularly from under-represented groups and those at higher risk of getting blood cancer – so that we can drive forward research to help improve survival for everyone.

We will continue to improve the education and support we provide for healthcare professionals. We'll also provide the healthcare workforce with funding to help them give better care to people with blood cancer, locally and nationally.

Together, we will make sure everyone with blood cancer gets the support they deserve.

“I think this is such a powerful and important place to come for everyone dealing with blood cancer. It has been a place of comfort and help to me. Keep doing what you are doing, thank you.”

Online community forum member

Campaigns that deliver change

Because to beat blood cancer, we need to change the healthcare system.

For the last ten years, we've been standing up for the blood cancer community through our campaigning and policy work – standing shoulder to shoulder with people affected and those helping them through their journey. But we don't just speak on their behalf – we make sure their voices are heard.

Raising the profile of blood cancer

Despite being the fifth-most-common cancer in the UK and the third-biggest cancer killer, 84% of our community believe blood cancer does not receive the same political focus as other cancers.

It's staggering that 76% of people with blood cancer say they were not told their condition was a type of cancer when they were diagnosed. This is causing real harm: people are diagnosed less quickly and are less likely to access support and services that could help them.

Our 'Raise the Profile, Reduce the Harm' campaign in 2023 aimed to draw attention to these problems, particularly among policymakers. The

campaign led to increased recognition of blood cancer in communications from the Government and healthcare professionals, more often adding "a type of blood cancer" when referring to specific types.

We'll continue to raise the profile of blood cancer and make sure our community is not overlooked. Together, we'll make sure blood cancer finally gets the attention it deserves.

"It's heart-breaking how often we have people come through the support line or forum, completely unaware they have a type of blood cancer, and then finding out there was all this help and support available from the start which they missed out on."

Alice Randall, Senior Digital Support Services Officer, Blood Cancer UK



Taking action to improve blood cancer care for everyone

To stop people dying from blood cancer, we must address the challenges facing the UK healthcare system.

In 2024, we published our UK Blood Cancer Action Plan, which was co-created with our community of healthcare professionals, scientists, and people affected by blood cancer.

The Action Plan shone a light on the gaps and inequalities in blood cancer

care across the UK. Based upon the experiences of our community, we recommended key actions to address these gaps – actions for Government, for the NHS, for Blood Cancer UK and others.

We'll continue to listen to our blood cancer community, and give them the tools and the platform they need to speak up for themselves.

And together, we will transform our healthcare system and beat blood cancer sooner.

Nearly
1,000
people contacted their political representative to ask them to support the UK Blood Cancer Action Plan



"Being part of parliamentary work, liaising with elected representatives, being asked for our story and being able to use our voice to amplify those of others brings meaning to a difficult situation."

Jude Irwin, member of the Blood Cancer UK Scotland Policy Panel

How we'll deliver life-saving research

The blood cancer community faces many challenges today. For some of the hardest-to-treat blood cancers, survival has not improved in decades. Treatment side-effects can severely affect people's lives. And though no one should die from blood cancer, some people are dying simply because of who they are or where they live in the UK.

But the progress we've made to date shows we can overcome these challenges – through research.

In 2025, with input from scientists and people affected by blood cancer, we published our new Research Strategy, and set out how we will invest in research to finally beat blood cancer.

We will fund research to improve survival at every opportunity – from diagnosis to treatment, and preventing blood

cancer. We will support the careers of researchers, and invest in all stages of research so that we continue making discoveries and creating life-saving treatments. We will partner with other organisations, sharing our expertise to achieve our common goals together.

And underlying that strategy is our commitment to our blood cancer community: to fund research into all forms of blood cancer, for the benefit of every single adult and child affected.

Blood cancer is a trailblazer for research. Many of the biggest advances in cancer treatment were first developed for blood cancer. And so, our research will not only benefit all people with blood cancers – but those with other cancers too.

We have the plan, the expertise, and the determination to transform research. And together, we will be the generation to beat blood cancer.



“As a community we have achieved so much with our research. It's this solid foundation that makes me confident that we can overcome the challenges that remain, and beat blood cancer for good.”

Dr Rubina Ahmed, Director of Research, Policy and Services at Blood Cancer UK

Strategic clinical trials investment

Because too many people are dying from blood cancer.

Despite the incredible advances we've made, every year 15,000 people in the UK die from blood cancer. 58% of these blood cancer deaths are from just five types. The simple reason is we don't have enough effective treatments for these types of cancer.

But with your help, we can change this.

We've recently launched a £25 million appeal to accelerate the development of treatments for these deadliest blood cancers.

This funding will be split across three £8 million innovative clinical trials. An additional £1 million will be invested in our Clinical Trial Support Service and our Policy work. This will enable a larger, more diverse group of people to join these trials, and rapidly implement the results into NHS practice.

We believe this appeal will fundamentally shift how we treat blood cancer – and save the lives of thousands of people.

Together, we will be the generation to beat blood cancer.

If you want to be part of this transformational project, or other areas of our work, you can find out more by contacting

**philanthropy@
bloodcancer.org.uk**



“We miss Paul every day. If taking part in a clinical trial would have bettered his chance of surviving, I really wish he'd had that chance.”

Jake, whose stepdad Paul died from acute myeloid leukaemia in 2018



Involving the blood cancer community in our work

Because our community holds the key to beating blood cancer.

From the day our charity was created, everything we have done has been driven by the needs of people with blood cancer. And we continue to ask for their help in shaping our work – to make sure it solves their problems, and helps us get as quickly as possible to the day we beat blood cancer for good.



Improving our research with the help of people affected

Our scientists aren't the only experts in our community. People affected by blood cancer contribute their own expertise, making sure our research has the biggest possible impact.

Our Patient Voice Grant Advisory Network, made up of people affected by blood cancer, review all the applications we receive for research funding, and suggest improvements.

Members of the Network also join our research funding committees alongside scientists to help decide which research projects will make the biggest difference to people with blood cancer.

We also enable people with lived experience to collaborate with scientists to help their research make more of an impact, such as shaping the research questions being answered by the project.

Blood Cancer UK aims to increase the number and diversity of people involved in all areas of our work – especially people from groups which have been under-represented in research in the past.

And in doing so, we'll bring forward the day when every person with blood cancer survives.

“I definitely think Blood Cancer UK is committed to involvement, it's in their strategy and they don't just pay lip service to it – people affected by blood cancer feel we are listened to and our voices really count.”

Carole, member of the Blood Cancer UK Patient Voice Grant Advisory Network

50

people from across the UK in the Patient Voice Grant Advisory Network

290

applications assessed since PVGAN launched in 2021



“[Patients and caregivers] gave us fresh understanding of their problems and priorities, which were used to hone our research idea, so that it better reflected their needs and priorities.”

Dr Pramila Krishnamurthy, scientist funded by Blood Cancer UK



“I send sincere thanks for the opportunity I had to take part in this great project that has garnered much support since it has been launched. Thank you very much – this experience will stay with me forever. To feel so valued and intently listened to is very special.”

Jacquie Hellowell, in remission from lymphoma, and member of the Action Plan taskforce

Co-creating the Action Plan with our community

For our UK Blood Cancer Action Plan to truly make a difference to how blood cancer is treated, we knew we needed to get a picture of the healthcare system from many different perspectives.

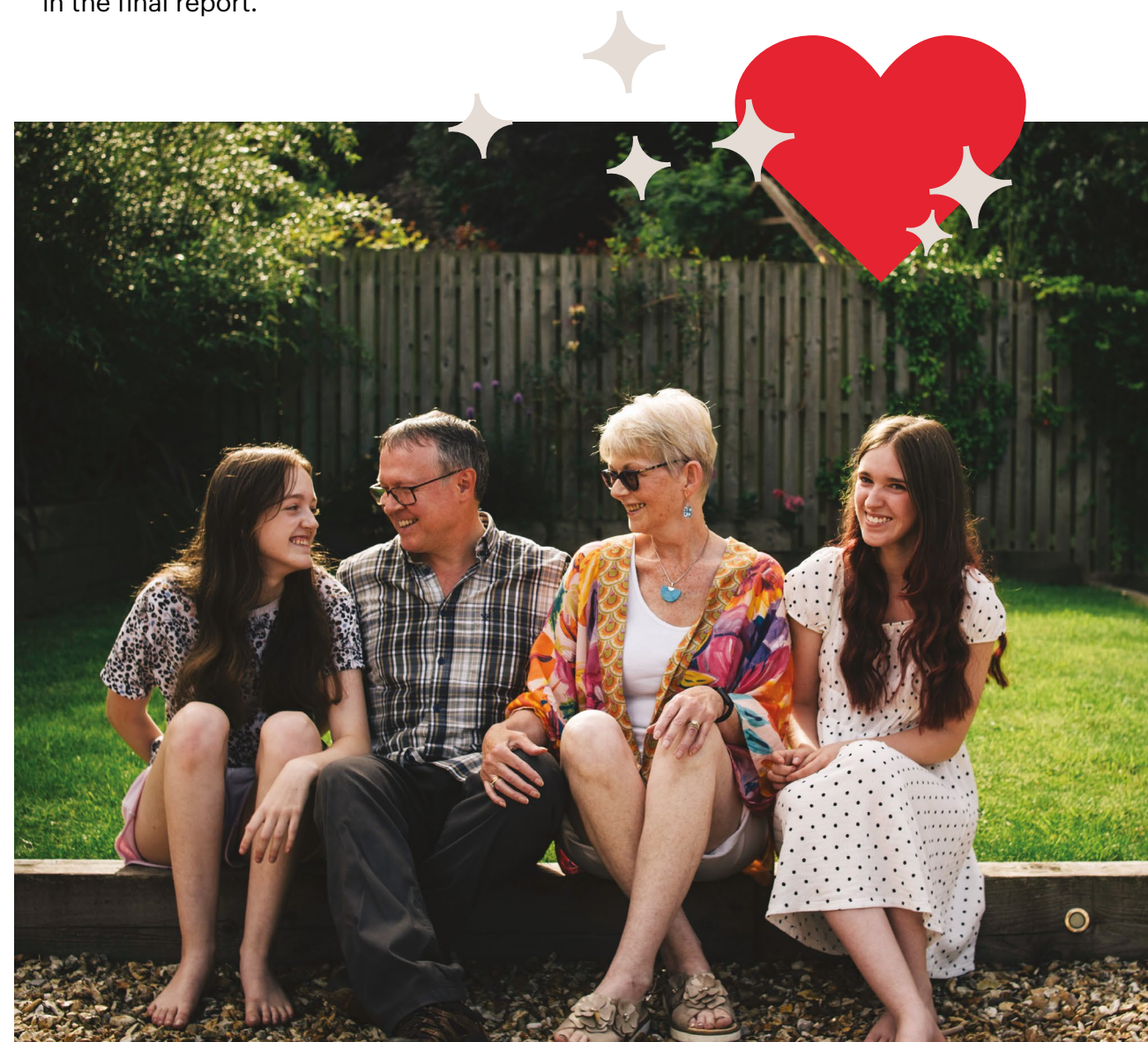
To achieve this, we created a taskforce made up of people from the blood cancer community – including healthcare professionals, scientists, other blood cancer charities, and most importantly, people affected by blood cancer. This included representation from all four nations of the UK.

Over the course of more than a year, they examined the evidence we gathered, provided direction, and agreed on the recommendations in the final report.

We asked our wider community to act too. Nearly 1,000 people wrote to their political representatives, which helped us engage with politicians and NHS leaders to build support for the Action Plan.

The UK Blood Cancer Action Plan was well-received, and has inspired other charities to take a similar approach in their work. We also won the Aisling Burnard Award from the Association of Medical Research Charities, in recognition of the Action Plan, its impact, and the work done to create it.

But the most important recognition to us was from our community, who were thrilled to see the influence the Action Plan is having, created with them and advocating on their behalf.



Our community's hopes for the future

Throughout this report, you've seen the incredible impact we've had thanks to the amazing support and involvement of our community. As we focus on the future, we share some of their hopes that will guide us to beating blood cancer in a generation.

That it becomes a historic disease

Managing to live to meet my grandchildren

My hope is that research will receive as much funding as possible

I hope that research into the lesser known cancers will progress so more people can live with cancer not die from it

Biggest hope is that I die with cancer not because of it

Live a happy life and watch my son grow older

To not have life expectancy shortened by blood cancer

To live a long and fulfilling life, spend time with my family and loved ones, and find a way to pay back the enormous debt of gratitude I feel towards to my care team

I hope that research will unlock the code to blood cancers and in doing this, treatments can be tailored to the individual

I hope with genetic testing all blood cancer patients are able to have personalised treatment rather than standard treatment! That would be wonderful!

That a treatment exists that is available for those on watch and wait. It is worrying that things have to get so much worse before there is an option for treatment

That a cure will be found in my lifetime

Feeling someone is on my side. In the past, battling to get info and test results was upsetting. Luckily I found Blood Cancer UK

For me, personally, that I could live into my 80s, at least!

Treatment that does not have such life changing effects

That the awful chemo I was given be stopped, in favour of a much safer and easier treatment that doesn't have the side effects that I had to deal with

I can see my grandchildren grow up

That it can be consigned to history. In the meantime, treatments be developed that don't have such devastating long term consequences

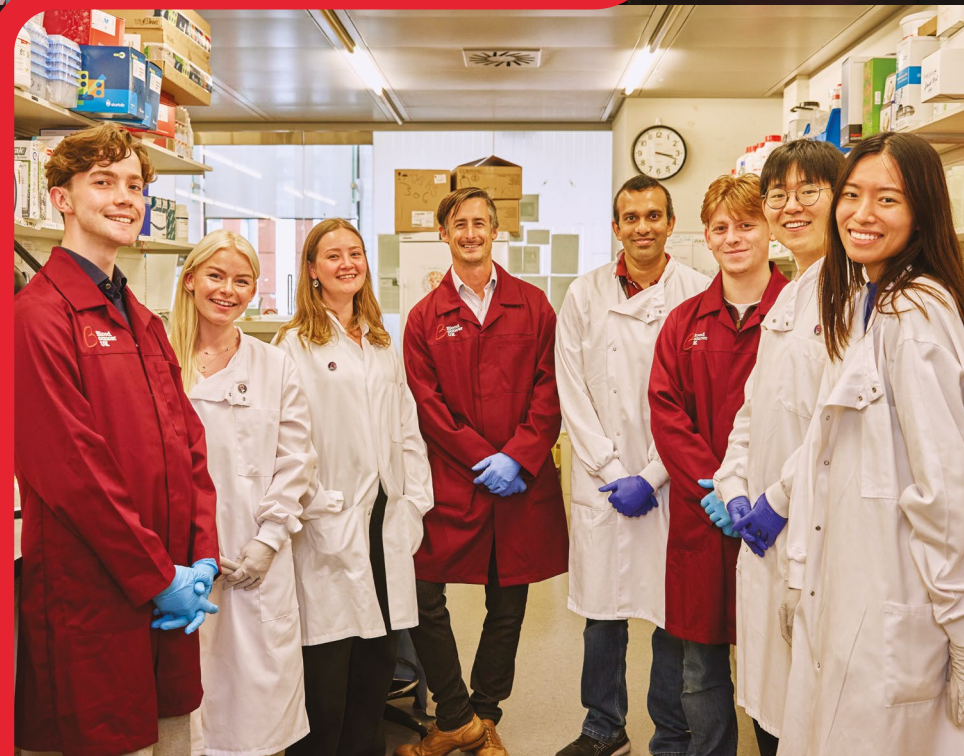
I want healthcare professionals to do as much as they can to prolong my life using innovative treatments, trials and the excellent research

My hope is that we can reach a point where treatments aren't worse than the condition itself

Greater use of genetic testing and targeted therapies to ensure each patient receives the care that is most appropriate to their individual circumstances and needs

The impact we've achieved is only possible because of the support of our incredible blood cancer community.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed their expertise, support and time.





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