

# Impact report 2023

The difference we made  
for patients and staff  
thanks to your support

Whittington  
Health Charity



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## About Whittington Health Charity

Whittington Health Charity (the Charity) is the dedicated charity for Whittington Health NHS Trust (the Trust). We enhance the quality of care and improve the experiences of patients and staff by funding projects that go above and beyond what the NHS is able to provide. Everything we do has a positive impact on staff, patients, and their families.

The Charity serves the diverse communities in Islington, Haringey and throughout north London. Our goal is to make a difference to the experience of every patient, their families and all our colleagues. Our work makes a difference to over 500,000 people across north London. The Trust provides excellent treatment and care, and we complement this with better equipment, facilities, training, and innovative projects – working together, with our valued supporters, we are proud of the impact we have.



## Our Year

The past year has seen us deliver a wide range of innovative, impactful projects, all thanks to the generous support of our donors, and we are grateful and excited to share some of those successes with you in this report.

Whether it's supporting individual patients through our Urgent Assistance Fund, or supporting thousands of patients by making our spaces more comfortable and inviting, our goal is always to ensure that we make donations go as far as possible. To support us with this ambition, we have taken a more sophisticated and strategic approach to our grant-making through the creation of our 2023-25 Grant-Making Strategy.

2023 also saw us partner with local and national organisations like Co-Op, Morrisons, Starbucks, Knight Frank, and independent local businesses to enable us to widen our impact and reach more patients, families, and staff.

This work would not be possible without the generous support of our donors. If you would like more information on the work that we do or you'd like to support the Charity, please visit [www.whittingtonhealthcharity.org](http://www.whittingtonhealthcharity.org) or contact us at [fundraising.whitthealth@nhs.net](mailto:fundraising.whitthealth@nhs.net).



**We are transforming maternity and neonatal facilities, thanks to your support**



## 2023 in numbers

- **£425,000 in new grants approved**
- **75+ new projects funded**
- **More than 40 different teams and departments supported**
  - We've supported teams across the Trust, from the Whittington Hospital, to community hubs, to outpatient services.
- **50 hours of Sing for Your Lungs sessions**
  - These sessions provide a safe, welcoming place for people experiencing difficulties with breathing to improve their symptoms and find community.
- **Work is underway to completely transform four rooms across Maternity and Cancer**
  - Thanks to generous support from leading interior designers, we are setting a new benchmark for patient and staff spaces, giving patients, families, and staff safe, comfortable, and durable spaces in which to relax, receive treatment, and recover.
- **Thanks to donor support that funds specialist Speech and Language Therapists, assessments and group therapy sessions, more than 200 additional children are receiving support at the Michael Palin Centre than would otherwise be possible**
  - Michael Palin Centre for Stammering (MPC) is a world-renowned specialist speech and language therapy centre that delivers expert assessments and individually-tailored therapy to children, young people and adults who stammer.
- **The Menopause Café is providing vital support and information for Trust staff, of which 75% are women**
  - Topics covered range from nutrition to managing symptoms in the workplace.
- **More than 60 children and family members directly impacted by life-limiting and life-threatening conditions supported with sensory toys and unique experiences**
  - Our Life Force team is made up of specialists who provide care and support to families who have a child with a life limiting or life-threatening condition.



## Sing for Your Lungs choir Christmas concert

### Sing for Your Lungs

Sing for Your Lungs is a weekly singing group for people with long-term respiratory conditions such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, fibrosis, and now, those recovering from Long Covid.

Research shows that singing can help people with respiratory conditions in a number of ways, including exercising the major muscle groups in the upper body, improving the efficiency of the cardiovascular system and improving oxygen intake, leading to increased alertness.

These weekly sessions are run by experienced facilitators and music therapists and have an incredible impact on patients' quality of life. They're helping to mitigate participants' breathlessness symptoms, while also enabling patients to access further sources of support, form new friendships and develop a network of peer-to-peer support.

The year culminated in a heartwarming carols concert at Whittington Hospital.

These sessions are provided free of charge to patients, thanks to generous donations from our supporters.

"The Sing for Your Lungs sessions are the best thing I have done since being diagnosed with Bronchiectasis. The combination of exercise and singing has helped my breathing and stamina."

-Patient P

"Obviously, I gain physically from the additional respiratory exercising, and also from the equally important mental health spinoffs. Seeing familiar faces and exchanging greetings are important social stimuli, personally beneficial as I live alone."

-Patient M

# Cancer care that goes above and beyond

We believe that care goes beyond clinical excellence, and Whittington Health Charity has provided funding to support various projects aimed at enhancing the holistic care that patients with cancer receive.

The psychological and social support offered through workshops and courses like The C Factor, Tree of Life, Intimacy workshops and support groups provide a well-rounded approach to patient care, support, and experience.

These programmes have been funded with the aid of generous support from our amazing staff, who have undertaken charity runs, put on fundraising events and worked with local businesses to raise much needed funds.

## Complementary cancer therapies

Treatment for cancer can be gruelling, lengthy, invasive, and often leaves patients with long-term worries. In addition to the physical scarring, patients can experience lingering anxiety and depression.

With charitable support, patients have been able to benefit from complementary therapies, including specialised massage and acupuncture. Whether provided during or after cancer treatment, these therapies have been shown to improve patient recovery and their physical and mental wellbeing, when delivered alongside treatments such as radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

In addition, it provides patients with a safe, supportive outlet to share their experiences. A survey of programme participants found that over 80% felt that the programme helped them to be more open about discussing their diagnosis and treatment with friends and family. After their treatment, one patient remarked that massage therapist Rosie was, 'absolutely wonderful' and that, 'I cannot express enough how grateful I am for this service.'

These treatments are provided at no cost to patients; the programme is funded entirely by the Charity.

## C Factor – An innovative and unique support group

A diagnosis of cancer may influence a person's mood, their relationships, activities, spirituality, work, or other areas of their life.

The C Factor, with financial support from the Charity, offers supportive sessions for people with cancer. This innovative and award-winning group intervention uses a storytelling approach, focused on performance and creative writing, to discuss the emotional effects of cancer and its treatment.

One patient remarked that, 'the C Factor brings a new way to engage with cancer experiences that is not just medical or social!'

C Factor was created to provide an innovative and more inclusive way to support patients, who might not be comfortable accessing one-to-one psychological support. This unique, pioneering approach to dealing with the psychological effects of cancer was co-created with Whittington Health patients for Whittington Health patients.

## A safe space for consultation

Thanks to the generosity of a local interior designer and charitable donations, we are creating a new counselling room for cancer patients. The transformation of this space ensures that patients and families have a dedicated room to consult with their care providers.

With a thoughtful, deliberate approach to the possibilities and needs of the space, and a focus on soft lighting and appropriate furniture, we aim to create a safe environment where patients and families can receive potentially difficult news privately and in comfort.



# A greener future

Safe, accessible and stimulating outdoor space plays a crucial role in recovery, treatment, development and wellbeing. We're working to improve multiple green spaces for the benefit of patients, families and staff. These projects will specifically address the needs of some of our most vulnerable patients, including those with dementia and children with special educational needs and disabilities. Throughout 2023, we have benefitted from the wonderful guidance of many celebrated garden designers as we bid to create a greener future for our community.

## Supporting children with additional needs in the community

In 2022, Whittington Health created the Haringey Children and Young People's Health Hub (the Hub) in east Haringey, bringing together children's services from across the borough.



The unused green space outside the Hub

More than 350 families visit the Hub each week and services include autism assessments, child protection medicals, speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, health assessments for children in care, care for children with special educational needs and disabilities, and pre- and post-natal support for pregnant women and



Inspiration for the Hub garden

parents. The Charity has already invested in the space, with the purchase of new, child-friendly furniture, and the creation of bright, welcoming murals and artwork.

Working with award-winning garden designers, we'll transform an unusable outdoor space of ~650m<sup>2</sup> of primarily concrete and brick, which sits in the middle of the Hub, into a garden with sensory elements, spaces for group activities, a vegetable patch, a wildflower meadow and disability-friendly play equipment.

This garden will be life-changing for thousands of children, families and the Hub's 100+ staff. It will reduce the stress and anxiety amongst children visiting for health appointments – particularly neurodiverse children - and families have told us that it will give their children something to look forward to as part of their visit.



## A peaceful space for vulnerable patients

Many patients in older people wards will spend months in hospital. For patients with dementia, a hospital stay can be particularly distressing and confusing.

For our sickest patients – those in our intensive and critical care wards – delirium is a threat to both their mental and physical health. Extended time surrounded by alarms, bright lights and loud clinical equipment has a major impact on survival and recovery.

With your support, work is underway to turn an unsafe, unused courtyard into a tranquil garden with plants, music, seating, soft flooring, games and exercise equipment. It will be a sanctuary for our most vulnerable patients – a place for reflection, socialising and interacting with nature. Crucially, the area will be used for interacting with family and friends, which will have a huge impact on patients' wellbeing.

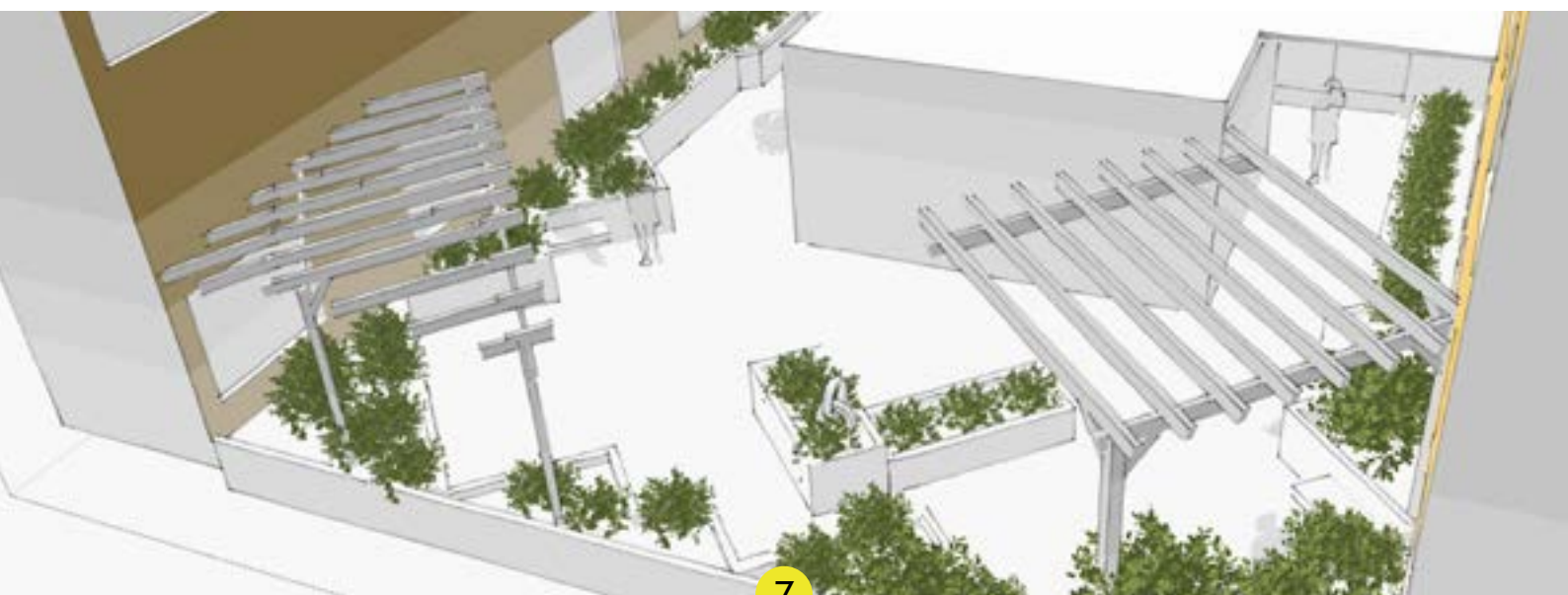
Phase 1 of the project, funded entirely by charitable support, included structural surveys of the site, as well as a consultation of patients, families, and staff, to gain their unique insight into how the garden should look and feel. Every participant said that they would like to see a garden created for older patients and ITU patients.

The garden will be a quiet, reflective space into which our most vulnerable patients can be taken for respite away from the wards. The benefits of green space, away from the clinical environment, are well-proven and this garden will have a crucial role to play in improving patient experiences and outcomes – particularly those who often spend months as in-patients.

The project will be the biggest fundraising priority in the year ahead and we are incredibly grateful to the designers and builders who are providing their services at no cost to the Charity.



A rendering of the courtyard garden space



## A place to play

The imaging department at Whittington Hospital saw over 3,500 patients between the ages of 0-16 in the second half of 2022. This figure doesn't include the thousands of other children who visit the Hospital as patients, siblings, children of adult patients, or visitors from other departments that also enter the Hospital.

Time spent waiting can be stressful, both for children waiting for appointments, and parents who have their children with them. Research has shown that providing children with opportunities to play, prior to an imaging assessment, such as an x-ray or an MRI scan, reduces the need for sedation and shortens appointment times.

**We have committed funding to create child-friendly play spaces in patient waiting areas. The goal is to reduce the time it takes to scan, diagnose and treat young patients and dramatically improve the child and family's experience.**

## Supporting those in urgent need

Often, our smallest grants can make the biggest impact. The Charity uses its Urgent Assistance Fund – a programme of small grants – to respond to immediate funding needs. We established the fund with the aim of relieving suffering and delivering joyful experiences when time is of the essence. Our focus is often on supporting families experiencing the combined pressures of financial hardship and a medical emergency.

This past year, we have supported a family whose baby was receiving care in our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, purchased a Moses basket to support a family as they moved their deceased baby, and enabled a young patient dealing with physical disabilities resulting from chemotherapy and radiotherapy to attend the cinema with his friend.



## Generous support from grateful patients

The work we do would not be possible without the support and collaboration of grateful patients and community members.

One very generous gift has allowed us to purchase a new, specialist ultrasound machine for our early pregnancy unit. This donation will support more than 1,000 pregnant families each year thanks to the addition of three clinics for those with complex pregnancies. This includes users expecting twins, at risk of pre-term birth or needing to see a foetal medicine specialist. Families are getting seen quicker and in far higher numbers than otherwise would have been possible.

Additionally, we received an incredibly generous £20,000 donation from a patient who'd been under the long term care of our respiratory team. They requested that we utilise the funds where they were most needed, which resulted in the purchase of additional scanning and diagnostic equipment, as well as new appliances for staff rest areas. Their support is helping to ensure that patients are being relieved of pain and receiving treatment faster – and from staff who are better cared for during their breaks.

We're incredibly grateful for every donation we receive. Large or small, every gift plays a critical role in enhancing the care and wellbeing of patients, staff and our wider community.



# This work would simply not be possible without your support.

If you're interested in hearing more about our impact, or you would like to support our work, please get in touch at [fundraising.whitthealth@nhs.net](mailto:fundraising.whitthealth@nhs.net) or call us on 0207 288 3402.



Whittington Health Charity is the working name of The Whittington Hospital NHS Trust Charitable Funds.

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