Newcastle Hospitals Charity



Impact report 2025/26

The home of

THE great north CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

The Sir Bobby Robson Foundation

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Welcome

Welcome to our impact report for 2025-26. We are continually humbled by the generosity of all our supporters, donors and fundraisers. Your kindness means that this year we have been able to continue to support.

We're proud to be the official charity for Newcastle Hospitals and thanks to your support we have raised over £10.5 million to fund initiatives that allow us to go further for our hospitals.

Over the last year the efforts of our supporters have enabled us to commit funding totalling almost £4.8 million to support programmes, projects and activities across Newcastle Hospitals. This includes funding for over 600 diverse projects, our wide-ranging arts programme and our charity volunteer service - all with the aim of making a positive impact for patients, staff and the health of the community.

This year also saw the launch of our campaign to build a world-leading cancer trials and treatment centre at the Freeman Hospital. The £30 million Sir Bobby Robson Institute will be fully funded by The Sir Bobby Robson Foundation and will improve access to life-changing cancer research for patients in our region and beyond.



Throughout this report you will see the difference we can make together, whether this is through the unique impact of our arts and volunteer programmes, or through funding innovative projects. You can also find out more about how you can be part of our journey and help us achieve even more in the future.

On behalf of everyone at Newcastle Hospitals Charity – thank you for everything you continue to do – your support is making a real difference everyday.

Teri Bayliss,
Charity Director, Newcastle Hospitals Charity

Your support matters

Thanks to your incredible generosity we raised

£10.5 million

to fund initiatives that allow us to go further for our hospitals.

Over the last year we have been proud to commit funding totalling almost

£4.8m **to over** **600 diverse projects**

across Newcastle Hospitals, all with the aim of creating a positive impact.

None of this would be possible without the generosity of our supporters, partners and fundraisers – here are just some of the ways their support has made a difference to the patients, staff and wider communities of Newcastle Hospitals.

Sir Bobby Robson Foundation

Turning vision into reality

The Sir Bobby Robson Foundation is part of Newcastle Hospitals Charity.

Sir Bobby Robson launched his foundation in 2008 after his oncologist, Professor Ruth Plummer, asked if he knew anyone who might help her raise £500,000 to equip a cancer trials research centre at the Freeman Hospital.

Sir Bobby responded by launching his foundation, which is part of Newcastle Hospitals Charity, to get the money she needed. He described it as "like being at the helm of a team again" - his last and greatest team.

Now almost 20 years later the foundation has raised over £30 million and is embarking on its biggest challenge yet.



Working in partnership with Newcastle Hospitals and Newcastle University we are building the Sir Bobby Robson Institute – a world-leading cancer trials and research centre on the site of the Freeman Hospital.

The £30 million purpose-built centre will be fully funded by the foundation and will open to patients in 2028.

The institute will:

- Increase clinical trials capacity by 50%, giving more patients access to pioneering treatments.
- Accelerate the development of life changing and life saving drugs and therapies.
- Bring together clinicians, researchers and patients in one purpose built, state of the art centre.
- Create breakthroughs that will be felt across the North East, North Cumbria, North Yorkshire and around the world.



Total Raised
£29 MILLION

Total Needed
£30 MILLION

Thanks to the generosity of donors, supporters and fundraisers more than £29 million has been raised to support the project, including an incredible £2million donation from the Barbour Foundation.

This year we will begin the final push and turn vision into reality and create a beacon of hope for patients in our region and beyond.

Finding more effective ways to detect and treat cancer

Alongside our plans to build the Sir Bobby Robson Institute the foundation has continued to fund innovative projects to support patients with cancer in the North East.

Genetic test brings early detection and improved treatment for hereditary cancer.

A pioneering genetic test, enabled by funding from The Sir Bobby Robson Foundation and developed by doctors and scientists in Newcastle, is improving early diagnosis and treatment for people with hereditary cancer caused by a genetic condition.

The test identifies specific signs in a person's DNA that are characteristic of cancers linked with Lynch syndrome – and demonstrates the vital importance of clinical trials.

Hailed as a 'breakthrough' by scientists, the test can now be used on a urine sample from people with Lynch syndrome to identify difficult to detect cancers in the urinary tract – which includes kidney, bladder and ureter – before any symptoms are apparent.

Cancer of the urinary tract is one of the most common in people affected by the genetic condition, and without early detection treatment is less likely to be successful.

The test has been designed by a team from Newcastle Hospitals and Newcastle University, led by professor of clinical genetics, Sir John Burn.

“”

Sir John Burn said :

"This is a really exciting breakthrough and the pilot study results are unprecedented.

In our study, the test detected early-stage cancer in five people, four of those hadn't yet showed any symptoms.

This early diagnosis has meant less invasive treatment for these patients, and the test has also guided the medical team as to whether they have successfully removed all of the cancer and also how to carefully target treatment.

We're now looking to carry out larger studies to validate these results, with a view to establishing a life-saving Lynch syndrome urinary tract cancer surveillance programme.

We're extremely grateful to The Sir Bobby Robson Foundation, part of Newcastle Hospitals Charity, which has provided £74,000 of funding towards a larger trial."

Developing the next generation

We were pleased to once again provide funding for a resident doctor and a training research nurse post – both based within the Sir Bobby Robson Cancer Trials Research Centre.

Patients come from across the North East, north Cumbria and North Yorkshire for treatment at the centre, which offers hope for people with advanced cancer. In the last five years referrals have increased by over 40%.

The research and clinical trials undertaken there are part of long-term national and international efforts into the disease. Sir Bobby hoped they would become his legacy for others facing cancer.

Patients who attend the Sir Bobby Robson Centre often have complications arising from their cancer and its treatments. These posts add value and support exceptional patient care and, through training, develop competencies.

They receive a unique opportunity to develop their career in oncology, with the chance to gain experience in practice, research, support lab work and help deliver clinical trials.

Both posts not only support the patients who come to the centre but also allow the team to train and develop the next generation of clinical researchers in a highly specialised area.

Part of the team delivering vital clinical trials of new cancer drugs, the roles underline Sir Bobby's commitment and enthusiasm for investing in the 'next generation' of cancer specialists.



The Great North Children's Hospital fund; supporting children and families

We were proud to launch our Every Step campaign in September 2025. The campaign highlights the crucial support that The Great North Children's Hospital provides to children and their families throughout the hospital journey – from diagnosis, treatment and recovery to the ongoing care and emotional support after discharge.

We used footprints from patients, families and staff to demonstrate how The Great North Children's Hospital is there every step of the way – helping patients and families feel supported no matter where they are in their journey.

Each year – thanks to your generosity - we support projects that support young patients and their families who come to the hospital for treatment and care.

Here are just a few of the projects we have funded this year to support patients and families.



The little touches that make a big difference

Having a child in hospital is never easy. Families can often be away from home for long periods of time and there is little opportunity to take a break from the ward environment.

A survey conducted in 2022 found the average additional cost that parents had to pay while their child was in hospital, was £405 per week.

This cost included travel, additional childcare, loss of income, food, and drink. As part of a mapping exercise conducted by the NHS England food provision group, it highlighted only 15% of hospitals in the country feed the parent that stays.

Following a successful pilot supported by national funding we were able to support a grant to provide daily snack bags to resident parents at The Great North Children's Hospital.

Feedback from parents has been overwhelmingly positive, the food provision is helping to make a hospital stay just that little bit easier, making sure they can eat at a time of their choosing and in a location of choice.

Alongside the daily snack bags we also provide a weekly fruit box in each parent room in The Great North Children's Hospital – giving additional support to meet the nutritional needs of parents and offering an easy to access, healthy snack.

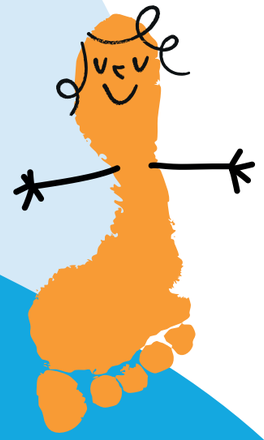
"Parent and staff feedback continues to highlight that this provision is extremely helpful, enabling parents to have some nutritional support for their health and wellbeing at a time when their priority is the needs of their child."

Paula Coulson
Senior nurse

THE great north CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
with you at EVERY STEP

Sensational sensory room





Ward 1b is a children's neurology ward at the Great North Children's Hospital – the team care for children and young people with head injuries who need medical and surgical care.

We provided £14,194.25 to the ward to fund updating the sensory room equipment. The updates included floor mats that can be lifted and moved to accommodate patients in wheelchairs, new interactive panels, lighting and speakers. The new equipment means that more patients can access the room supporting rehab sessions and providing a calm and engaging space for families to use together during their hospital stay.

"We love going into the sensory room - it's so calm away from the bright lights of the ward."

Parent of young patient





"The sensory room is now a calm and versatile space where we can take children for individual sessions or groups to work on their goals."

Occupational therapist

Working in partnership

Each year we work in partnership with organisations across the North East to fund projects that support the health and wellbeing of children and young people both within the hospital environment and in the community.

Hoops4Health

Support beyond the hospital walls

Supporting the health and wellbeing of children and young people went beyond the hospital walls this year through our partnership with Newcastle Eagles and their Hoops4Health programme.

Hoops4Health is a major initiative run by Newcastle Eagles and the Eagles Community Foundation that uses basketball as an activity to share a range of positive health messages to young people in primary schools, including the importance of keeping physically active and leading a healthy lifestyle.

With the support of funding from Newcastle Hospitals Charity 20 Newcastle Schools – almost 900 children have benefitted from the programme.



Newcastle United Foundation

Our longstanding partnership with Newcastle United Foundation provides funding to support dedicated staff who work across the Great North Children's Hospital, providing respite and activity sessions for children living with chronic illnesses.

Delivering a wide range of sport and physical activity sessions across wards including football, golf, archery and curling the team also run a variety of sessions to support mental wellbeing such as unique LEGO builds, arts and crafts and STEM-based activities.

The impact of the sessions goes beyond the physical activities, they not only support patients but also provide valuable respite for parents and carers – meaning they can take a little time away from the ward. Often siblings often join in with activities bringing a sense of normality and creating shared experiences.

Our partnership with Newcastle United Foundation has also helped to provide children with a range of unforgettable experiences including NUFC match tickets, NUFC matchday experiences, as well as tickets for Sunderland, Middlesbrough, NUFC Women, Newcastle Eagles and stadium tours.



"We are totally humbled by Newcastle foundation and the difference it has made to our 8-year-old whilst receiving weekly chemotherapy in hospital. It has really supported transforming a challenging experience into positive memories and made a huge difference. We are very grateful."

Parent of young patient
Great North Children's Hospital.

Durham Cricket Foundation

Keeping children and young people active and engaged while they are in hospital can often be a challenge. Working in partnership with Durham Cricket Foundation we are supporting more young patients facing long-term hospital stays.

Joint funding has been awarded to support two members of staff to deliver three sessions each week to patients at the Great North Children's Hospital and on ward 23 at the Freeman Hospital. Alongside cricket, the staff provide activities such as archery, golf and seated activities. They also spend time playing board games and arts and crafts.

Coaching staff work closely with patients, adapting sessions to suit their physical ability, energy levels, and personal interests. Activities are designed not only to support physical wellbeing but also to contribute to emotional resilience and mental engagement.

Feedback from parents recognises the impact the sessions have on children and young people, they create a solid routine that grounds families during a time of high stress and upheaval. Through the partnership the men's and women's team also come and make a very special visit over the festive period to spread a little festive joy.

"This partnership brings real value to our patients, supporting their recovery and wellbeing throughout their hospital stay."

Andy McDonnel
Business manager, The Great North Children's Hospital





Supportive paws

This year we also continued our partnership with Wagg & Company helping to bring more therapy dogs to spend time with patients, families and colleagues across Newcastle Hospitals.

The amazing team of volunteers and their furry friends visit patients at the Freeman Hospital, RVI and Great North Children's Hospital. The time they spend with patients is invaluable, we know that spending time with animals – dogs in particular – can help release endorphins, reducing anxiety and lowering stress.

Visits not only lift spirits and brighten days but they can also help break up long stretches of time in hospital – bringing comfort and companionship to those who are away from their loved ones.

Supporting research



Nursing, midwifery & allied health professions

The Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions (NMAHPs) Researcher Development Institute was launched in 2022 – dedicated to the progression of research talent amongst NMAHPs and offering a new, innovative avenue to drive forward to professional research.

We supported this development with a multi-million-pound award that has greatly increased opportunities to allow nurses, midwives and AHPs (such as physiotherapists, paramedics, radiographers, dieticians, and speech therapists) to access much needed funding and support, enabling them to develop and lead research for the benefit of patients, staff, the community and beyond.

To date 46 individuals have been awarded fellowships and research internships, supporting experienced and early career professionals across a huge range of topics, supported by collaboration with Northumbria University.

The work of the Researcher Development Institute (RDI) continues to influence policy and practice regionally and nationally. This includes contributions to a range of national NHS England research focused work streams (Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) research plan, CNO professional strategy, workforce planning), leadership of or contribution to regional National Institute for Research Infrastructure awards, and membership of the range of NIHR panels from Health and Social Care Delivery Research Programme to personal awards from pre- to post-doctoral awards.

Ian Joy
Executive director of nursing, midwifery and allied health professionals said:

"We remain grateful to the Charity for their investment in this important agenda. Much has been achieved in the last four years. Whilst there remains much work to do, the future continues to look very bright, and the impact and influence of the RDI continues to grow due to the atmosphere both within the trust and feedback/interest externally."

Supporting and celebrating excellence

We know that the teams who work across Newcastle Hospitals to provide the very best care to patients and their families. Audit and assurance frameworks show that teams consistently deliver safe and high-quality care but how this is recognised, celebrated and accredited needed to be improved.

We provided funding to support a project to deliver high-quality care, enhance patient and staff experience, and celebrate excellence across over 200 clinical areas.

The Accrediting Excellence Programme (ACE) is designed to support staff to take pride in their work and to recognise and celebrate the care delivered every day. Alongside this it also supports the sharing of excellence and key themes.

The ACE framework provides a comprehensive view of the quality of care delivered across all wards and departments focussing on:

- **Harm free care**
- **Well led**
- **Patient experience**
- **Engagement and improvement**
- **Research**

“This process supports a real focus on clinical standards and expectations and gives a good insight into what is required for improvements.”

Ward sister



New & Innovative technology

A life changing first



We're always proud to support innovative, lifesaving and life-changing technology and were pleased to provide a grant to support the transformative Newcastle Organ Assessment Hub (NOAH) at the Freeman Hospital.

This year Mark Wrenn became the first patient to receive a life-saving lung transplant through the NOAH.

Mark had previously been fit and healthy, working in a physically demanding role as a telephone engineer, climbing and repairing telephone masts. In 2018, he began experiencing increasing breathlessness, initially thought to be asthma. Over the following years, his condition worsened significantly, leaving him dependent on permanent oxygen.

At the age of 40, Mark was diagnosed with a rare lung condition, known as obliterative bronchiolitis, alongside an unclassified systemic autoimmune disease. With his lung function reduced to just 22 per cent, he was told that a lung transplant was the only option to save his life. The new NOAH facility at the Freeman Hospital uses perfusion technology to preserve and assess donated organs, helping make more organs suitable for transplantation.

Mark was offered the opportunity to receive a transplant using this innovative organ preservation technology, becoming the first patient to benefit from Newcastle's newly launched ex-vivo lung perfusion (EVLP) programme.

Perfusion technology keeps donor organs supplied with oxygenated blood or nutrient-rich fluids, extending preservation time and allowing a more thorough assessment before transplant. Newcastle Hospitals has been at the forefront of organ perfusion innovation, having performed the UK's first EVLP transplant in 2009. NOAH is the only site in the country offering lung, liver and kidney perfusion under one roof.

"Without NOAH, I would still be waiting for a transplant – it's genuinely saved my life.

When I was told about this new technology and the opportunity it gave me, it felt like hope. I've gone from being on permanent oxygen and struggling to do everyday things, to starting to get my life back again.

Being able to spend time with my wife and children and think about the future once more means everything. I'll always be grateful to the donor family and to the teams here in Newcastle who made this possible."

Mark Wrenn

UK first thanks to purchase of MAZOR robot to improve single position spinal surgery

In 2024 we provided funding to purchase a MAZOR robot to support spinal surgery and improve patient outcomes.

The impact of this funding goes far beyond the purchase of equipment – it has the potential to support innovation and surgical advancements for months and years to come.

The MAZOR spinal robot has done just that by allowing surgeons to operate on a patient's spine while they lie on their side.

This allows access to the front of the spine through an abdominal incision and via the back to place screws in the spine.

Prior to having the robot, staff would have to change the position of the patient from their side to their front adding over an hour to the case, limiting surgical options.

The team collaborated with the robot manufacturer Medtronic, leading to them becoming a centre of reference to teach the technique to others reinforcing Newcastle's reputation as being at the forefront of robotic technologies.



Credit: Barry Pells

"We are the first hospital outside of the USA to complete a single position lateral surgery, anterior and posterior using the Mazor spinal robot; the third globally.

Since receiving the grant from the charity, we have successfully improved patient outcomes using this technology for the last two years. As it allows a reduction in theatre time, giving us more time for complex cases, we are pushing for all surgeries to be done this way."

Andrew Bowey, consultant orthopaedic surgeon, trauma and orthopaedics

Generous legacy helps Ophthalmology team see a bright future ahead

Thanks to a substantial legacy donation to Newcastle Hospitals Charity, specifically for ophthalmology, consultant ophthalmologist James Talks and his team have secured a significant bundle of technology that will boost ophthalmology research and improve aspects of the service offered to patients.

A new Canon OCT S1 camera will improve research capabilities for commercial and National Institute for Health and Care Research-funded clinical research trials. The new camera will produce a true colour, wide field image showing retinal circulation in high detail without the need to give patients an intravenous dye injection – a major improvement for the patient experience, reducing risk and improving clinic efficiency.

An EyeSi surgical simulator was purchased in 2011 and is no longer supported and needs to be replaced. The new model includes online access to teaching materials improving the benefits and experience for trainees. The EyeSi will improve the quality and availability of training for our medical trainees and will hopefully help in improving the feedback.

The new technology will improve the service for all patients seen annually within the busy ophthalmology service which sees around 120,000 patients each year, allowing the team to stay at the forefront of developments in this field.

> “This incredibly generous gift allows the hospital to provide state-of-the-art treatment, to the benefit of the people of the North East. Patients are diagnosed quickly and accurately, without the need for invasive treatment such as touching the eye. Gifts in Wills make a huge difference to our work.”
>
> **James Talks,** consultant ophthalmologist



Pump-priming research into knee replacement robotic technology

Over 100,000 primary knee replacements are performed each year in England and Wales for osteoarthrosis. The patella (kneecap) is the fulcrum for load when the knee is extended so correct movement is essential for movement such as stair climbing and descent or getting up from a seated position.

Whilst replacement of the tibial and femoral diseased surfaces at the knee joint is vital to a knee replacement, debate remains as to whether replacement of the back of the patella is beneficial to the patient. Unfortunately, dissatisfaction with knee replacement remains unacceptably high at 20% of cases and in many of these cases patients report symptoms relating to articulation between the back of the patella and front of the femur.

For consultant orthopaedic surgeon Professor David Deehan and his team, determining which patella to resurface or replace and how to place the patella in the optimal position at the time of joint replacement remains something of an inexact science.

In partnership with the Imperial College Biomechanics department, we joint-funded the team to carry out a year-long investigation to determine how and when to resurface the patella at the time of surgery using instrumented manual and then robotic principles.

A CAD CAM model of a robotic sensor was developed to map the movement of the kneecap in 3D.

Inspirational images

Ringing the bell to mark the end of cancer treatment is a significant moment for patients. This year we provided funding for an Instax camera and films so staff can capture the moment for patients and their families. With consent from patients they also display the images on a notice board so that other patients receiving treatment get to see how many get to ring the bell – it's a real morale booster and very emotive for staff and patients alike.



And the everyday differences

Sometimes, it is the small things that make a big difference. Over the last year we have supported staff from all areas of Newcastle Hospitals to implement ideas and projects that have a meaningful impact on patients and staff.



Supporting families during the darkest times

The trust's palliative care team take a holistic approach to caring for their families. We supported the team with a grant to help give families the opportunity to make memories with their children in the most difficult times of their lives. The team are able to provide equipment for hand casting, hand and footprints, jewellery charms and books to support bereavement.

We committed more than

£675k

in easy to access, smaller project funding, for projects seeking

£5,000 or less.

Any member of staff is encouraged to apply and the variety of the over

340 projects funded

shows the commitment and creativity of those who came forward for charity support.



Improving staff wellbeing

Supporting staff wellbeing is one of our key priorities and we were pleased to fund the development of a staff wellbeing room on ward 21 at the Freeman Hospital. Feedback from staff shows that the room has had a meaningful impact on their wellbeing, describing it as "a quiet place to reset and recharge for 10 or 15 minutes."

Supporting the World Transplant Games

We were proud to be able to support clinical scientist Wayne Hartley to represent Great Britain at the 2025 World Transplant Games. Competing with transplant recipients from around the world, Wayne not only helped Team GB top the medal table but demonstrate power of organ donation.



Arts programme

Over the past 12 months our arts teams have reached over

230,000

patients, visitors, staff and members of the wider community with over

330 creative engagement sessions

The team have also worked with 24 professional creative freelancers including dancers, musicians, visual artists and writers.



Credit: Colin Davison

Our arts programme is centred in growing evidence that arts and health (or creative health) programmes have the potential to hasten recovery times, address health inequalities and challenges facing healthcare, including ageing, long-term conditions, loneliness, isolation and mental health.

We are an active member of the National Art in Hospitals Network and have supported the development of new national guidelines for art in hospitals. This initiative seeks to advocate for the delivery of creative programmes, particularly within NHS healthcare settings.

The importance of music

This year we celebrated our first anniversary of hospital sessions - an ongoing programme of live music performances across the RVI and Freeman Hospital. Five professional musical acts each perform regularly in bays, cubicles and day rooms, playing a range of music responding to the environment and the mood of the audience.



Credit: Amelia Reed Photography

Meet our musicians

- Ceitidh Mac
- Jon Doran
- Rapasa Nyatrapasa Otieno
- Simon Wood
- Liz Corney
- Nicky Rushton



Listening to music has been proven to have positive effects on our health and wellbeing and research shows that it can elevate mood, improve memory and cognitive function, reduce stress, anxiety and blood pressure, have anti-inflammatory effects and enhances immune systems.

We have been piloting a singing for lung health programme that brings people together who have respiratory or lung conditions like COPD, lung cancer, asthma, to sing in groups in community settings, led by trained musician Liz Corney. Singing has been proven to reduce shortness of breath, strengthen muscles and help people to better manage their symptoms. As a group activity it is also evidenced to decrease social isolation and loneliness and improve quality of life. Following positive feedback and engagement, we are launching Newcastle Singing for Lung Health, a dedicated 12-week programme in 2026.

Another strand of the music programme is the development and support of Newcastle Hospital Singers. Open to staff, volunteers and patients they are a friendly group, who sing together for fun, including popular songs, folk, musicals, Geordie classics and feel-good tunes often performing both in, and out of, the hospitals. Singing together has many proven health and wellbeing benefits from lowering cortisol and relieving stress, strengthening our immune systems, as well as improving breathing and lung capacity.

Lighting up the community

We once again partnered with Northern Lights Newcastle - a light trail through Leazes Park.

Over 80,000 attendees experienced ‘Lantern Lane’ which featured the drawings of children and young people who were patients at Newcastle Hospitals in the run up to Christmas 2025.

The lanterns - each customised by children - were suspended above the pathway, forming a vibrant, glowing garden that celebrated creativity, imagination and community.



Sharing is caring



Shared reading is a partnership volunteer programme with writing development agency New Writing North, where specially trained shared reading volunteers read to - and talk with patients - discussing the stories they encounter together.

This can help negate social isolation, providing mental stimulation and alleviating boredom during hospital stays.

We currently deliver this in the haemodialysis unit at the Freeman Hospital, but this will expand to other areas in 2026. Books and reading allow us to connect to the world around us and shared reading is a way to encourage this connection for patients while they are in hospital and support their wellbeing beyond the hospital walls.

Supporting our colleagues

We launched a new staff art club and held taster sessions for Newcastle Hospitals colleagues to try different creative techniques, led by artist Louise Underwood.

Staff could also bring along their own creative projects to work on. The sessions are a great chance to learn new skills, connect with other colleagues and carve out some time each month to be creative, helping reduce stress and support wellbeing. We are looking forward to developing the club to provide a variety of creative opportunities in 2026. Our arts team also deliver creative activities in the trust destress and recharge sessions to further support staff wellbeing across trust sites.

“It’s really relaxed me. All day my heart has been going so fast, but this has calmed me for the rest of my shift.”

Staff member

Time to draw

This year we have also introduced free mindful creative activity booklets for staff and patients, produced biannually.

The first edition of Time to Draw has been created through staff engagement and was produced by artist duo Foundation Press. Creative practice, such as drawing can reduce biological stress markers and support flow state process, which can contribute to sustaining healthier lives.



“These are fantastic for our patients who require some distraction resources.”

Staff member

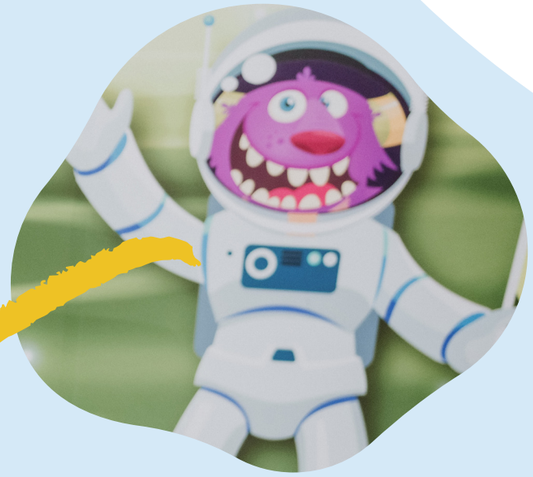
Bringing stories to life



Our continued partnership with Seven Stories, the National Centre for Children's Books, based in Newcastle has brought storytelling into the Great North Children's Hospital and Freeman Hospital, delivering both group sessions and 1:1 sessions at the bedside.

This brings stories to life, which helps patients to feel involved, builds confidence and introduces new creative and cultural experiences. that celebrated creativity, imagination and community.

seven stories
The National Centre for Children's Books





Movement as medicine

This year we were also excited to pilot a new project in partnership with Dance City.

Dance moves is a regular programme of participatory movement and dance activities, facilitated by professional dance artists Lynn Campbell and Sophie Douglas. Initially sessions engage patients in both stroke and orthopaedic rehabilitation wards using dance, movement and somatic techniques to promote greater awareness of - and connection to - our bodies.

The sessions aim to support patient wellbeing, aid recovery and create social moments to enjoy in the wards.

DANCECITY
DANCE FOR THE NORTH EAST



Enhancing our hospital spaces

Our arts programme also includes visual arts exhibitions, site-specific artworks across trust sites and connections with cultural and community settings.



Credit: Colin Davison

NHS Darkroom

Each year we partner with Sunderland University to deliver NHS Darkroom led by Johannah Churchill, a former Newcastle Hospitals nursing trainee, and now professional artist.

This photography programme offers NHS workers space to process lived experience through photography and the darkroom acts as a site of care and reflection to support healthcare staff. This year the resulting portraits and images were also displayed in a public exhibition at Northern Gallery of Contemporary Art. This meant NHS Darkroom met new audiences and made further visible the variety of professions working together, across Newcastle Hospitals.

Art in Motion

As the Newcastle Diabetes Centre moved into a more permanent home at the Freeman Hospital, we worked with staff and patient feedback to develop a suite of site-specific artworks specially commissioned for the new centre.

Working with artist Dan Savage, of Artstop Studios the artworks created take patients and staff on a journey over and along the bridges of the River Tyne. The symbolic use of bridges to reference the centre's move into the Freeman Hospital; a bridge, as a method to support us, to make supported crossings, moving from one place to another.

Embers of Care

A new national project by artist John Yayen, Embers of Care, involved the artist working with two staff members who have migrated from outside of the UK, to create a painting reflecting on their unique journeys and experiences.

Through this project and his art, Yayen seeks to bring visibility and recognition to the often-unseen hands and stories of migrant healthcare workers within the UK healthcare system. The completed final paintings are on public display in the RVI's New Victoria Wing, alongside portraits from several other NHS trusts.

Journeys

Journeys is a project and exhibition that explores the experiences of individuals impacted by organ donation and transplantation, visualised through maps and objects.

The project, developed by the NIHR Blood and Transplant Research Unit in Organ Donation and Transplantation at Cambridge and Newcastle universities and in collaboration with community publishers Foundation Press, invited participants to create maps to illustrate their unique journeys. In addition to the maps, participants selected objects that played significant roles in their experiences. The display is now installed in the Freeman Hospital – we also held a creative to support the launch.

Human elements

We also partnered with XP Gateshead School on their Year 8 cross-disciplinary project, 'What does it mean to be human?'

The project seeks to promote understanding of organ donation and transplantation with young people and their families. The arts installation is now installed on the RVI site.

Over the next year we'll continue to support the estates team to integrate site-specific artwork into refurbishment and capital projects, to enhance the patient experience within Newcastle Hospitals.

Considerate design of the hospital environment has been proven to improve patient recovery times, reduce violence and support staff wellbeing.

We can't wait to share some exciting new commissions already in development.

Volunteer programme

In the last year, our volunteers contributed over

44,000 hours

in a variety of roles

Our amazing team of charity volunteers continue to go above and beyond to help support patients, families, visitors and staff across Newcastle Hospitals.

They work in a variety of roles across the trust including meet and greet, mealtime support, charity events, retail and ward-based roles.

Their support is invaluable and makes a real difference to patient experience.

67 new volunteers recruited

33 active volunteer roles

More than **220** volunteers

Aged between **16-89** years old



Volunteering feedback

We know our volunteers are amazing but don't just take our word for it – we receive so much feedback from patients about how supportive our volunteers are during what can often be really challenging situations.

"I was in A&E due to severe pain. In the back part of the A&E there was an older gentleman who was bringing refreshments around for people. The contacts that we had with him throughout the hours I was there were so kind, reassuring and supportive. His small acts of kindness during a very painful time were exactly what my partner and I needed.

His reassuring words, coffee and biscuits for my partner and little drinks of juice for me helped us tremendously.

And of course, there will have been other volunteers there too all giving acts of kindness to others going through very difficult times."

A&E Patient

Inspiring the next generation of healthcare support



Our youth volunteer programme provided 30 local sixth form students with valuable ward-based experience, offering a meaningful introduction to healthcare volunteering and the realities of hospital life.

By supporting staff and patients during mealtimes, the volunteers played an active role in enhancing patient comfort and dignity, while gaining first hand insight into compassionate, non-clinical care.

The programme helped volunteers build confidence, communication skills and empathy, while developing their understanding of how teams work together on a ward to care for patients. In addition to enhancing the patient experience and supporting staff at busy times, the programme inspired young people to consider future careers in health and care, contributing to our long-term vision of supporting workforce development and creating healthier communities.



Supporting safe movement and independence through volunteering

In collaboration with Helpforce, this year we introduced a new activity and mobility volunteer role designed to promote meaningful movement, activity and engagement for older patients.

Developed alongside colleagues from Newcastle Hospitals including the harm free care team, senior physiotherapists, matrons and consultant physicians specialising in frailty and falls prevention, the programme addresses the high risk and impact of falls among older adults.

Our volunteers work across care of the elderly wards, supporting patients to carry out prescribed exercises designed by physiotherapists, encouraging safe movement, building confidence and helping patients remain active both during their hospital stay and as they prepare to return home. This collaborative approach supports falls prevention, patient wellbeing and independence, while easing pressure on clinical teams.

Festive programme



The festive period is such a special time of year, but not everyone gets to spend it at home celebrating with their loved ones. Whilst we can't change that, we can help to spread a little festive cheer and joy.

As always, our festive programme did just that. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we were able to support a full programme of events, provide those patients who couldn't be home with their loved ones with small gifts and brighten up wards and departments across Newcastle Hospitals with festive decorations.

We had an extensive live performance programme over the festive period, with pop-up live performances including Complete Ballet, a group of dancers who are over the age of 55; the Northern Counties Signing Choir, in collaboration with Percy Hedley school; and Back Chat Brass band. It is always a pleasure to welcome them all back to the hospitals and witness the joy they bring.

We were joined by visitors from the Theatre Royal's production of Aladdin, players from Newcastle United's men's and women's teams and Durham Cricket and the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service once again brought a very special visitor to greet the young patients at The Great North Children's Hospital.





This year we were once again inundated with generous gift in kind donations worth more than £150,000 from individuals and organisations. The gifts were distributed to young patients across Newcastle Hospitals, meaning that all children at The Great North Children's Hospital received a gift on Christmas Day.

Our events programme

Our successful panel discussion series Newcastle Hospitals Charity Presents continued with great success.

Open to members of the public, partners, staff and donors, NHC Presents gives us an opportunity to shine a light on some of the amazing projects we support, showing the invaluable difference they make across Newcastle Hospitals.

The first of our events this year focussed on ‘Celebrating Transplantation – A story of the NHS at its finest’. We were thrilled to be able to showcase Dr Rachel Clarke’s story about the incredible series of events leading up to – and including – Max Johnson’s heart transplant at the Freeman Hospital in 2017, performed by world leading surgeon Mr Asif Hasan. We were joined by Max’s mum Emma, Dr Rachel Clarke and Mr Asif Hasan who all spoke movingly about Max’s transplant.



For our second event, timed to coincide with International Women’s Day, the discussion highlighted the role of influential women across healthcare, business and philanthropy in shaping the future of research and regional impact.

The panel included, Chief Executive of Develop North PLC, Michelle Percy, and Anne Reece, Chair of the Reece Foundation. They were joined by Professor Ruth Plummer, Director of the Sir Bobby Robson Cancer Trials Research Centre, who shared insights into the simple question that led to the founding of The Sir Bobby Robson Foundation and how pioneering clinical trials are already transforming cancer treatment for patients across the region and beyond.

The conversation was chaired by Professor Jane Robinson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Engagement and Place at Newcastle University, who leads the University’s work to strengthen partnerships that support the region’s development, and was opened by north east Mayor, Kim McGuinness.

The series will continue throughout the next year and we’re excited to be able to share more about some of the projects we’re supporting.



Magpies and Wor Flags unite



We teamed up with Newcastle United and Wor Flags to surprise young patients at the Great North Children’s Hospital – a real highlight of our event programme this year.

Magpies stars Kieran Trippier and Emily Murphy made a surprise visit to help young patients design a flag in celebration of the club’s Carabao Cup triumph.

They displayed their artistic flair for the afternoon to help a group of young patients add finishing touches to their artwork, as Wor Flags hosted a special guest takeover of our charity art programme.

Wor Flags’ design masterclass featured an overview of the inspiration behind their Wembley display, before patients were set the challenge of creating a flag of their own. Elements of each design were transformed into a flag commemorating the cup win, which was displayed in the Gallowgate End at St. James’ Park during the season-concluding fixture against Everton.



Your support makes a difference

Fundraising is at the heart of everything we do. It is powered by the generosity, commitment and belief of an incredible community of supporters who make our work possible year after year.

From individual fundraisers and major donors to trusts and foundations, corporate partners and those who choose to leave a legacy, every contribution has helped turn ambition into action.

We are incredibly grateful to every person that supports us in making a positive difference for the patients, staff and wider communities of Newcastle Hospitals.

Whether you are supporting Newcastle Hospitals Charity, The Sir Bobby Robson Foundation or The Great North Children's Hospital you are helping to make a meaningful difference to people's lives every day.

Thank you



Race night for ward 9



Megan Wallis and her family organised a charity race night and raffle.

They raised **£2,000** for ward 9 at The Great North Children's Hospital to say thank you after Megan's little boy Oaklee, spent a lot of time on the ward.



Fundraising in memory

Stacey Brown, from South Shields raised **£23,308** for Newcastle Hospitals Charity in memory of her husband, Chris.

Chris, 37, died three days after a motorbike accident earlier this year. The memory boxes created for their daughters meant so much to the family that Stacey began fundraising to support others facing bereavement.

Northern Gas & Power



Northern Gas & Power made a generous **£5,000** donation towards our Big Give campaign for The Great North Children's Hospital.

They also donated more than **£3,900** of gifts for our young patients spending time in hospital over the festive season.

Newcastle Hospitals Charity

THE great north CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

The Sir Bobby Robson Foundation

Get involved

Your support can help us do more to improve the patient and visitor experience, improve the health and wellbeing of staff across Newcastle Hospitals and tackle health inequalities and key health issues.

We know much more can be achieved and as you to consider continuing your support so we can – together – transform even more lives.

Fundraise for us

We can only achieve all we do through the generosity of the many fundraisers who give their time to help raise vital funds, often undertaking their own personal challenges to show their appreciation for the work of staff at Newcastle Hospitals.

Organise an event

Host a charity run, bake sale, or a quiz night. These events are great for groups or work colleagues.

Participate in a challenge

Take on a sponsored challenge like the Great North Run, marathons, bike rides or swimming. Challenges are a great way to push yourself and get fit all while supporting Newcastle Hospitals Charity.

Corporate partnerships

If you own a business or work for a company, consider setting up a corporate partnership. This can include matching employee donations, sponsoring events, or organising team fundraising activities. Boosting your profile while giving back to your community.

Join our Business Club

For as little as £10 per month join our business club and receive a framed certificate, banner for your website, personalised email banner, member networking events and your logo on our website.

Thank you

Making a regular gift

Regular donations are a lifeline, enabling us to better plan for the future to make sure we reach those most in need of help. Scan the QR code below to start making a regular donation to Newcastle Hospitals Charity.

Leave a gift in your Will

Leaving a gift in your will is one of the greatest honours we can receive. Your gift will support innovative and transformative healthcare programmes that significantly improve the health and wellbeing of the patients, staff and wider communities of Newcastle Hospitals – creating an incredible legacy.

The process is straightforward, and our charitable status could reduce the overall tax amount of inheritance tax you would be liable to pay. To find out more, please call us on **0191 213 7235** or email **nuth.charity@nhs.net.**

Spread the word

We are always looking to reach more people and let them know about the amazing work of Newcastle Hospitals, and how we support them. Once you have finished reading this, why not pass it on to a friend or colleague who you think might be interested. To hear more about the work of Newcastle Hospitals Charity why not sign up to our newsletter.

Help us make a difference

£5 can support dementia patients with tea sets to help spark connections and conversations.

£10 per month can buy arts and craft supplies that our play specialists can use to help entertain and distract our youngest patients.

£25 can support distressed families with bereavement boxes to cherish important memories of a loved one.

£50 can provide equipment for a sensory room for children and young people who have autism and learning disabilities.

£150 can provide overnight accommodation for families dealing with end-of-life care, providing comfort and a safe haven to deal with the difficulties of losing a loved one.

£500 supports our research team to test and trial new approaches; without it, many projects which go on to provide new cures, drugs, treatments or diagnostics would not be possible.

Newcastle Hospitals Charity

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