

IMPACT

act
Addenbrooke's
Charitable Trust

The supporter magazine for Addenbrooke's Charitable Trust

New Year 2026

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Hello

A warm welcome to the New Year's edition of your supporter magazine.

What better way to start off the new year, than to reflect on some of the highlights of the past year and to see how much we have achieved together. I am proud to share with you some extraordinary examples of impact and purpose we have the privilege to support at Addenbrooke's. From funding a special microscope which, for the first time in the UK, means some cancer patients are being diagnosed within 24 hours, to enhancing a space for families to say goodbye to their babies with love and dignity, you are helping your community have the care they deserve.

I look forward to sharing more stories about what more we can make happen thanks to the amazing community of supporters like yourself who donate generously and keep us motivated along the way.

I am thrilled to share an update with you about the new Cambridge Children's Hospital. We are currently the only region without a dedicated children's hospital, so making this hospital a reality is vital. Construction partners have now been appointed, bringing us closer to building a brighter future for children and their families in the East of England.

Thank you for your continued kindness and support, we really could not do any of this without you.

Best wishes

Shelly Thake.

Shelly Thake,
CEO Addenbrooke's Charitable Trust



News in brief

On air with ACT's amazing people!



Have you had a chance to catch our radio show on Cambridge Radio yet? *ACT's Amazing People* airs on the fourth Sunday of each month at noon, celebrating the fantastic clinicians, care givers and fundraisers who make our hospitals so special. From robotic surgeons and an ultra-runner completing the 'toughest foot race on earth', to an inspirational cancer patient and a 95-year-old knitting legend, each show features incredible stories that won't fail to move you. You can catch up with our past shows on the ACT website.

You're making a difference for Maggie



A heartfelt thank you goes out to everyone who responded to our regular giving appeal in August and, of course, to all of you who already donate regularly in this way. We shared the story of two-year-old **Maggie**, who is just one of the many patients and their families who will benefit from your ongoing support.



Professor Adrian Dixon

A founding fundraiser reflects

Retired Professor of Radiology, **Adrian Dixon**, was one of the pioneering few whose determination funded a scanner and founded the fundraising movement that became ACT. Reflecting on the last 30 years, Professor Dixon talked to us about the importance of fundraising for Addenbrooke's, **"Patients attending Addenbrooke's are extremely lucky to have the support of ACT for so many ventures that would not otherwise be possible. And it is absolutely essential that fundraising continues, particularly for innovative equipment and projects that the NHS cannot possibly afford."**

Creating a space to make memories

Families can often spend weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) with their babies. It's an understandably clinical environment full of specialist equipment and staff. Sadly, when it becomes clear that nothing more can be done, the baby will be taken to a space where parents and loved ones can spend their last precious moments together and say goodbye.



“It's a privilege to be with a family at that time when they go through the worst thing ever.”

Stacey Miller
Lead nurse at CUH



“The room now feels kinder. Before it was so clinical. The room is like being hugged and cared for as a family.”

Stacey Miller
Lead nurse at CUH

It is at this moment that families move into a separate room where they can spend precious time with their baby. Previously, the bereavement room was, like NICU itself, a somewhat impersonal space designed for clinical use. But your kind support has enabled ACT to fund the refurbishment of this important room, named 'The Butterfly Room' by NICU staff, to help improve the environment for families at what is an inconceivably difficult time.

The room includes a new sofa-bed which converts to a double bed, and the family can spend time cuddling their baby, without being separated, saying goodbye and holding their baby without tubes or clinical intervention. Families can stay overnight if they choose to. This is a chance for families to make memories with their baby during their last few days or hours together.

Everything has been considered for this space. The pictures on the walls are soft and not thought provoking. When families go home, there is nothing about the images that will be replicated anywhere that will bring them back to this room and this time. There are privacy blinds on the doors – and a nurse is always outside, checking on the family, making sure they are supporting them in care.

The room before the refurbishment



Harnessing the healing power of music

Members of the chamber orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, brought their music to Intensive Care thanks to your support – with quite remarkable results.

The aim was to use music to boost patient wellbeing during what is often an extremely traumatic time for patients and their families. Critical care nurse Sian Ingham told us, *“Patients in our Intensive Care Unit are generally the most unwell in the hospital, so it can be a very challenging time for patients and their families. Seeing their emotional responses to the live music has been so uplifting and really illustrated the positive impact.”*

The musicians worked with a variety of patients and their families, inviting them to take part with percussion instruments, conducting or improvising in any way they could. Cellist Sam Glazer was delighted with the reaction their music inspired, *“We’ve seen how well patients responded to the live music sessions – they’re not just a patient in a bed who is very ill, they seem to be able to recover some of their identity. The sessions have been very moving for patients, families and staff working in ICU.”*



This isn't the first time Britten Sinfonia have performed at Addenbrooke's, but it was their first opportunity to engage with Intensive Care patients. With such uplifting effects felt by staff and patients alike, their debut here was a great success. As Suzy, whose sister Hajnalka was in ICU said, **“I think it's a great way to help patients get better. My sister loved it. I haven't seen her move her face or her arms for three weeks, so to see her reaction to the live music was extraordinary.”**



Photos by Rob Hill ©

Stories of impact

Just as every donation makes a difference, so does every purchase we make. Here are just a few of the projects you've helped fund that have made a big difference.

Relieving the pressure in paediatrics

Thanks to your help, ACT has funded a 24-hour blood pressure monitor for the paediatric team to address an urgent need in detecting and managing childhood hypertension early. Originally expected to benefit around 10 patients annually, the monitor has already been used by three patients in its first month. This means that children requiring medication will be provided with these devices, allowing repeat monitoring to ensure accurate treatment is provided, preventing under or overdosing and reducing the risk of long-term, potentially irreversible, health complications.



Innovation that changes lives and tackles cancer at the right time

Thanks to the generosity of supporters like you, we helped fund the first confocal microscope in the UK at the new CkOSMIC clinic (Cambridge Kidney One-Stop Mass Investigation Clinic). This pioneering service allows patients with suspected kidney cancer to have a biopsy, receive a diagnosis and discuss treatment options all on the same day. The approach reduces anxiety and speeds up access to treatment. In a study of 48 patients, none of the same-day treatment plans needed to change, and waiting times fell from 55 to just 25 days.



Connecting patients after life-changing surgery

Laryngectomy surgery is a life-changing procedure involving the partial or full removal of the larynx leading to loss of voice and adapting to a new way of breathing. ACT was pleased to fund the re-establishment of the Laryngectomy Support Group, connecting patients who have undergone similar treatments. Patients find the gatherings highly beneficial, helping them navigate their return to social settings in a supportive environment.



It's all thanks to you!



Your support continues to make a huge difference to patients and the hospital. Here are just a few of the most recent projects that your generosity has helped make possible.

Well-being boost for transplant patients

ACT is helping to provide much-needed mental health support to transplant patients. Receiving a transplant can lead to feelings of stress, guilt, depression and many other challenges, plus the medications that are necessary to take can often have mood altering

effects. With over 2,000 patients in care and 300 transplants performed every year, the demand for specialist health support is significant. Thanks to you, our transplant patients are benefitting from counselling and clinical referrals as well as social and financial guidance, which help improve well-being and support patients to keep to treatment plans.

A special day for dialysis

With your support, ACT has been able to continue funding pre-dialysis education sessions for patients and their families. Spending a full day with the team, participants learn about the different types of dialysis and hear from staff from various departments, allowing patients to make informed choices



about their care. The centre is situated off-site with no nearby lunch options, so the session includes refreshments, which is also a great opportunity for patients and families to mix and discuss what they have learned. In the afternoon, patients have individual consultations with doctors when they can ask any questions they may still have. After an initial grant to set up the training, the feedback received was so positive that additional funding has been provided so that the training can continue.

Penny's decision is transforming thousands of lives



You may have received our recent letter about an inspirational supporter called Penny. Diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2020, Penny received care at Addenbrooke's but, sadly, her cancer had already spread, and she passed away in May 2023. Her friend, Eileen, who attended consultations with her, told us, **"I could see just how much she valued everyone's support. The consultant we saw, the nurses, the specialist nurses – they were all just wonderful."**

In many ways, Penny lived an ordinary life working in a department store, spending time with friends and gardening in her spare time. But Penny did something extraordinary in those last few

months of her life. *"It was a very hard time for Penny... but she never ever felt sorry for herself,"* Eileen told us. *"She just got on with things and was an inspiration."*

So, although Penny hadn't told a soul of her intentions, when it became clear that she had left a gift to ACT in her will it all made sense to Eileen, *"I was just so incredibly proud of her, but that was the sort of person she was. She always wanted to do good for other people."* And that is exactly what leaving a gift in your will can do – it can change lives and even save lives.

Approximately one third of all gifts we receive from individuals come from supporters leaving gifts in their wills. Any one of us can make an extraordinary difference and save lives, just as Penny did, by leaving a gift in a will. It is an extraordinarily kind thing to do and a wonderful way to leave a lasting legacy – indeed, Addenbrooke's itself was founded in 1766 with a gift left in a will.

Gifts in wills and our free wills service



If you would like to support Addenbrooke's with a gift in your will, or find out about our Free Wills service, please visit www.act4addenbrookes.org.uk/free-wills-service or call our team on 01223 217 757

Fundraisers in action

We are always so thankful to those who selflessly give their time and energy to raising money for Addenbrooke's. Here are the stories of just a few of our fundraising superstars.



Ross, Kayleigh, Elliott, Scarlett, Florence, and Maddison

Family fundraising: in Elliott's memory

Elliott was diagnosed with a rare and incurable disease when he was just three months old. He had his first surgery at just a few hours old and many more followed but, unfortunately, none were successful. Unable to absorb nutrients in the usual way, Elliott remained dependent on intravenous treatments to receive artificial nutrients.

Despite everything, this special little boy never complained. His mother Kayleigh and stepdad Ross told us that, although he could never join a football team, go on

school residentials, or even travel too far from home, he didn't moan, he just got on with things, and would especially love to kick a ball around.



In December 2023, Elliott caught the flu and his condition continued to worsen until in July 2024 the family was given the devastating news that Elliott's condition could no longer be treated. Sadly, Elliott

passed away in September 2024.

The couple have pledged to raise £100,000 for the new Cambridge Children's Hospital, as a way of thanking Addenbrooke's for the amazing care Elliott received. Fundraising has included a walk from Cambourne to West Ham football ground; a children's sponsored swim; a tea party, a walk on Hadrian's Wall and a 72-hole golf challenge! They hope to raise enough to fully equip one of the rooms and name it after Elliott.

"We'd love to have something named after Elliott in his memory," said Kayleigh.



Powered by love (and music)

Ben Standing first noticed something was wrong on holiday in May 2023 when he began veering across the pavement and bumping into people. Following a brain scan on his return, everything pointed to a life-threatening brain lymphoma.

Ben was due to receive chemotherapy when a team of specialists at Addenbrooke's decided to conduct further investigation to confirm the diagnosis by the Neurology team. After the studies were finalised, Ben was diagnosed with Clippers disease – an extremely rare neuroinflammatory condition treated with steroids.



Ben Standing with consultant neurologist Dr Ed Needham

The multidisciplinary approach by our medical staff at Addenbrooke's spared Ben undergoing unnecessary chemotherapy. Extremely grateful for the care he has received, Ben has written a computer-generated song to raise £10,000, **"Addenbrooke's has been amazing from day one, ringing me twice a day after I had been in hospital to check if I was OK. If I can do this and possibly help find a cure for Clippers or an early diagnosis, it would be amazing."**

Looking forward

We hope you've enjoyed reading about the many wonderful things that your support has made possible at Addenbrooke's, none of this would be possible without you.

We've enjoyed looking back over many ground-breaking projects and achievements. However, there is so much more to come including our campaign to build two new pioneering hospitals – the Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital (CCRH) and the Cambridge Children's Hospital (CCH). Work is very much underway, and we look forward to updating you on these exciting projects.

Finally, as we step into this new year, we do so with gratitude for your continued support and belief in our work. Thank you for being such an important part of our community and for helping us create lasting change, one act of generosity at a time.

Your wonderful support makes a difference to our patients and staff every single day, thank you for being an important part of Addenbrooke's.



Hawkins/Brown and White Arkitekter Artist's Impression

Call us

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Email us

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Visit us

www.act4addenbrookes.org.uk

Write to us

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Gifts in wills and our free wills service

If you would like to support Addenbrooke's with a gift in your will, or find out about our Free Wills service, please visit www.act4addenbrookes.org.uk/free-wills-service or call our team on 01223 217 757



Registered charity number: 1170103
Company registration number: 10469089

We'd love to meet you

Our charity offices are open every day from Monday to Friday so please do drop in to say hello. We are opposite A&E and we would be very happy to see you.



Thank you

For helping to provide a comforting space for parents to say goodbye to their baby with love and dignity