

IMPACT

act
Addenbrooke's
Charitable Trust

The supporter magazine for Addenbrooke's Charitable Trust

Spring 2023



On the ward
with the
superheroes
of play

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Hello

A very warm welcome to the spring edition of your supporter magazine. It's always a pleasure to share some wonderful stories that show what a huge difference you make to our hospital.

Although it has been another challenging winter, the staff at Addenbrooke's continued to deliver high quality care for patients throughout the East of England and beyond. And they've done so knowing that whatever is going on in the world ACT and our supporters will always be there to help and support them.

As always, everything we have shared in this edition of Impact is a result of your generous donations.

In this issue, we bring news of an uplifting refurbishment for the children's phlebotomy room. On page 4 we meet our amazing play specialists, Kat and Vicki, and discover how they bring joy to poorly children when they need it most. Your kind gifts continue to help the Play Team make a huge impact on the children at Addenbrooke's. And, as we move into spring, I'm also looking forward to the plans for our pioneering Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital moving forward.

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



Play is so important for children in hospital.

Must-see TV



The new series of *Surgeons: At the Edge of Life* showcases the incredible skill of the surgical team at Addenbrooke's, including patient Jamie's high-risk surgery following treatment for testicular cancer. Your kind support continues to help fund new innovation in surgery at Addenbrooke's, helping to provide even better treatments for patients. Available on BBC iplayer.

Top neurosurgeon scoops prestigious award



Consultant neurosurgeon, Angelos Kolias, has won the prized Hunterian Professor Award for 2023, given to pioneering surgeons since 1810 for original research and innovations. His cutting-edge paper looked at improving outcomes for those with traumatic brain injury. Your donations continue to support world-leading research at Addenbrooke's.

It's a jungle in there!



We are delighted that the newly decorated paediatric phlebotomy room is now open.

Your generous support has helped to transform this space and provide bright sensory equipment along with colourful jungle scenes so that children coming to hospital for blood tests can now experience a calmer, more welcoming environment.

Meet the superheroes of play

Ask any child who has spent time at Addenbrooke's and they will tell you all about Kat and Vicki, the amazing Health Play Specialists who are part of the Play Team.

Kat Collen and Vicki Brown will, of course, object to the superhero label in our headline, but what these two caped crusaders of play do makes an enormous difference to the children and their families during very unsettling times. We managed to catch up with Vicki and Kat and asked them to tell us about the Play Team.

Changing children's experiences

"What do we do? We help children cope with and manage all aspects of the hospital environment and get through their treatment in a positive way. Through different types of play we change their hospital experience.



We are usually one of many teams a child comes across during their time at Addenbrooke's and so we become part of their hospital life. However, they know we're the 'safe' ones as we don't have any needles and so they look forward to seeing us!

A great example of the difference we can make came recently with a child who was extremely frightened of the operating theatre. But because we had had the time to build a relationship with her through play, we were able to be in the anaesthetic room and distract her with fun games so that she could go to sleep in a relaxed way.

Sensory play equipment brings joy to young patients. Your kind gifts help the Play Team make a difference for children in hospital every day.

“ Seeing children smile, laugh and have fun, that's what's most rewarding. ”

Becoming part of the family

Many children who need ongoing care become regular visitors to hospital and so we get to know them and their families from an early age right up to adulthood. We become part of their hospital family, which enables us to step in and give the rest of the family a break from the bedside.

For example, we will often read to young patients with brain injuries who have not yet woken up as their brain is still recovering. This stimulates the brain and helps with healing. We had a boy who had been stuck in bed for over two months but we were able to wrap him up and take him out into the garden so he could have some fresh air and feel the sun on his face, which helped with his wellbeing.

Parents and carers want to be strong and to support their child, but if they are breaking down inside themselves, they will often struggle. That's why we work hard to make sure the family eats and takes breaks.”

Learning how to fit a cannula on a doll.

That wasn't just a great outcome for the child, calm children help the doctors and nurses too. For example, it's much better for the child if they are happy to have an MRI scan while they are awake. If they need to be sedated then that is another upsetting procedure for the child to go through, it's also more costly and will take more time, meaning fewer children will be seen that day.

We also use procedural play to have discussions with children about what's going to happen medically. With one three-year-old recently, we practiced putting a cannula in a dolly over and over. Their parent said how much it helped when going to theatre to be able to say, 'this is what you did with dolly'. The play helps to de-sensitise children and reduce the fear of procedures.



Typical day in the life of a Play Team Play Specialist

“ On a typical day we’ll see around 35 patients, including those in the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit. We’ll set up fun activities for the children in the playroom and we’ll make sure we say ‘Hi’ to every single child.

Each day is different and there will always be something that comes up to change our plans, but we will work as a team to keep the children happy. Seeing children smile, laugh and have fun, that’s what’s most rewarding. It makes us feel so good when children arrive a bit down and unsure and are then laughing an hour later. ”

Kat and Vicki



7.15am Handover from night shift



7.45am Clean and sanitise everything in the playroom: including all toys; the teen room, including TVs, check the garden is safe



9.00am Say hello to all patients and see if they need anything

9.00am – midday

- See the long-term patients
- Work with children due to go to theatre or have scans – do procedural play e.g. look at photos or film of what’s going to happen
- Go to all bedspaces 3 times each day



12.00pm **LUNCHTIME** for the patients

12.00 – 4.00pm Afternoon visits to patients: group play in the playroom e.g. board games, decorate biscuits, make volcanoes out of sick bowls. The teenagers will play Uno

3.15pm Tidy the playroom again and leave colouring pens, paper and toys out for the evening and overnight



Sparing newborn babies the trauma of open surgery

New laparoscopic equipment the size of a pencil is enabling surgeons to operate on even the smallest newborn babies.

Laparoscopic surgery is a highly precise, minimally invasive alternative to open surgery that causes less pain, scarring and potential complications, and results in significantly shorter recovery times for their young patients.

The paediatric surgical team at Addenbrooke’s operates on all complex neonatal surgical cases across the East Anglian region and so far over 100 young children have already benefitted from the new equipment. Its compact size means that surgeons can now operate on tiny newborn babies with even greater precision, reducing the tissue damage and bleeding caused by surgery.

As a result, the team reports that children are now going home on average two days earlier than they would have done if they had undergone open surgery. That’s not just a great outcome for the children, it is also beneficial to their families. We look forward to the number of children who will benefit from this equipment, increasing greatly over the coming year.



We’re no fans of breathlessness



Breathlessness is disabling and distressing for all concerned and is common with heart and lung conditions as well as certain cancers. However, research has shown that cooling the face with a fan reduces symptoms. It’s thought that cooling the cheeks, nose and mouth areas sends a message to the brain that reduces the feeling of shortness of breath. With your help, the Breathlessness Intervention Service has been able to give away free fans to help patients manage their symptoms.

It's all thanks to you!

ACT would achieve nothing without your generosity and unstinting support. Here are just a few of this year's highlights that have helped make our world class hospital even better.

A remarkable reaction to REACT

REACT (Rehabilitation and Exercise during Addenbrooke's Cancer Treatment) is a programme designed to help cancer patients find ways to exercise. The programme started life in 2017, thanks to ACT funding for the pilot to test this new approach.

So far, over 3,000 patients have participated in the programme at all points of the cancer journey – post diagnosis; during rehabilitation; during active treatment; and at the end of their treatment into long-term recovery, as well as into palliative and end of life care.

The results have been incredibly positive, with improvements in cardiovascular fitness, endurance and muscle strength all recorded, along with reductions in anxiety, depression and fatigue. Participants also report their quality of life and general wellbeing have both improved. An amazing 100% of patients were satisfied with REACT, while 97% rated the staff as excellent.

After the successful pilot funded by ACT supporters, it's no wonder that the programme has now been permanently funded and is indeed expanding due to the increasing number of people living with cancer. What's more, evidence continues to emerge supporting physical exercise across the whole cancer spectrum, including prevention and early detection, as well as during treatment.

We're delighted that REACT is such a great success, producing impressive results and enjoying sky-high ratings. But without your help to fund its start-up, this invaluable programme may never have got off the ground – thank you!



Eyeing up a new ophthalmology training room

Thanks to a kind gift left by an ACT supporter in their will, work is now under way to give the ophthalmology training and simulation room at Addenbrooke's a much-needed transformation.

It's an essential facility used to offer trainees a safe learning environment in which they can practice surgical processes, such as incisions and stitching. The room is also home to an ACT-funded ophthalmology surgery training device that lets trainees practice managing rare surgical complications, which helps minimise the likelihood of patients suffering these surgical complications in real life.

However, the training room was not in great shape to say the least. Located in the basement, this re-purposed storeroom didn't just have many aesthetic



problems, but a more serious ventilation issue and insufficient heating too.

Now thanks to this kind gift, we have been able to help transform the training room. The room will soon offer a fit-for-purpose facility and a wonderful environment for staff to train in, helping to attract more trainees to Cambridge.

Baubles of Christmas joy

Thank you to the many kind supporters who took the time to send in Christmas messages for the children spending the festive period in hospital. We were bowled over by the sheer number of messages, which were on bauble-shaped cards displayed near the playroom on the children's ward.

The messages were hugely appreciated by the children, their families and the staff, who all found them deeply moving and truly inspiring. They provided some much-needed, uplifting Christmas cheer just when it was needed most.



Fundraising superstars in action



Over the past few years our wonderful community did not let a pandemic hold them back. They got creative and embraced a new world of virtual fundraising while in lockdown and, when the rules allowed, they got active on behalf of their hospital, its patients and staff. Thank you to all our fundraising superstars – you are amazing!

A marathon for PaNDR

Chris and his family hadn't heard of the ACT-funded PaNDR team before, but in April last year they unfortunately, had to use this service. When their son, Bowie, fell ill with bronchitis this specialist ambulance service was quickly called in to transport him to Addenbrooke's.

These amazing life-saving ambulances, just like intensive care units on wheels, transport critically ill children to the nearest specialist intensive care unit across Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. While Bowie was intubated and in an induced coma, Chris and his family were so touched by the care and compassion of the PaNDR team that he decided to run the London Marathon for them in 2023.

With Bowie and Patch the Panda bear cheering on his training, Chris is already on his way to smashing his target, having raised over £1000. And, at the time of writing, we're still a few months out from the big day on the 23rd April. Good luck Chris!



Jack's PJ day takes off

Inspired by his school's fundraising, Jack Chambers (aged 7) was determined to do some fundraising of his own. What's more, he knew exactly where he wanted the funds to go – the children's ward at Addenbrooke's where he has received treatment for a heart condition and where his Mum, Sade, is a nurse in the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit.

Jack decided on a sponsored Pyjama Day, which has now been held twice and raised a brilliant £2,400 for ACT. What's more, Jack's fundraising efforts have been featured on the local news several times and have spurred schools across Cambridgeshire to raise funds too. Thank you, Jack!

Looking forward to an exciting year

While the dark days of the pandemic are behind us, they leave a legacy that is fuelling many of the current pressures on our hospital. This coming year those pressures are expected to continue, but with your help we will also continue making a difference to staff and patients wherever and whenever it is needed.

Beyond those day-to-day pressures, we are looking ahead to an exciting year of investing in the future of Addenbrooke's. With your help, we can continue to support the world class research that ensures Addenbrooke's remains at the forefront of innovation and saves even more lives in the future.

Speaking of world-leading research, we are incredibly excited about the planned Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital. As we move ever closer to making this hospital a reality, we will bring you more about how you can get involved.

Plans for the pioneering Cambridge Children's Hospital will also be progressing this year. With construction of this first-of-its-kind hospital due to begin in 2024, our fundraising will be stepping up a gear this year, so do keep a look out for updates.

And finally, thank you so much for being part of the Addenbrooke's family. Your support means the world to us and it will continue to help make our wonderful hospital even better in the year ahead.

We would love to meet you

Our charity offices, opposite A&E, are open every day from Monday to Friday. So if you're passing, please do drop in to say hello.

Call us

01223 217 757
(9am-5pm Monday to Friday)

Email us

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Visit us

www.helpyourhospital.co.uk

Write to us

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