

# the force report

An update for our supporters on how your donations are being used and why we need your support more than ever.

Everybody is treated with  
**COMFORT,  
KINDNESS AND  
CONFIDENTIALITY**  
when they come to FORCE

FORCE sees the person. They saw  
**WHO I REALLY WAS**  
and not what cancer was doing all around me

FORCE have been so wonderful as  
**PART OF MY  
RECOVERY**

FORCE complements the clinical side by adding  
**A DIFFERENT  
LEVEL OF  
SUPPORT**

The power of that extra  
**SUPPORT, KNOWLEDGE,  
AND PROFESSIONALISM**  
in a very caring environment - come and try it

For me, the world is a  
**MUCH  
BETTER  
PLACE**

for having been to  
FORCE than it would  
have been otherwise

**FORCE LITERALLY  
SAVED ME**

because there was no-one else that  
I could speak to



“For the first time in decades we’re faced with the fact that cancer survival could go backwards.”

CRUK

## FORCE has never been needed so much

We are facing the tip of a terrifying iceberg as experts suggest the COVID pandemic has had a devastating effect on patients.

There have been:

- huge numbers of missed diagnoses
- delayed treatments with health systems under pressure
- patients reluctant to seek medical care

The backlog is impacting survival rates as compromised care means people are dying prematurely.

During the pandemic, cancer screening, treatment and operations were cancelled to free up staff and hospital beds, creating long waits for care and causing patients huge anxiety.

The figures are eye-watering. Estimates suggest that nationwide:



**Three in 10** cancer patients had their treatment **disrupted** when the NHS suspended much of its normal care to focus on COVID-19



**Three million** fewer people were invited for **screening** during the pandemic

45k

**45,000** people missed receiving a cancer **diagnosis** due to suspended screening services

340,000

340,000 people could miss out on an early cancer **diagnosis** over the course of the **next five years**



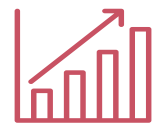
Women diagnosed with **stage four breast cancer** increased by **48%** in the space of a few months



Between July 2020 and November 2021 there were **47,300** fewer cancer diagnoses in **England** than usually predicted



A snapshot earlier this year revealed that **327,395** people were on England's cancer **waiting list**



There is likely to be a **20% increase** in cancer-related deaths over the next **12 months** because of the effect of the pandemic on health systems

The pandemic created a perfect storm which left patients facing more complex challenges than ever due to delayed diagnosis, isolation, fear of infection and altered treatment plans. As a result, the support offered by FORCE is needed more than ever and our team continues to prioritise providing vital services.

**Cancer didn't stop for COVID and neither did we.**

Research and reports from: NHS, JCO Global Oncology, The Lancet Oncology, Macmillan, Cancer Research UK



## FORCE bjective:

To provide a range of **personalised support** for anyone affected by cancer in Devon

**FORCE is a dynamic charity, always searching for new ways to support local people affected by cancer and give them the tools to manage their own lives.**

Recent successes include the Moving Forward programme for patients who have finished treatment and a new group to help people live with cancer as an incurable disease.

We have also introduced new exercise opportunities including men-only sessions and a group for women with breast cancer.

They are part of the Get Active with FORCE programme of individual assessment and personalised exercise programmes - pioneering in the field of cancer rehabilitation and consistently commended.

Don't take our word for just how much it helps – these are just two of the patients who have offered glowing feedback.



"Just a thank you note to say how much I appreciate your help and support at our consultation yesterday. The COVID experience has moved many of us, myself included, from a position of quite intense support to a place where we are unsure what is appropriate to seek and ask.

FORCE is obviously a special service in this vacuum and the patient time and listening you offered me was very reassuring and helpful.

I shall move forward with more confidence with your help."

**JON PRATT**

**THE BENEFITS ADVICE SERVICE FOR LOCAL PEOPLE AFFECTED BY CANCER**, provided by Citizens Advice Exeter with the help of an emergency grant from Macmillan and hosted by FORCE, continues to make a major impact. In the year from October 2021 to the end of September 2022 benefits advisor Mike Watson:



**301**  
Clients helped



**3,036**  
Issues dealt with

**£**  
**£2,468,133**  
Received by clients





## To reach more people needing support and advice

After two tough years we're ready to move forward again and step up the vital support that makes FORCE unique and precious.

Rebuilding our teams – both support and income generation – is crucial to our recovery plan.

It means we'll have the resources to reach even more people – our friends, our colleagues, our neighbours, anyone in our community affected by cancer.

We've taken the first steps towards a bright and sustainable future.



Sarah Airdrie's appointment is a shining example of our close collaboration with the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

Her role is jointly funded by our charity and the Trust and she divides her time between FORCE and the hospital to enhance an already unique partnership.

As part of that relationship, we offer invaluable support to nurses in the oncology, haematology and palliative care departments whose roles treating cancer patients were more demanding and emotionally

challenging than ever during the pandemic.

Our Information Nurses and Oncology Support Specialists make regular visits to the wards, helping patients and staff and raising awareness of the range of high-quality support available at FORCE.

Sharing skills and knowledge with other organisations - local and national - and is also one of our core values, made more important than ever as we adapted to new ways of working through lockdowns and other restrictions.

We continue to build on relationships with public, private, voluntary and community organisations, to deliver co-ordinated services to the people who need them.



## FORCE Objective:

*To invest in local clinical and scientific **research** at respected institutions including the University of Exeter Medical School and the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.*

We understand the massive importance of research into cancer.

That's why supporting local projects is one of FORCE's key aims.

We recently invested £25,000 in a significant two-year study into cancers in pregnant women.

It was led by consultant gynaecological oncology surgeon Dr Katharine Edey from the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital.

Women at risk of bowel and ovarian cancer can't currently be effectively monitored during pregnancy as normal levels of the markers for the diseases are affected by hormone changes during pregnancy.

The research aimed to identify a range of normal markers so that pregnant women can continue to be monitored.

### KEY FINDINGS

- **Tumour marker CEA** – a substance made by cancer cells or by normal cells in response to cancer in the body - is not affected by pregnancy and the reference range is the same as in a non-pregnant population. This marker is most often used for bowel cancer.
- **Tumour marker CA125**, used to assess the likelihood of ovarian cancer, is increased in pregnancy.

“We have proposed a reference range for this marker in pregnancy from our study,” said Dr Edey. “Women had blood taken in early pregnancy and again in later pregnancy so we know our results are robust for all stages”

The findings were presented at the International Congress of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in June 2022 and the team were recognised with an award for the Best Oral Presentation.

## FORCE Objective:

*To **support innovation** by improving local cancer services*

Buying state-of-the-art equipment to support and help initiate new treatments locally is part of FORCE's DNA. We've spent more than **£1million** on high tech kit for the RD&E already and we haven't finished yet.

There's an interesting proposal in the pipeline from the oncology department for a photo-biomodulation machine. It's used to reduce the severity of symptoms of head and neck cancer patients suffering from oral mucositis - that's tissue swelling and irritation in the mouth, often caused by radiotherapy or chemotherapy. Watch this space!



## To develop a **strong infrastructure** to ensure a sustainable future for FORCE services

Nearly three years ago our world changed beyond belief. But as we all grappled with the effects of the COVID pandemic, FORCE adapted quickly to ensure that local people dealing with a cancer diagnosis were not forgotten. While other organisations were forced to withdraw their support, we did everything we could to make help available when it was needed most.

We succeeded thanks to the resilience and sheer determination of the people who work and volunteer here. And **we survived because of the incredible support of people like you in the communities we serve.**

So thank you for all you've done to make sure we're still here to offer free support to those who need it.

We know times are tough. We know there is more uncertainty on

the horizon – the cost of living crisis, the impact of war in Ukraine and even the threat of winter blackouts.

We also know that we face a potential tsunami of demand for our services as we confront the consequences of delays in diagnosis and altered treatment plans.

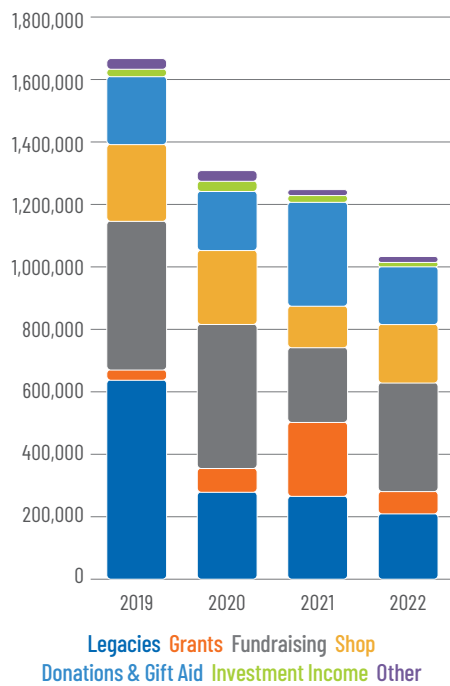
### That's why we're asking for your help.

We need funds to keep our doors open, to offer practical, emotional and physical support, to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Whatever you can spare, whenever you can afford it, you can make a difference to someone you know affected by cancer. Check out the back page of this report for information on ways you can join the fight.

Thank you.

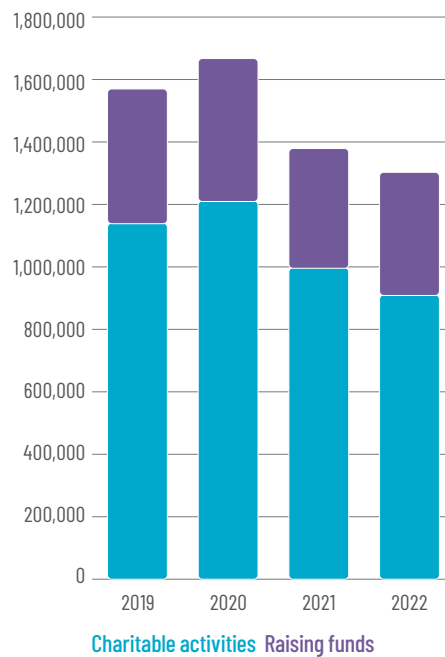
### Analysis of Total Income by financial year to 31 March



Years of **sound financial management** and **reasonable reserves** gave us breathing space when the pandemic hit but there has been a significant impact on our traditional income streams. Emergency grant funding during 2020/21 helped but we now need to boost our income so we can cope with the anticipated increase in pent up demand described on Page 2.

Further lottery funding and new legacy notifications are improving the picture for 2022/23 but we still face a significant funding gap if we are to get back to pre-pandemic levels. We are working to identify exciting opportunities but we need your support more than ever to make these ideas a reality.

### Expenditure by financial year to 31 March



**We take care of your money.** Our spending on support for local people affected by cancer peaked in 2019/20 at a time when we were funding

- **three FORCE@ outreach locations**
- **two chemotherapy nurses**
- **significant research projects.**

With careful management, we made cost savings of £360k over two years while maintaining vital support. We now need to rebuild and we aim to do it in innovative and cost-effective ways, like developing the use of specialist volunteers to help deliver our support and education programmes alongside paid staff. But there is no escaping the fact that we need support from our local community to reach our goals and create a sustainable future for the services that are so precious. **Your support has never been needed so much!**

## Moving in the right direction

October 2021 - September 2022

- Number of visits to FORCE**  
12,797
- Complementary therapies delivered**  
1,233
- Wig fittings**  
126
- Acupuncture treatments delivered**  
615
- Men seeking support**  
3,106
- Relaxation and anxiety management groups**  
56
- Look Good Feel Better individual pampering sessions**  
89
- Information nurse appointments**  
646
- Specialist physio assessments**  
406
- New requests for support**  
2,918
- Volunteering**  
38 new recruits

# We need your help – together we can make dealing with cancer better

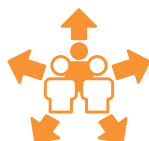
**Let's talk about money.** Just to maintain what we're offering right now – a slightly streamlined service due to the brutal effects of COVID on our income – we need to bring in £1.3 million a year. But we've set our sights well beyond that. To deliver even greater levels of support to local cancer patients and their families, we need to raise upwards of £1.7 million every year. That would enable us to:



Put **new equipment** for the hospital back on our shopping list



Pump prime more local **research** projects



Relaunch our **outreach** projects – counselling, information, exercise advice, complementary therapies



Step up our support for **children and young people**



Ensure that our headquarters in Exeter can offer the very **best support** available

Our ambition remains undiminished because cancer hasn't taken a break, even if we all feel our lives were on pause for so many months.

Wouldn't it be amazing if no-one in our special part of Devon ever had to face cancer alone again? And wouldn't it be even better if they didn't have to travel far to feel the FORCE.

**We're ready to take the next step. Are you ready to join us on that journey?**

Our focus remains on delivering **high quality, core services** and rebuilding to ensure the **long-term sustainability** of the charity.



## FORCE has been awarded £290,000 in funding from The National Lottery Community Fund

The grant will help us restart our programme of face-to-face services across Devon and expand a pioneering programme of using specialist volunteers to work alongside our professional staff in support and education programmes.

This new National Lottery funding is for a specific three-year project, which will enable FORCE to reach more local people dealing with a cancer diagnosis.

It doesn't secure the future of the entire organisation but it will contribute to our sustainability as we work hard to rebuild funding for core services after COVID.

It represents a significant step on the road to recovery after the pandemic caused such a massive upheaval for our services, especially our outreach projects.

The application process for lottery funding is extremely rigorous and our success in securing this grant is a huge vote of confidence in our recovery plan.

### *This is why we do it - what our clients say*

“FORCE became a place where I would be treated as an old friend, somewhere I could retreat during the long chemo days.”

“To come out of the other side of the treatment, there was still this burden on my shoulders and FORCE has managed to remove that burden.”

# What you can do to help us reach even more people

There are so many ways you can help us raise the money we need to support you, your family, your friends, your colleagues, your community to deal with a cancer diagnosis.



Commit to **regular giving** – it makes a huge difference



Make a **one-off donation**



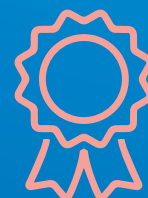
Leave FORCE a gift in your **Will**



Support or organise an **event**



Donate to or buy from **our shop**



Make us your **Charity of the Year**



## Ways to give

- 1. Scan** this QR code to make a regular or one-off donation via JustGiving.
- 2. Visit** our website – [www.forcecancercharity.co.uk](http://www.forcecancercharity.co.uk) – and click DONATE to make a regular or one-off donation via JustGiving.
- 3. Set up** a standing order online with your bank and let us know. If you prefer, we can send you a paper form to complete.
- 4. Send** us a cheque – it should be made payable to FORCE Cancer Charity. You can also pay directly into our bank account.



## FORCE BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS

Account name : FORCE Cancer Charity

Account Number : 60796568

Sort Code : 30-80-37

### IMPORTANT

Please email [donations@forcecancercharity.co.uk](mailto:donations@forcecancercharity.co.uk) to let us know that you have set up a standing order or have made a one-off donation into our account. We'd love to thank you and confirm whether we can claim Gift Aid on your donation.

For queries or to ask for a paper standing order form, please email [donations@forcecancercharity.co.uk](mailto:donations@forcecancercharity.co.uk) or call **01392 406166**.

## giftaid it

If you are sending this form back to us with a one-off donation and would like to Gift Aid it please tick a box.

- I would like to Gift Aid this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the last 4 years
- I would like to Gift Aid this donation only

## Donor details

Name

Address

Postcode

Please return this form to:

FORCE Cancer Charity, Corner House, Barrack Road, Exeter EX2 5DW

FORCEcancercharity @forcecancer

01392 402875 (Fundraising) / 01392 406151 (Patient Support)

Charity registration no. 1140676 Company registration no. 7529991

