



Questions we're sometimes asked

We've put together a selection of some of the questions we've been asked during the Breaking Point appeal. You may find them useful during your own conversations as a Breaking Point champion.

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Why do we need hospital charities when we already support the NHS through our taxes?

Charity and philanthropy have played a vibrant role in the health service. It's a proud tradition that for the Royal Free Hospital goes back as far as the 19th century when founder William Marsden foreshadowed the introduction of the NHS by setting up a hospital free at the point of use.

Today, hospital charities go beyond the limitations of NHS funding to provide services, equipment and training that would otherwise simply not be available. **We complement, rather than subsidise, state funding.** Together, we and the RFL can achieve things the NHS can't do alone.

We can invest in projects that the trust is not allowed to fund from their budgets. And because we're independent of the NHS, we can be agile and push work forwards so that we get there faster.

As a strategic partner to the Royal Free London, we work with the trust to identify the areas where our funding can add the greatest value:

- together, we accelerate system and service improvements
- at a time when the NHS is in the grip of a major workforce crisis, our funding bolsters staff resilience and wellbeing
- our grant funding strengthens the delivery of the trust's research strategy, directly contributing to the RFL's status as globally significant research leader

The government has announced extra funding to help the NHS recover from the pandemic and tackle waiting lists. Doesn't this mean your appeal isn't necessary?

Increased national insurance contributions are expected to raise £12bn a year, which will go initially towards easing pressure on the NHS. A proportion will then be moved into social care system over the next three years.

However, this increase doesn't kick in until April 2022, which still leaves NHS leaders facing a perfect storm as we head into winter, the most challenging period of the year.

Like all acute trusts, the Royal Free London is faced with a surge in numbers of patients waiting for treatment, partly due to routine services being paused during the pandemic and partly because people did not seek help during 2020 for fear of burdening the NHS further. As people come forward for treatment and services are resumed, the latest national figures showing the highest waiting lists since records began. Health Secretary Sajid Javid has warned that the NHS waiting list could reach 13 million.

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That's coupled with the ever-growing demand for emergency and urgent care that's exceeding pre-pandemic levels and an exhausted workforce.

Our patients don't have the luxury of time. Our staff are already at risk of burnout.

Why do you need my money? Surely the funds Captain Tom raised were sufficient to keep your work and that of the other NHS charities going for several years?

We're incredibly grateful to have benefited from NHS Charities Together funding, including the £33 million raised by Captain Sir Tom. His legacy will be felt for years to come by all NHS charities who received a share to help the NHS respond swiftly to the pandemic.

However, our Breaking Point appeal focuses on **the lasting impact** the pandemic is having on our hospitals, including the real risk of staff burnout as we approach another difficult winter. Latest government figures show the highest waiting lists since records began. All that is coupled with the ever-growing demand for emergency and urgent care that's exceeding pre-pandemic levels.

We can help speed up the improvements the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust has already identified will be key to supporting an exhausted workforce, to getting patients into surgery as quickly as possible and to supporting research into long Covid so patients can get the answers they need about this devastating condition.

Can I ask for my donation to go specifically to one of the hospitals in the Royal Free London group?

We understand that many of our supporters have personal experiences that motivate their wish to donate to a particular research fund or hospital team. However, the Breaking Point appeal is all about supporting our patients and staff across all three of our hospitals as they recover from the impact of the pandemic. The donations we receive from this appeal will be used where the need is greatest and will have the biggest impact for staff and patients.

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