



This document gives background information to the Breaking Point appeal which you might find useful when having conversations as an appeal champion.

Contents

Why are the staff and patients of the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust at breaking point? 2

What projects or work will the Breaking Point appeal support? 2

Why this appeal extends beyond north London..... 3

Why are the staff and patients of the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust at breaking point?

Covid has disrupted every aspect of health care delivery. The NHS is grappling with what's been described as **a perfect storm** due to:

- a surge in numbers of patients waiting for treatment after many routine services were paused during the pandemic;
- the ever-growing demand for emergency and urgent care that's exceeding pre-pandemic levels;
- an exhausted workforce.

Alongside this, the NHS continues to treat patients with COVID-19 both those requiring hospital admission and those with long COVID symptoms.

Pressure in the system now, even before we head into the challenges of winter, means it will take considerable time and resources for the NHS to stabilise and recover.

In the meantime, patients are scared and staff are at risk of burnout.

The Royal Free London is working tirelessly to address these issues. We know that NHS funding alone won't be enough to fund wholesale improvements quickly enough to give patients and staff the support they need now.

You can help change that by raising funds that will speed up the Royal Free London's ambitious programme of improvements.

What projects or work will the Breaking Point appeal support?

We want to make sure the funding gets where it will have the biggest impact for the people who need it most. We've worked with the trust to identify some of the areas that could have a big impact. That's why we're highlighting projects like:

- putting more measures in place to support the workforce, including providing rest spaces where frontline staff can have respite from the pressure and emotional strain of their busy shifts.
- speeding up work on digital innovation so we can get patients into theatres for elective surgery more quickly. Using digital methods to carry out pre-operative assessments will create more capacity in the pre-operative service; this in turn will allow surgery staff to better identify which patients need to be seen by a specialist nurse or anaesthetist ahead of their surgery, speeding up the time patients wait for their procedures and reducing the number of visits they make to hospital pre-surgery.

Produced by:

Royal Free Charity, The Pears Building, Pond Street, London, NW3 2PP
Charity number 1165672 Company limited by guarantee number 09987907

- speeding up research into long Covid so we can really understand how best to care for patients who are struggling with this condition. The research project that we're highlighting in the appeal will allow researchers to find markers, which are likely to be simple blood tests, to identify who gets long Covid and why. Long Covid patients are struggling with symptoms such as breathlessness and fatigue; and many of them are experiencing mental health issues. Being able to fund this project means we'll be able to make a big impact on these patients' lives by helping them with their symptoms and their mental health.

Why this appeal extends beyond north London

Patient care and treatment

As well providing health services for the local population, the Royal Free London is the biggest referral centre for cancer in north central London. It provides treatment for patients all over the UK for a range of conditions requiring highly-specialist expertise, including:

- amyloidosis
- liver transplants
- kidney transplants
- breast surgery
- myeloma
- neuroendocrine tumours

The Royal Free London is home to one of the UK's leading plastic surgery units which is also a major teaching centre and a national centre of excellence for facial reanimation surgery.

It has a pioneering neuroendocrine tumour unit with an international reputation, the first centre in the UK to be awarded the status of European centre of excellence.

One of the UK's few high-level isolation units for infectious diseases is based at the Royal Free Hospital.

Research

The Royal Free London is also a pioneering research centre. It is built on a heritage of "firsts", from the first ever open-access clinic for patients with HIV and AIDs, to the first PET scan to diagnose breast cancer in the UK (4th in the world).

It has undertaken globally renowned research into HIV and rare auto-immune disorders; developed the world's first gene therapies for haemophilia, metabolic disorders, and genetic disorders; and worked with the UK government on various COVID research programmes including hosting the world's first human challenge studies in the race to find a COVID vaccine. It was also one of the first hubs in the UK to open for the delivery of COVID vaccines.

Produced by:

Royal Free Charity, The Pears Building, Pond Street, London, NW3 2PP
Charity number 1165672 Company limited by guarantee number 09987907

The Pears Building is a partnership between the Royal Free Charity, Royal Free London and UCL. It opened earlier this year to provide a purpose-built home for one of world's few research centres dedicated to the study of the human immune system, the **Institute of Immunity and Transplantation (IIT)**.

The IIT combines the clinical excellence of RFL and the research excellence of UCL, which is ranked amongst the top 10 universities in the world. The IIT's aim is to improve human health by understanding the human immune system: how it works, why it can stop working properly and how can it be fixed. It is one of only a few centres in the world dedicated to collaborative immunity research and its new home will enable it to bring together teams of more than 200 researchers and more than 10,000 patients.

Produced by:

Royal Free Charity, The Pears Building, Pond Street, London, NW3 2PP
Charity number 1165672 Company limited by guarantee number 09987907