

CHILDREN'S CANCER UNIT CHARITY
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2022

The Trustees are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31 October 2022.

Principal Activity and Results for the year

The principal activity of the Children's Cancer Unit Charity is to provide support for the Unit, medical staff and families at The Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children with all the necessary resources, equipment, and support to ensure that children affected by cancer in Northern Ireland have access to the best possible treatment and care.

The charity also aims to raise awareness of childhood cancer and the effects it has on families across Northern Ireland.

The charity is committed to providing additional support to families affected by cancer.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Staffing

The Children's Cancer Unit Charity continues to provide additional funding for important posts at the Haematology & Oncology Unit. The Charity contributes and covers the cost of two vital posts – Database Manager and Assistant Clinical Psychologist. The Board have also confirmed that they will fund the role of a Brain Tumour Dedicated Social Worker in the Unit.

Equipment

The Charity purchases both larger-scale equipment and smaller, more entertainment-focused items for the Unit.

This year the Charity funded the purchase and installation of the new Ultrasound Room in the CHU. This includes state-of-the-art imaging equipment and specially decorated walls to provide a calming and supportive environment for children and young people. The ultrasound machine also has additional probes with help staff to get the best possible examinations and higher quality scans. This will allow the team to significantly increase the average number of ultrasound scans per month and reduce waiting times.

Infrastructure

The maintenance of the two isolation rooms, previously built by the Charity, continue to be supported.

Training & Research

Providing opportunities for the medical team and staff at the Children's Cancer Unit is another vital piece of support provided by the Charity. Thanks to CCUC funding, a number of members of the team took part in various training courses and conferences over the last 12 months, including the Children's Cancer & Leukaemia Group, the All-Island Children's Palliative Care Conference and SIOF.

Additionally, the Charity funded the BHSCT Children's Medical Staff Committee's participation in the annual Sim-Off Event, promoting paediatric sim-based education.

Teenagers & Young Adults

The Charity continues to fund the post of Data Manager for the specialist Teenagers and Young Adults service. The Children's Cancer Unit Charity is committed to supporting teenagers and young adults affected by cancer in Northern Ireland and, as well as already completing the redesign of two more age-appropriate bedrooms on the Unit, aims to develop further assistance and suitable support for them.

The Charity continued to support the YLVC Teenage MOVE Forward Exercise Programme with a donation towards fuel costs for families participating in the programme.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Supporting the Children's Cancer Unit

The Charity continued to provide support to the Children's Cancer Unit through the purchase of equipment, and play resources for the Ward and Clinic, as well as providing toys, gifts and treats for children and families.

The Charity launched its partnership with Aflac Northern Ireland to provide My Special Aflac Ducks to children diagnosed with cancer in Northern Ireland. The robotic ducks use naturalistic movement, quacks, nuzzling and calming play, as well as a corresponding app, to help children to express their feelings and develop coping techniques for often scary and uncomfortable cancer treatments.

Raising Awareness

In September, the Charity partnered with Childhood Cancer Ireland, Cancer Fund for Children and Belfast Trust to deliver a Light It Up Gold Day in the CHU to mark Childhood Cancer Awareness Month.

The Charity is engaging with Queen's University Belfast to develop a joint project to promote and engage students with children's cancer nursing.

The Charity is a member of the Northern Ireland Children's Health Coalition, to advocate for families accessing paediatric acute services in Northern Ireland.

Family Support

The Charity continued to provide financial assistance to families on referral from the Social Work Team in the CHU. These requests for specific support included travel for treatment, specialist equipment for the family home, tutoring and educational resources and childcare for siblings.

The Charity continued to develop and deliver its Robotics Programme, placing robots within 12 schools to facilitate educational and peer connection between patients and their classes.

Fundraising

In May, The Belfast City Marathon took place, with a variety of CCUC supporters including families, corporate partners and hospital staff taking part across the full run, relay, fun run and walk events.

Our annual Stormont Mile event took place in October, with 160 supporters taking part and raising just under £20,000.

Governance & Structure

The Charity engaged with Edwards & Co Solicitors to review its structure and governance and will begin the process of incorporation.

The Charity recruited and appointed its first Chief Executive, to lead on the development of the organisation. Jane Hoare will join The Children's Cancer Unit in this role in January 2023.

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PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

With the recruitment of the new Chief Executive role, future plans for the organisation will be delivered with this new appointee and will include:

Supporting the Children's Cancer Unit

For the year ahead, the Children's Cancer Unit Charity aims to further enhance its support for families, both at the Children's Hospital and at home. The charity will review current support services and identify development opportunities.

The Board have committed to securing new premises for the Charity's Headquarters, ideally in close proximity to the Children's Cancer Unit, in order to maximise support to families and staff at the Unit, as well as to increase the brand awareness of the organisation.

The Charity will also explore the potential for a Parental Engagement Group.

Raising Awareness

The Charity will develop and deliver the Partnership Project with Queen's University Belfast, to deliver a programme of events to promote and enhance childhood cancer treatment and care in Northern Ireland.

The Board are also committed to exploring opportunities to support research into paediatric oncology, and are engaging with the Ulster University and the All-Island Children's Oncology Network (ACORN) on potential collaboration.

Family Support

The Charity will continue to work alongside the CHU Social Work Team to deliver appropriate support to families, as well as continue to expand the Robotics Programme.

Income Generation & Communications

The Charity will expand the current team to include a Fundraising position, with a view to developing and delivering a robust income generation strategy to grow and diversify income streams.

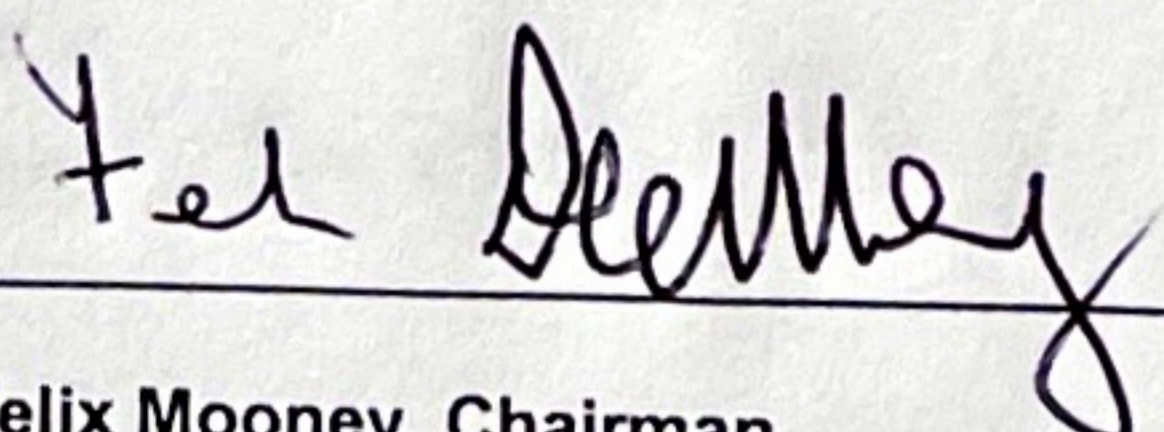
Additionally, the Charity will focus on developing a Communications Strategy, to build the organisation's profile, clearly communicate its services and impact, and engage new supporters.

Governance

The Charity will progress the process of incorporation and ensure compliance with Charity Commission NI requirements.

The Board are committed to the development of the infrastructure of the organisation in terms of staffing and resources to maximise opportunities and enhance good governance.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by –



Felix Mooney, Chairman

Date: 30 August 2023