

Prime Minister announces £25 million cash boost for hospices to secure their future

The future of hundreds of hospices and palliative care services which provide vital treatment and support for patients at the end of their life will now be protected thanks to a multi-million-pound funding boost from Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

The Prime Minister today announces that £25 million will be pumped into the sector, building on funding already provided by the NHS.

The funding follows a reception hosted by the Prime Minister at Downing Street last week, to thank hospice front line staff for their work.

This new investment will help keep many of these facilities – which receive the majority of their funding from the voluntary sector – open and will also improve the quality of end of life care, ensuring people die as comfortably as possible. The money will also support the sector in relieving workforce pressures as well as introducing new services – such as out-of-hours support, respite care and specialist community teams.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Seeing a loved one nearing the end of their life is one of the hardest things a family will ever experience, so it's vital that we support our fantastic and hardworking hospice staff to deliver the highest quality palliative care.

As Prime Minister I am making sure that today our hospices and palliative care services are given a £25 million boost to alleviate the everyday pressures faced on the frontline, helping to ensure they have the resources they need, when they need them.

Today's announcement follows campaigning from Chief Executive of Hospice UK Tracey Bleakley and its Chair Robert Peston. They recently met with Health Secretary Matt Hancock to discuss the pressures facing hospices – from falling fundraising and legacies to reduced local statutory support.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

End of life is vitally important, and our NHS is committed to caring for you from cradle to grave. This cash boost will protect our precious hospices and palliative care services so people across the country will have the best, most personalised and dignified choices when they die.

We should expect the highest quality support, so we can spend the last days of our life with our loved ones, dying with dignity in the way that we want to.

The hospice care sector supports more than 200,000 people with terminal and life-limiting conditions in the UK each year, as well as supporting tens of thousands of family members with bereavement support.

In June, NHS England announced plans to increase the children's hospice grant to £25 million by 2023/24, from £12 million in 2019/20.

Tracey Bleakley, Chief Executive, Hospice UK, said:

We are pleased that the Government has responded to Hospice UK's call for extra funding for charitable hospices in England and recognises that many are currently overstretched, amidst rising service costs and increasing demand for the care they provide.

While this funding boost is welcome and timely, many charitable hospices are facing grave, financial challenges in the long-term and need to raise over £1 billion a year in a very tough fundraising climate. As demand grows and costs increase, the need for funding rises every year.

The support pledged today is an important first step to help protect the vital care provided by charitable hospices for people with life-limiting conditions and their families.

Robert Peston, Chair, Hospice UK, said:

Many hospices and palliative care providers are facing acute financial pressures and are struggling to meet the growing need for their desperately important services.

This injection of new funds by the Government could not have come at a more critical time. It will help many, but it will not completely alleviate the serious funding problems facing a swelling number of charitable hospices.

Debbie Raven, CEO, Thames Hospice said:

It was a privilege to meet with the Prime Minister last week. He was very knowledgeable about hospice care and genuinely concerned about the challenges we all face across the hospice sector.

This announcement of additional funding with the intent to conduct a more detailed review of hospice funding in the near future is extremely welcome and will make a huge difference to our ability to

meet the ever increasing needs of our community.

Specifically for Thames Hospice it will help us to continue to provide and develop high quality end of life and palliative care across our community.