

# Impact Report and Annual Accounts

April 2023 to March 2024



**Because every day matters**

[www.hospiscare.co.uk](http://www.hospiscare.co.uk)

Registered charity no. 297798



**Hospiscare**  
Your local hospice

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# Welcome

## to Hospiscare's Impact Report and Annual Accounts for 2023-2024

We are proud to present Hospiscare's latest Impact Report, highlighting the performance, successes and challenges for our hospice in 2023/24.

Looking back at last year, first and foremost we want to thank our staff, volunteers and supporters for their dedication and service. In a demanding year, we are tremendously grateful to all those in our community who have given their hard work, expertise, time and money to help us continue to care for patients and families across Exeter, Central and East Devon. Thank you.

We are very proud of our hospice team. We were delighted to receive an 'outstanding' designation once again from the CQC and be rated 'five star' on [iwantgreatcare.org](http://iwantgreatcare.org) by our patients and their loved ones.

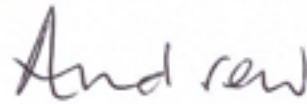
The year covered by this report brought challenges, as it did for many charities across the breadth of the UK. In November 2023, we highlighted that inequity in government hospice funding in Devon, combined with the cost-of-living crisis, meant we were facing a £2.5 million funding shortfall.

In response, our teams worked hard to grow our income and make savings where possible. We continue to engage in ongoing discussions about fair funding with Devon's Integrated Care Board, the local body that allocates government healthcare funds, and remain hopeful that statutory funding for our hospice will improve in the future.

The 'Care' section of this report, from p.12, outlines how we have cared for our patients and those close to them this year and the steps we take to ensure our services are safe, effective, responsive, compassionate and well-led.

As well as reviewing the past year, this report also looks ahead (p.22) at the year to come, to outline the four pillars of our strategic plan for 2023-26 and highlight the steps we will take to address our current challenges, strengthen our organisation and continue to improve our care in the future.

At Hospiscare, year-on-year, over 80% of our funds are raised thanks to the generosity of local people who donate, leave us a gift in their Will, play our lottery, shop with us or fundraise on our behalf. With our community behind us, we will continue to care for patients across the heart of Devon when they need it most.



**Andrew Randall**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Brian Aird**  
Chair of Trustees



# Making Every Day Matter

## Our Mission

We provide compassionate, expert end-of-life care to those in need – before, during and after death. Together with our local community, we make every day matter.

## Our Vision

Our vision is to ensure those in need receive outstanding end-of-life care in the place of their choice.

## Our Values

Our values are the foundations upon which our strategic ambitions are built. They determine how Hospiscare is run on a day-to-day basis. In everything we do, we strive to be:



### Compassionate

towards every member of our community, from our patients and families to our staff members, volunteers and supporters.



### Respectful

to the needs and beliefs of the people we serve.



### Professional

in our provision of specialist end-of-life care.



### Inclusive

of all needs and circumstances, ensuring end-of-life care remains accessible to all.



At Hospiscare, we understand how precious life is. That is why we strive to make every day matter to our patients and their families.

Our specialist doctors and nurses are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to support our patients and their loved ones when they need it most.

We believe that everyone deserves a good death and we are committed to making this happen by:



### **Caring for patients in the place of their choice**

Our specialist doctors, nurses and therapists care for patients on our ward in Exeter, at the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, at home, in care homes, in Exeter Prison and those who are homeless or have complex housing needs.



### **Sharing our voice**

By training the next generation of doctors and nurses and sharing our expertise, both locally and nationally, we aim to improve the standard of end-of-life care for all.



### **Making every day matter**

We can't give our patients and their families more time, but we can support them to make their final days matter. From supporting patients to achieve bucket list goals to advising them on how to make their final wishes known, we are there to make every moment count.



### **Being there after death**

For many of our patients, leaving loved ones behind is one of the most worrying things about a terminal diagnosis. At Hospiscare, our care doesn't stop after the patient has died. We remain by the side of families for as long as they need us.

# Our Impact



*"I'm surrounded by Hospicare, so I feel like I'm in a safe place. They're all angels as far as I'm concerned. The hospice is always going to be there for you."*

After receiving the 'all clear' from breast cancer in 2018, Charlotte's cancer returned and she was given the devastating news that it was terminal. Charlotte is determined to spend the time she has left with her loved ones, sharing how much they mean to her.

# We said we would...

## Provide care reflecting the wishes and needs of our patients and those close to them

To provide this level of care, it's vital to discover what's important to our patients and those close to them. With this in mind, we are establishing patient engagement groups and feedback forums. We're also embedding patient-centred outcome measures to enhance our clinical service provision for the future.

To ensure that our care continues to be individualised, responsive and accessible, we're reviewing our triage processes so that acute patients' needs are responded to appropriately. We've also identified an area of need for young people transitioning from children's services to adult care and are developing strategies to support them at this vulnerable stage in their care pathway.

Educating and engaging our healthcare partners and the wider community impacts the broader experience of our patients' care. We are developing opportunities with local universities, as well as outreach projects with faith groups and community hubs, to ensure that we champion expert end-of-life care across our region.



## Develop and support a sustainable and stable workforce

It's vital that we continue to provide specialist care. To ensure this, we've prioritised staff and volunteer access to learning and development, including reviewing our training and mentoring programmes and working to embed supervision.

To improve inclusivity, we've initiated an equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) working party of staff and volunteers from across the organisation. This group has created an EDI action plan with the aim of engaging staff at all levels to ensure understanding and awareness of our vision, enabling inclusive policies and processes and evaluating our practices against measurable targets. This includes a communications plan, partnering with other organisations, reviewing training, and applying for Committed to Equality (C2E) accreditation.

We have also formed a 'Volunteer Voice' programme: a group of volunteers that act as a voice for the broader group, working with the teams at Hospiscare to support and develop volunteering initiatives.

The wellbeing of our staff and volunteers remains a priority. In 2022, we used MIND's Workplace Wellbeing Index to create an action plan to improve mental health in our organisation. The action plan has now been completed and we are considering how best to reassess staff wellbeing in 2025. We also have several support mechanisms in place for staff, including our employee assistance programme, wellbeing group, and mental health first aiders.





**LOCAL PEOPLE  
DESERVE  
FAIR HOSPICE  
FUNDING**



*“It costs our hospice £10 million a year to provide our services caring for people with terminal illnesses. The government funds only a small proportion of this, and it’s thanks to the remarkable generosity of local people, who support us through fundraising and legacies, that we are able to continue our vital work.”*

Andrew Randall, Chief Executive Officer, Hospiscare



## Increase income to fund our care

Discussions with the Devon Integrated Care Board (ICB) regarding fair funding remain a top priority for our charity. During 2023/24, Hospiscare only received 15% of our annual funding from the ICB, the statutory body responsible for allocating government healthcare funding within the county. This is in comparison to the national average of 27%. Further information on our fair funding campaign can be found on p22 or online at [www.hospiscare.co.uk/fair](http://www.hospiscare.co.uk/fair).

To increase revenue from our retail operation, we've taken steps to improve the customer experience and to increase the range of goods available in our shops, including vintage clothing and white goods.

To maximise growth from existing fundraising streams, we've invested in corporate fundraising and we promote more partnerships where the relationships are mutually beneficial and long-lasting. We are also commissioning new advertising for our gifts in Wills funding stream, and are providing a free will-writing service to supporters.



## Create a workplace that is fit for the future

Digital ways of working are at the heart of a modern workplace. As part of Hospiscare's digital strategy, we are in the process of migrating to a cloud-based system to allow staff to work more flexibly, to ensure the system is more robust, both from a connectivity and storage perspective, and to improve security. This change will bring long term savings to our charity and help us to develop our people management systems.

Another vital strand in future-proofing our workplace has been improving the sustainability of our environmental and financial practices. Our Estates Team has rolled out a programme of LED light installations at our retail warehouse to reduce costs and emissions, is overhauling the way we manage waste and is introducing a new recycling system at Searle House.

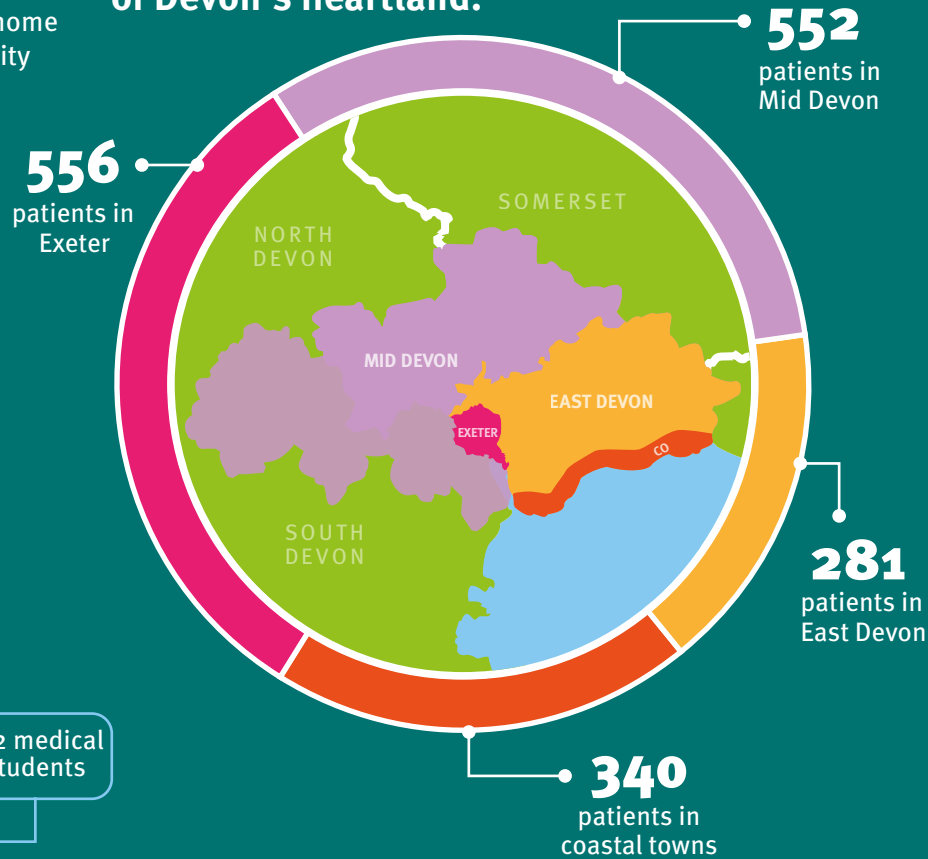
As we have several sites across the heart of Devon, we need to ensure our buildings are fit for purpose. We introduced an e-registration system at Searle House which has improved the flow of staff and visitors through our reception area. Discussions are also in place to install a digital catering system at Searle House to manage out-of-hours requests.



# Our Year in Numbers



Our care spans 1,028 square miles of Devon's heartland.



**151 students** undertook placements at Hospiscare

132 medical students

1 Occupational Therapist

2 Trainee Nurse Associates

15 nursing students

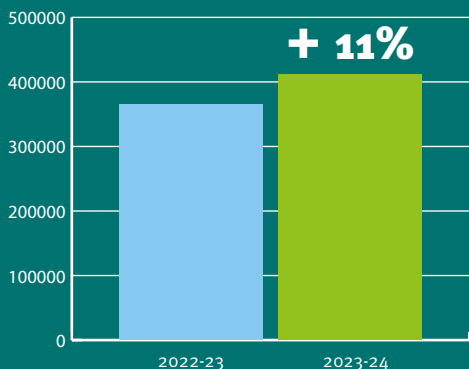
1 Social Worker

**Over 55,000 hours donated by 571 dedicated volunteers**



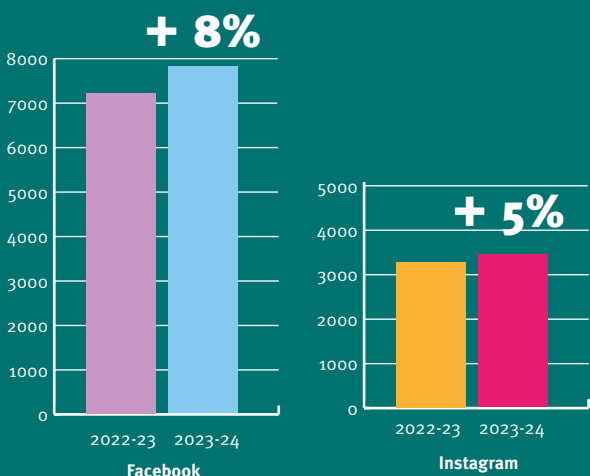
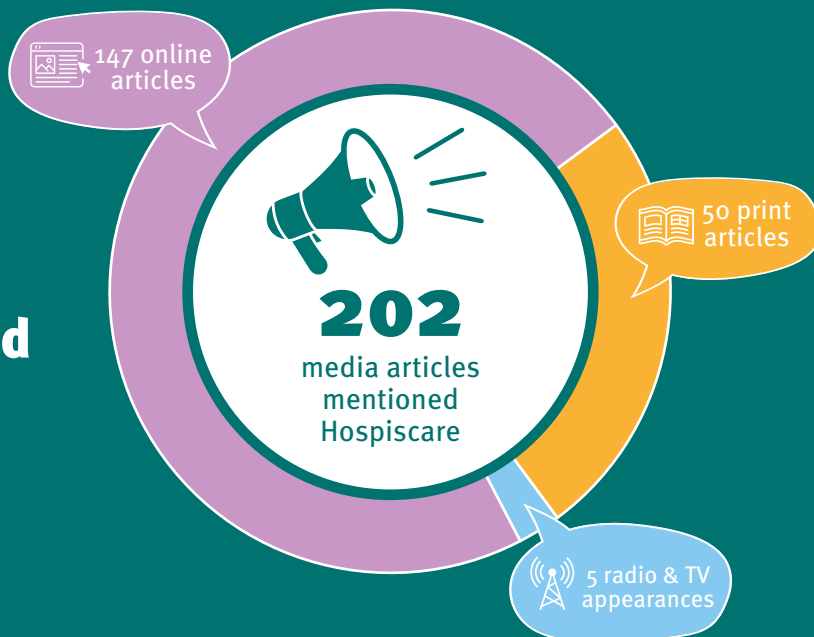
327 volunteers in retail roles

# Awareness of our work is growing

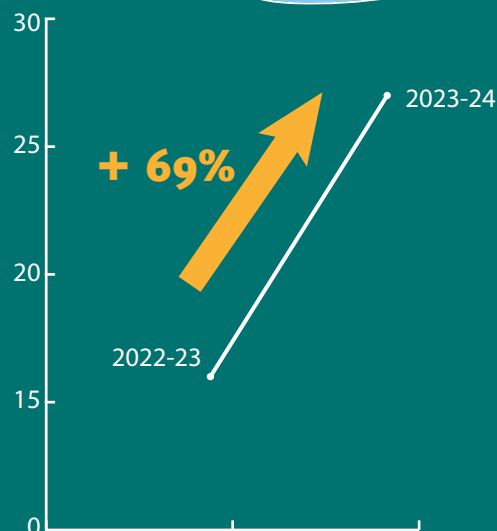


**Our website received 411,000 views**

an increase of 11% from the previous year



**Our audience on social media is growing**



**We provided more than double the amount of external training courses in 2023/24**



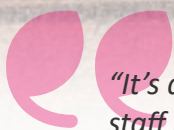
149 volunteers in fundraising roles



133 volunteers in patient support roles

13 volunteers in trustee roles

# Our Care



*"It's a testament to the skill, dedication and hard work of our staff members and the support of our volunteers at Hospiscare that our services have been rated by CQC as outstanding. I'm particularly proud that our specialist care was noted by inspectors to be 'exceptionally effective and responsive.'"*

Ann Rhys, Clinical Director at Hospiscare

## An outstanding result

We are proud to announce that Hospiscare has been rated as outstanding by the Care Quality Commission, the regulatory body for healthcare services. The news comes following an inspection of our hospice by the CQC between January and April 2024.

Hospiscare is rated as outstanding in the categories of well-led, caring, response and effective and good in the category of safe, with an overall verdict of outstanding, Inspectors praised our hospice as “exceptionally effective”.

Inspectors noted that Hospiscare patients felt they were treated with dignity and that the care we provided was flexible, well-coordinated and respectful of patient choices and views. The report also found that our outreach work and partnerships provided palliative care for those in society who might otherwise struggle to access it.

Hospiscare’s Clinical Director, Ann Rhys, continues “I’d like to thank our supporters in the local community who fund our charity through donations, playing our lottery, shopping in our charity shops and leaving a gift in their wills. It’s thanks to their generosity that we’re able to provide our services to those in need of expert end-of-life care, free of charge.”

## Caring for all our patients’ needs

We are proud to be able to offer a highly skilled multi-disciplinary team (MDT), which includes palliative medicine consultants, advanced nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, admiral nurse, palliative care paramedics and allied healthcare professionals. We also have many volunteers who work alongside our clinicians to give holistic support to our patients.

Our teams support and treat patients who have complex physical, psycho-social and spiritual symptoms seven days a week. This support could be in the form of home visits, telephone or video consultations or via clinics to provide support and ongoing assessment. An overnight telephone advice service is available for patients and those close to them. Healthcare professionals can also access this service for out-of-hours specialist support and guidance.

Through our close links with the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital, our team of consultants and doctors also visit patients on the hospital wards, attend MDT meetings and offer advice.

## Our doors are open to everyone

As part of our work on equality, diversity and inclusivity, we presented at the national Hospice UK conference in November 2023 on our homeless community project. This was a collaboration with local homelessness charity, St Petrock’s, with the aim of ensuring our “doors are open” to all members of our local community.

Exeter has a large homelessness problem. 73% of the homeless community have a physical health issue and rough sleepers have a reduced mortality age compared with the national average. We wanted to ensure that Exeter’s homeless community are aware of the support we provide.

Thanks to grant funding, we have been able to establish training with St Petrock’s staff as well as drop-in clinics and monthly walkabout visits to directly reach this vulnerable group. To date, seven patients have been actively supported as part of this project, with two dying in the hospice. We now have a greater understanding of the complexities of the homeless and vulnerable housing community, and our processes are more flexible to ensure they don’t create barriers to our care.

## Challenges within healthcare

The health and social care system has entered the most turbulent time in its NHS history, and this has a direct impact on the care our patients receive from local healthcare services.

As a hospice team, we work alongside colleagues within the NHS and see on a day-to-day basis how, despite the many advances in NHS care over the past 75 years, social and economic vulnerability has led to access and provision becoming stretched, with increasing demand and a reducing workforce.

Over the past three years there have been major changes to the healthcare landscape which have inevitably impacted on us as a charity and provider of specialist palliative care.

Due to increases in costs and a reduced level of funding, we have had to review our services. This resulted in the difficult decision to reduce the number of beds on our ward, as well as changing our weekend clinical services and the services we provide in patients’ homes.



## The legacy of COVID-19

For many, the national lockdowns are a distant and somewhat surreal memory, but the aftershock of the pandemic continues to be felt by our healthcare system.

Data has demonstrated that during the lockdowns, there was a 50% drop in A&E presentations for heart attacks, leading to an increase in heart failure, alongside 50,000 missed oncology diagnoses. Our recent referrals reflect this impact, with the average time from referral to our service to death being just 11 days.

In addition, due to the isolation inflicted on people at this time, those living with dementia either saw a significant worsening of symptoms and/or deterioration in their physical health. Deaths from dementia including Alzheimer's is now the leading cause of death in the UK. Our Admiral nurse works

closely with our specialist clinical teams to ensure the most appropriate care and support is given to this group of people and their carers. Post-COVID, the demand for this specialist support has increased and will continue to be a focus for us due to our local demographics.

## Caring for Devon's ageing population

The Chief Medical Officer's 2023 annual report highlighted the increasing demand of an ageing population and a need for a focus on future care provision. Projections show a significant increase in both over 65s and 85s in Devon in the next ten years. This will undoubtedly impact on the requirements for specialist palliative care. Along with a cultural shift towards people wishing to remain at home at the end of life, we will need to be able to respond to this wave of change.

As well as our ageing population, we're seeing an

increase in the complexity of our patients' diagnoses, with the majority of our patients having two or more conditions simultaneously present. Estimates suggest that 15-30% of the population is now living with more than one chronic condition, and this is rising.

## Cost-of-living crisis

Over the past year, we've faced soaring energy costs alongside increases in the cost of fuel, food and fair wages for our dedicated staff.

With no further support packages available from the government, our energy costs increased in September 2023 when we reached the end of our utility contract, and we have seen a staggering 50% increase in fuel costs from the previous year. We implemented Agenda for Change (the current NHS grading and pay system) to stabilise our recruitment. This, combined with the subsequent NHS pay increase, had a significant impact on our costs with an annual increase of £606,000.

We were able to mitigate the rise in utility and food costs by increasing our use of energy-efficient LED lighting and continuing our hybrid working policy to allow for less office usage, as well as significantly reducing our staff and visitor food menu.

Our patients and their loved ones are not only facing the life-changing news of a terminal diagnosis, they must now also navigate this journey with increased financial pressure.

We are supporting more patients and their loved ones with applications for financial support grants. Recently, we were successful in securing funding for transport to allow a teenage son to visit his dad at home before he died. Our clinical team have also reported that patients are accessing food banks and applying for gift vouchers for supermarkets. We have supported families by discussing energy prices as the need to heat our patients' homes for longer periods has had a significant impact, with some patients being admitted to our ward for a warm place to stay.

In 2023, Hospiscare worked with Citizens Advice Exeter on a pilot project to support our patients' family members and carers with their financial issues, the most prominent of which was applying for and receiving financial benefits. The pilot project empowered most of the relatives or carers with the information to take the necessary steps to claim these benefits themselves. It also identified a clear area of need and as a result, we will have a Citizen's Advice advisor working with us on a weekly basis from June 2024.



## Fair funding

According to data from Hospice UK, England's adult hospices have faced a real-terms cut in their government funding of £47 million in the past two years, and UK hospices are on track to spend almost £200 million more on delivering their care than they will receive in income.

In 2023, we launched a public campaign to address the shortfall of our income from the Devon Integrated Care Board (ICB). The hospice costs almost £10 million a year to run. The ICB provides just 15% of our funding, well below the national average of 27% that other hospices receive. This means we rely on the incredible generosity of local people to continue our vital work and fund over 80% of our costs.

In response Devon ICB finally awarded Hospiscare with a one-off funding contribution of £480,000. While the payment is welcomed, it still leaves a huge deficit and is not enough to stave off service cuts.

As a result, we will begin the 2024/25 financial year with a funding deficit of £2.5 million which has forced us to reduce the number of beds on our specialist ward and cut back our weekend community services.

# Maintaining our Standards



*“We found Ges in his bed, where he’d probably been for two days. He hadn’t been eating or drinking and didn’t really understand where he was and what was going on.”*

Suspecting sepsis, a life-threatening reaction to an infection, Hospiscare paramedic, Patch, called for an ambulance. Ges was given emergency treatment before returning home where he continues to be cared for by the Hospiscare team.

As a healthcare charity, we are registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The CQC’s five lines of enquiry – caring, responsive, effective, safe and well-led – form the basis of our care. We are proud to have retained our ‘outstanding’ rating following the CQC’s inspection of our hospice at the beginning of 2024.



## Caring

We are committed to providing the highest level of care to our patients and their families. In order to do this, it is vital that our staff receive the most up-to-date training. As part of this, our teams are working through the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism.

To maintain the high standard of our care, it is essential that we seek the views of our patients and their family members. iWantGreatCare is an independent healthcare rating scheme that enables patients and those close to them to give anonymous feedback on our services. In 2023/24, we received 306 responses across our services with an average rating of 4.96 out of five.

## Responsive

We continue to monitor our data and patient feedback to ensure our clinical provision is responding to our patients' needs. As part of this, we recently expanded our paramedic roles across the community to respond to any sudden deterioration in our patients.

In response to the quality of information recorded on new patient referrals, we decided to change the way patients are referred to our service. We began offering a new telephone referral service to the Royal Devon and Exeter University Hospital (RDUH) teams to ensure that all information was accurately captured at the time of referral. This gives the RDUH teams the option of discussing any concerns they may have regarding a patient and allows our teams to triage the patient with no time lost seeking further information from the referrer.

## Effective

Hospiscare was one of 69 hospices who took part in the National End-of-Life Care (NELC) audit. The results were very positive for us and gave us clear evidence about the very high standard of care being delivered across all our clinical teams. The need for two main improvements were noted by the audit. The first was for clearer documentation of conversations which take place on the ward when prescribing medications for patients which may cause sleepiness. The second was to ensure that written leaflets were given to all families explaining the changes that happen in the last few days of life, rather than just relying on a verbal explanation. We are working to implement these changes to ensure that we are operating at the highest level.

Four of our nurses presented a time and motion study at the Hospice UK conference in November 2023 entitled: Releasing Time to Care in Palliative Care. The study aimed to understand how the hospice Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) utilised their time

with a focus on identifying any inefficiencies and reallocating this time to direct patient care. 70% of our working clinical team participated in the study and the results showed that a large amount of time is spent on administration, communication and management duties. This may be improved by analysing systems within the service to reduce duplication of work and inefficient processes. A digitalisation strategy is being introduced to consider the use of virtual and AI approaches to care, alongside a group focusing on email management. This work is ongoing but provides valuable information to allow us to further explore and re-evaluate current roles, releasing time to care including utilising volunteers and considering more non-traditional roles within our MDTs.

## Safe

In response to COVID and the resulting increase in the number of referrals, and complexity of referrals, our clinical team developed the Hospiscare Clinical Escalation Activity Tool (HEAT). The tool was needed to ensure clinical safety and effective patient care at all times by safeguarding the wellbeing and capacity of teams throughout periods of heightened activity.

There are a range of safe staffing and dependency tools within the health and social care world, but within the hospice sector there is no specific tool which focuses on our speciality. As a result, we would often try to fit into other moulds which did not always consider the complexities of our specialist services.

HEAT uses a risk assessment matrix to calculate the status for each day. Based on the HEAT level, recommendations are made to the Clinical Director in order to ease the pressure across the organisation.

Since launching HEAT, we have been able to extract data which demonstrates pressure points on our organisation, enabling us to be agile as a service, but also gain an understanding of where the pressures are.

## Well-led

In 2020 during the early part of the pandemic, our Clinical Co-ordination Centre (CCC) was established as the hospice front door to ensure that, however restricted our staffing was, there would always be someone at the end of the phone to support patients and loved ones, as well as healthcare professionals.

Over the past four years, we have developed the CCC and it is now an essential element of our clinical service, operating from 8am to 6pm, seven days a week. The service is staffed by call handlers and registered nurses, with a fluid rotation of community specialist nurses overseeing the day-to-day support and advice.

# Supporting one another



## Meet our nurse, Natalie

*“Hospiscare is unlike anywhere else. I’ve never thought once about working somewhere else – I’ve never felt the need to. I am privileged to be part of what Hospiscare does.”*

*“I’ve been there through all the ups and downs and major changes, but the core of what Hospiscare does has remained the same. We focus on patients at the end of life and give the best possible care we can and that’s never changed.”*

In January 2024, Natalie Mear celebrated 30 years of working as a Hospiscare nurse.

Just a few years after qualifying, Natalie successfully applied for the role of community nurse in the new Hospiscare service that was being set up in Axminster. Natalie’s career has gone from strength to strength and she now leads our Eastern Community Team, managing our nursing teams from Axminster to Exmouth.

## Meet our care navigator volunteer, Viv

*“If people don’t have family members fighting their corner, looking after them and what’s happening to them, then they can feel left by the wayside. They need someone to be their voice when they’re not feeling strong.”*

Viv Menear became a volunteer care navigator in 2023 following the death of her mum. After being her mum’s primary carer, Viv describes feeling “a bit empty” and decided it was time to give something back.

As a care navigator, Viv provides practical and emotional support to patients and their families at home. From helping with everyday tasks such as collecting shopping to accompanying patients on trips, Viv is able to provide comfort and companionship to our patients, as well as respite for their family members and carers.





## Meet our supporter, Steve

*“My wife was brought into the hospice for two weeks at the end of her life. Our children were only two and four at the time. She was given a private room so I could take the children to see her right up until the end. I will never be able to repay Hospiscare for what they did for us.”*

As a widower with two children under five, free time was in short supply for Steve Percy but he was determined to give something back. The family began taking part in bike rides to support our local charity and when the children were older, Steve joined the Otter Vale Friends of Hospiscare. In his many years as a member of the support group, Steve has helped to organise community fundraising events including coffee mornings, plant sales, car boots and bingo nights.

When lockdown brought most of Hospiscare’s fundraising activities to a halt, leaving our charity struggling to cover costs, Steve took action by walking

105 miles in one week in March 2021, raising an incredible £6,384.

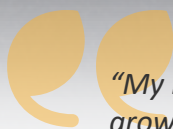
Steve also motivates local businesses to choose Hospiscare as their charity of the year, including Otter Garden Centre, where his daughter works. The team there raised over £14,000 in 2021 and continue to support Hospiscare.

Steve’s incredible efforts in supporting Hospiscare were recognised in 2022 when an attendee of his bingo nights nominated Steve as a baton bearer for the Commonwealth Games.

Steve isn’t the only fundraiser in the family. His fiancée regularly supports his events and his children have undertaken their own fundraising activities for Hospiscare. In 2023, Steve’s daughter Lauren braved a skydive, as well as recreating her dad’s 100-mile walk. To date, they have raised over £16,700 for Hospiscare.

Without amazing supporters like Steve and his family, we simply could not do the work we do.

# Learning and Developing



*“My role will ensure that Hospiscare continues to improve and grow, not just on a local level, but on a national level too. We will be at the forefront of informing best practice for end-of-life care across the country and bringing this level of care to our own hospice.”*

Hospiscare Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Emily Collyer, became our first Research Nurse in January 2024.

## At the forefront of palliative research

Working in partnership with the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), Emily's role as Research Nurse enables Hospiscare to be a research-active organisation. Funded by the NIHR, the role was developed as a response to the growing need for research in end-of-life care.

Emily explains, "Historically, research in palliative care has not been very active. That is all changing now and we are proud to be at the forefront of this driving force."

Emily works collaboratively with other hospices in the South West who are being supported by the NIHR to develop practices within our region. Her role involves engaging our clinical staff body in research, as well as implementing learning from other professionals' research into Hospiscare's practices.

This collaboration is of great benefit to our patients as we continue to learn and develop our service. We are also able to offer our patients the opportunity to participate in research and be a part of improving palliative care for all.

## Training the next generation

As specialists in end-of-life care, a vital part of our mission is passing on our expertise to the next generation of medical professionals.

As well as a vast range of training opportunities available to our staff and volunteers across all areas of our charity, Hospiscare also provides placements to medical students and nurses.

In 2023, we widened our training offer and provided education and training to student paramedics, occupational therapists and social work students.

All of our courses are now available to book via the Hospiscare website, and we have seen an increase in external learners attending our training due to this.

## Collaborating to create opportunities

Over the last year we have collaborated with the University of Exeter as primary partners in a research project entitled 'Creative Toolkit'. This project is aimed at using creativity to support the wellbeing of healthcare workers in response to the increase in stress levels and difficulty in accessing wellbeing resources that stemmed from the pandemic.

In 2023, we piloted two Creative Toolkit face-to-face workshops. We invited 18 staff members and volunteers to try out a range of art forms, including collage, clay modelling and poetry, to facilitate reflection, community building and wellbeing.

The response was overwhelmingly positive, with 95% of attendees reporting feeling more confident in using creative methods. Those who attended described a range of benefits, including opportunities for team building and self-reflection, as well as feeling grounded, restored and valued.

The research from these pilots led to the creation of an online interactive library of creative resources. A poster from the project was displayed at the recent European Association for Palliative Care World Research Congress in Barcelona. We also collaborated further with the University on their BBC-featured annual exhibition 'The Art and Culture of Nursing' and this project continues to strengthen links between Hospiscare and the University of Exeter, with new initiatives planned.

In 2024, we evolved the Creative Toolkit workshops into Hospiscare's new Rest and Reflection Days where members of staff can spend the day taking part in a variety of creative activities to support their wellbeing.

Due to the challenging nature of our work, it is important that our staff engage in regular clinical supervision – taking time out of practice to reflect on the work they do so that they can return to it feeling fully refreshed and resourced. We conducted a clinical supervision survey to ensure staff are getting the support they need, and in response to this, we developed a 'supervision menu' to allow staff to access the supervision that suits them. We also trained a number of our staff to facilitate groups and one-to-one support, and established a regular Creative Clinical Supervision group at Searle House with plans to extend this across our hubs.

## From April 2023 to March 2024



711

hours of training were provided to medical students



173

workshops and courses were delivered in-person or digitally



151

students undertook placements at Hospiscare

# Looking Ahead



Our 2023-26 strategic plan outlines four key areas of activity that we use to manage our objectives and achieve our mission.

In our 2022/23 Impact Report, we identified key challenges and took substantial steps to address them. This work continues. Despite our funding shortfall, our priority remains to provide quality, holistic care for local people in need, with our patients and their loved ones at the heart of all we do.

This section outlines the priorities for each of our strategic areas in 2024/25.

## Care

**Ensure care is individualised, responsive, and accessible.**

- In 2024/25, we're participating in a county-wide review of end-of-life care services alongside NHS Devon and neighbouring hospices.
- We'll adapt our services according to evolving patient needs, ensuring care is provided by the right person, in the right place, at the right time.
- Our new at-home rapid response service launches in autumn 2024, increasing patient access to at-home care across our catchment area.

## **Listen to our patients and those close to them.**

- Implement patient and carer groups focusing on experience and safety, expand symptom control groups, and strengthen community-based bereavement groups and social activities.

## **Engage and educate our partners and communities to champion expert end-of-life care.**

- Expand our education programme for medical students, health professionals, and care givers.
- Provide placements for junior doctors and allied healthcare professionals.
- Build on our partnerships with other local charities with shared goals and values.

## **Adopt innovative and flexible ways of working to improve efficiency.**

- Increase evidence-based knowledge to inform best practice.
- Explore implementing virtual wards, starting with a virtual admission triage process.

## **Income**

### **Engage and develop relationships with strategic funding partners.**

- Continue discussions with the Devon Integrated Care Board on equitable statutory funding and campaign for a national review of hospice funding.
- Invest in key supporter networks.

### **Improve our customer experience to increase revenue from our retail estate.**

- Focus on customer experience, seek new stores in strategic locations, and increase stock variety.
- Evolve our e-commerce offerings, establish new partnerships, and find new ways to reuse and recycle.

### **Develop opportunities to maximise growth from existing fundraising streams.**

- Invest in our charity lottery and Gifts in Wills fundraising programme.
- Grow our established community-based campaigns and test new income generation activities.

### **Identify and invest in new business development opportunities.**

- Develop and expand our retail operation and consider other opportunities as they arise.

## **People**

### **Identify effective ways to recruit and retain staff and volunteers, and improve inclusivity.**

- Establish our 'Volunteer Voice' forum and a programme of volunteer events.
- Invest in competitive pay benchmarked with comparable organisations.
- Evolve our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group and deliver our EDI action plan.
- Introduce new ways to gain feedback from our staff and volunteers.

### **Develop our wellbeing offer to ensure a healthy working life for staff and volunteers.**

- Use the results of our MIND survey to evolve our wellbeing support.
- Seek staff feedback on our wellbeing programme.

### **Ensure staff and volunteers have access to learning and development, enabling us to remain expert and specialist.**

- Use feedback to update our staff and volunteer learning & development programmes.
- Continue to enhance our clinical skills training.

## **Place**

### **Implement a digital strategy that supports a modern workplace.**

- Move to a cloud-based environment to increase resilience and cost-effectiveness, and future-proof our systems.
- Set up a Digital Working Group to advise on and embed new digital systems.

### **Ensure our buildings are fit for purpose, welcoming, and meet our future needs.**

- Measure the sustainability of our buildings using an industry-standard process.
- Gather feedback on our buildings from patients and their families, staff, and volunteers.

### **Drive efficiency to support environmental and financial sustainability.**

- Develop our waste management system to reduce landfill and collection costs.
- Implement learning from our energy efficiency survey and work towards the Green Accord accreditation and implement our carbon management plan.

# Funding our Care

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## Fundraising during a financial crisis

As a result of the acute financial challenges that our charity is facing (detailed on p15), fundraising is more important than ever before. The generosity and dedication of our local community has been unwavering, despite the financial challenges that they themselves may face. From holding Coffee Mornings and opening gardens to braving challenges such as skydives, marathons and treks, our supporters have made an incredible difference to our hospice at this difficult time.

By the end of 2023/24, our financial position was a deficit of £2,540,000, an improvement of £892,000 compared to budget. This was due to an increase in our fundraising income (£115,000), income generated from the provision of education (£118,000), additional contribution from the ICB (£203,000) and an increased retail contribution (£118,000) compared to budget, as well as savings achieved across the organisation (£365,000) during the financial year.

Gifts left in Wills to Hospiscare raised £1,427,000 in 2023/24. These special gifts continue to play a vital – but variable – role in the income needed to deliver our care. We believe in planning ahead, and to make this process as accessible and straightforward as possible we signed up to a free will-making service in 2024. Octopus Legacy enables our supporters to easily draft their Wills online, over the phone or face to face, giving peace of mind that their last wishes will be followed.

Community fundraising in 2023/24 saw its most successful year since the pandemic, with huge support for our Open Gardens programme and a busy spring and summer as supporters put on their own events activities. Personal challenges were also very popular with a rise in people taking on running, cycling, trekking and ski-diving endeavours.

Local businesses succeeded in raising the largest amount of funds ever for Hospiscare. Our corporate 40 Club raised £117,938 through activities which primarily involved staff engagement within their organisation and across their business networks. We continue to raise funds from applications to grants and private foundations and would like to thank the Wolfson Foundation for funding the new patient entrance to our ward and the Norman Family Trust for funding the consumable items for patients on our ward.

In 2023/24, our retail operation saw significant development. We expanded our retail offering with a new pop-up shop on Sidwell Street in Exeter and relocated our Tiverton shop to a larger unit in the town. These changes were driven by the need to increase our presence in key areas and enhance customer accessibility.

Our income streams from both our physical shops and e-commerce showed notable growth. Sales from our physical stores increased by 13% from the previous year. Our online sales surged by 36%. This positive trajectory is anticipated to continue with a budgeted increase of 22% for the 2024/25 financial year. This growth is attributed to our strategic focus on new ways of working and exploration of additional marketplaces while also improving online customer experience.



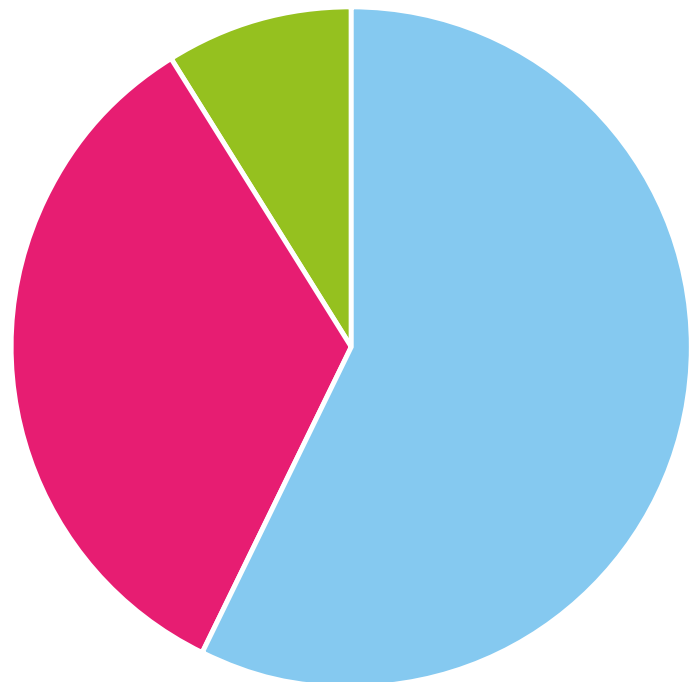
# How we funded our services in 2023/24



- Reserves (£2.93m)**  
 Hospiscare used savings generated in previous years to fund the provision of services during 2023/24. While this is normal for a charity, the scale of use was unusual and demonstrates the severity of the funding challenge facing the organisation.
- Fundraising (£2.31m)**  
 Income generated through the incredible generosity of our supporters through fundraising events, general donations and corporate partnerships.
- Gifts in Wills (£1.43m)**  
 This is from individuals leaving a lasting legacy to support local end-of-life care.
- NHS Contribution (£1.42m)**  
 The local NHS contributed 15% of our running costs compared to a national average of 27%.
- Other forms of income (£1.40m)**  
 Contributions received from our lottery (£301k), partner charities (£342k), retail (£254k), provision of education (£204k) and other sources of income (£294k).

# How we spent our money in 2023/24

- Community Nursing (£4.5m)**  
 Our community nurses visited over 1,800 patients, providing care and tailored support to them and their loved ones in the place of their choice. Where it is the patient’s wish, we will also support them to die at home.
- Specialist Ward (£2.66m)**  
 We provided care for 244 patients on our specialist ward in Exeter.
- Other Clinical (£0.69m)**  
 We provided supportive care, including occupational, physio and complementary therapy and bereavement support and counselling to patients and their families.



*During the year, we spent £1.61m on raising money. This generated a total of £2.89m of income through donations, corporate sponsorship, gifts in Wills, and lottery contributions.*

# We couldn't do this without you

*Our tree grows and grows  
With every kindness you show  
Hope still in blossom.*



Thank you to every single person who has helped Hospiscare make every day matter.



**5,406**

meals served to patients on our specialist ward by our ward support volunteers



**£117,938**

raised by the Hospiscare 40 Club in 2023



**50**

talks were delivered across the heart of Devon by our Community Fundraisers



**1,212**

Christmas trees collected and recycled, raising a phenomenal £30,981

42

gardeners opened their gates and shared their green spaces for our Open Gardens



586,778

items of homeware were sold by our shops

Over

1,400

people took part in Men's Walk in March 2024



42

Hospiscare Heroes' blogs celebrated our supporters' achievements



1,963

people donated to Hospiscare in memory of a loved one



90

Facebook fundraising pages were created to raise money for Hospiscare



34

people took to the skies for a wing walk or skydive for Hospiscare



Over

450

people stepped out for our first ever Summer Walk in July 2023



## **Help make every day matter, now and in the future**

We have remained by the side of our community for over forty years and this is largely thanks to people who think of us when making their Will.

**Discover the power of a gift in your Will today**

Call Louise on 01392 688020 or  
email [legacyinfo@hospiscare.co.uk](mailto:legacyinfo@hospiscare.co.uk)