



ACHIEVING OUR POTENTIAL TOGETHER

Strategy
2023-2028



NHS
CHARITIES
TOGETHER



Join us!
To find out more and to get involved
visit nhscharitiestogether.co.uk

OUR STRATEGY ON A PAGE

OUR VISION

A future with a thriving NHS and the best possible healthcare for everyone.



OUR MISSION

We mobilise the collective power of NHS charities and the nation to help the NHS go further for patients, staff and communities – ensuring extra support goes where it's most needed and enabling the NHS to advance in a rapidly changing world.



OUR IMPACT VALUES

Inclusive:

We build inclusive relationships with diverse stakeholders, sharing our time, knowledge and skills to create partnerships that support each other, our members and the NHS.

Make a difference:

We remain focused on making a positive difference for our members and the NHS, based on evidence and insights on what works the best.

Pioneering:

We dare to be different and are constantly curious, asking questions to uncover what needs to be done so that we can have most impact.

Authentic:

We are open, honest and act with integrity in all that we do.

Compassionate:

We care about people and treat everyone with equity, kindness, respect, empathy, and support; we put heart into all we do and how we care for the NHS.

Transformative:

We actively champion innovation and transformational leadership, and we advocate for change, bringing supportive challenge to ourselves and others.



ACHIEVING IMPACT

The change we want to maximise as a sector:

Transforming patient experience and outcomes.

Supporting workforce wellbeing through caring for NHS staff and volunteers.

Supporting people to live well, through preventing ill health and holistic management of long-term conditions.

NHS Charities Together enablers of change:

Evolving our role as a centre of knowledge, insight and expertise – building our collective capability.

Delivering and facilitating approaches to grow impact and voice.

Leading innovative and transformational programmes.

Being a sustainable and purpose led organisation.

INTRODUCTION

About us

NHS Charities Together is the national charity for everyone who uses, cares about and works in the NHS. We have a unique relationship with the NHS and a unique role as the membership organisation for the over 200 NHS charities across the UK. This means that we can deliver effective, rapid change through our network – together helping the NHS to deliver the very best outcomes and experiences for the people who use it and work in it.

NHS charities impact on the lives of millions of people each year, investing upwards of £1million a day in approaches that improve health, healthcare and wellbeing. The diversity of the sector is extensive, with NHS charities supporting hospitals, health boards, ambulance trusts, mental health trusts and community health services right across the UK.

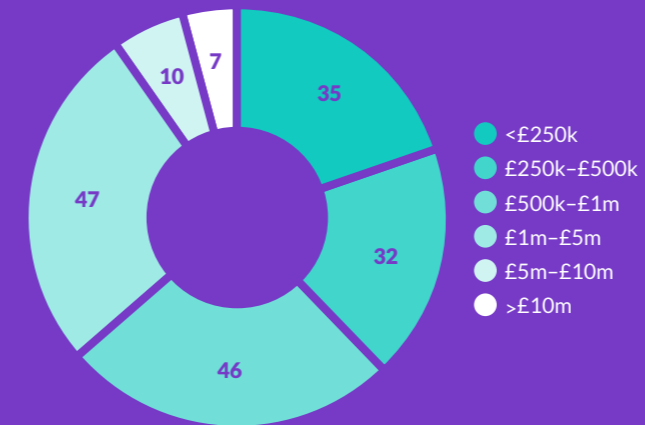
NHS charities help the NHS to go further, by investing in new ways of working, innovations, projects and interventions that help to deliver improvements and enhancements.

NHS Charities Together is here to support NHS charities to reach their individual goals, to grow and learn together and deliver benefits for patients, communities and the workforce.

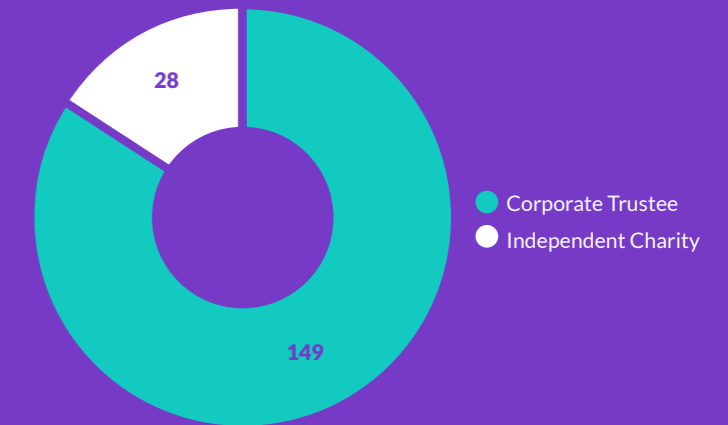
Our position as a national charity also enables us to play a distinct role in the delivery of programmes and activities that impact on the outcomes that are important to all of us.

The Diversity of the NHS Charity Sector

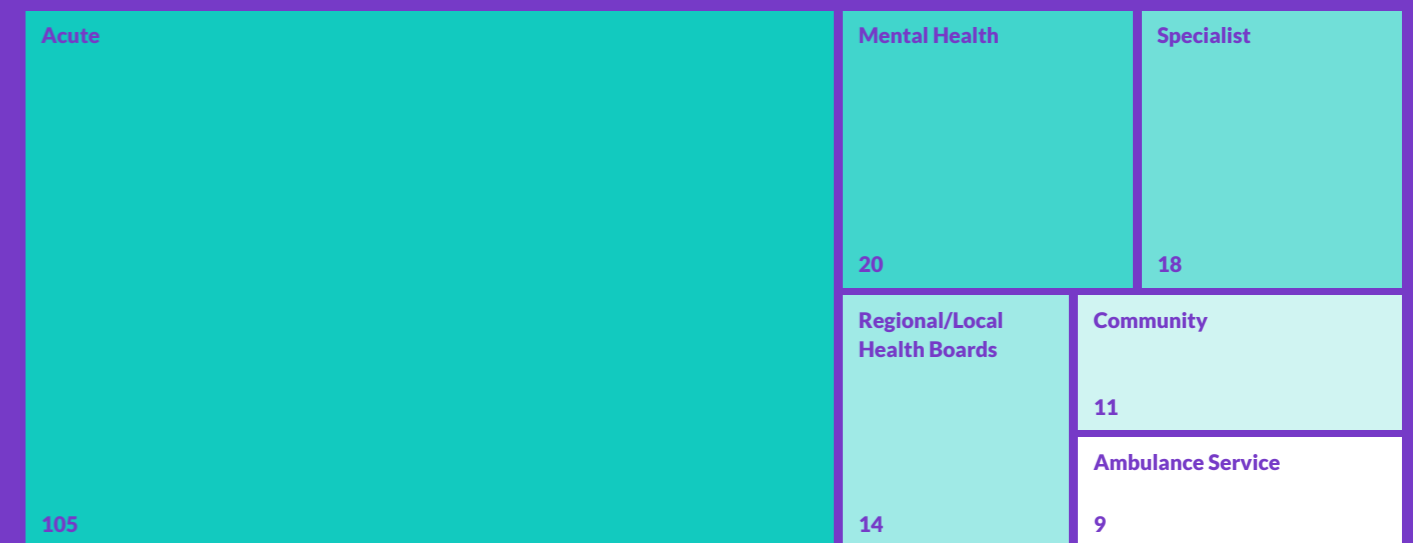
Income



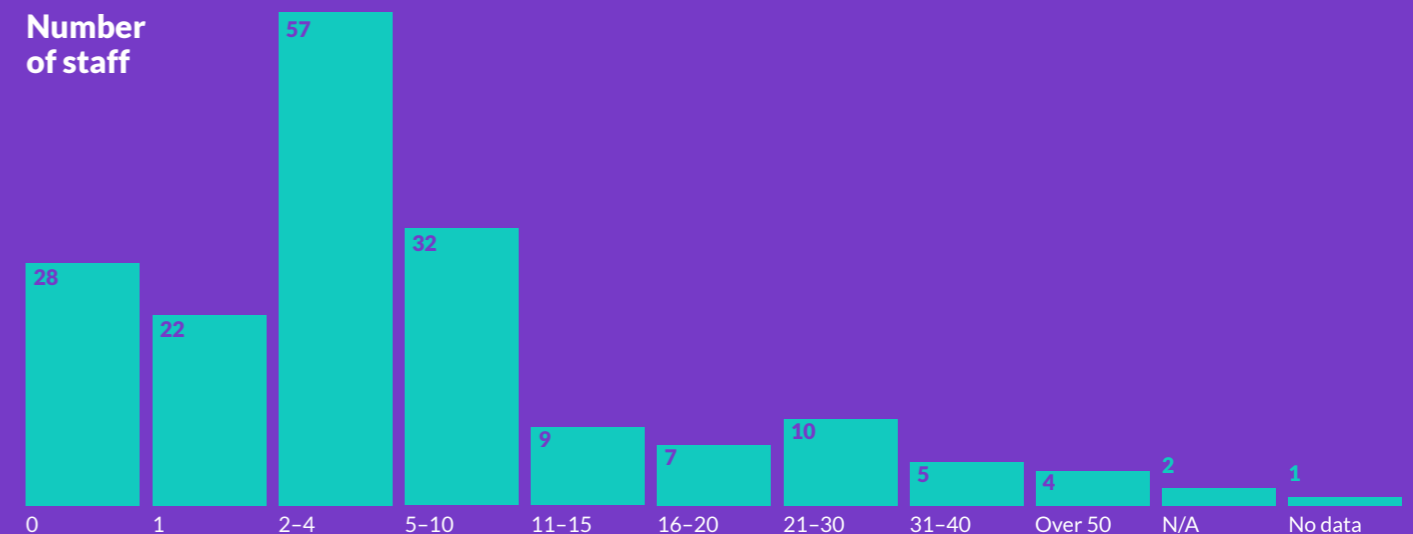
Corporate or Independent



Nature of the Trust or Health Board



Number of staff



Note: Based on data from 177 NHS charities.

Our refreshed strategy

Context:

As the country and the NHS emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, this refreshed strategy builds upon previous iterations, reflects learning and takes account of the new policy context. In its creation we have engaged with over 70% of our network and listened to the views of a range of key stakeholders from across the health and care system. It creates the framework for sustainable ways of working for the future, setting out our new approaches, our relationships with NHS charities and other key

Purpose:

This strategy is our statement of intent, setting out, primarily for members, how we will work and where we will focus our efforts over the next five years, recognising that our key strength is our collective potential. It will underpin all our work and our communications – building from this, we will develop further publications aimed at our supporters, the general public and other key stakeholders, along with more detailed narrative relating to the ambitions outlined in this strategy.

Next steps:

Whilst launching our refreshed strategy represents a significant milestone, it is now that the real work begins. Over the coming months, we will review our current ways of working and our programmes of work, developing operational plans to underpin delivery in partnership with members and other key stakeholders.

As we emerge from the challenges our sector faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, we also recognise the need to build and prioritise all of our relationships. Going forward, all of our approaches, from grant making to fundraising,

stakeholders, and how we can work to help the NHS tackle the challenges it faces.

This strategy both outlines how we can work as a network of NHS charities to affect the things that matter most, and how we can work nationally as NHS Charities Together, to be an effective and important strategic partner to government, arms-length bodies and other organisations that share our values and ambitions.

Our strategy has two key ambitions:

- Maximise the impact of the NHS charity sector, coalescing with members around the change we want to see and working together in more collaborative ways.
- Maximise the impact of NHS Charities Together as a national charity, making our distinct contribution as outlined in this strategy.

will be underpinned by strong relationships with members and partners who can work with us to achieve common goals. We are also re-emphasising our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, across all our work; as well as prioritising the planet through our approaches to sustainability.

Our strategy will not be static, it will evolve with the environment within which we operate and as we learn from evaluation of progress. We will underpin the next stage of our work with the principles of co-design, co-production and collaboration with members at the heart of everything we do.



“

The NHS charity sector is built on mutual support and guidance, and our ability to challenge and grow our collective capacity to support people who work and volunteer for the NHS, and to help people to get well, live well and stay well.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, NHS charities were at the forefront of supporting NHS staff, volunteers and patients during the most challenging time in its history. I believe this demonstrates that we are at our best when we work together with common goals and under a clear identity. This is why, in the 75th year of the NHS, I am so excited to launch our refreshed strategy.

Ellie Orton OBE

Chief Executive, NHS Charities Together

”

ACHIEVING IMPACT AS A SECTOR

The change we want to see

Over the next five years we will work together with members to enhance the impact of our network with a focus on three areas of change. This focus harnesses the areas that matter most to all of us across the breadth of the network of NHS charities and provides the framework around which we can all coalesce. They also highlight the distinct position we have as NHS Charities Together both to facilitate change and to connect our impact into strategic conversations at a national level, supporting adoption, spread and scale.

IMPACT AREA	WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?
Transforming patient experience and outcomes	New technologies and interventions can transform patient care, but the NHS struggles to effectively adopt innovation at scale. Without evidence, ideas and initiatives that could save and change lives never get off the ground. Under pressure, the holistic needs of patients, carers and families can be overlooked.
Supporting workforce wellbeing	The UK is facing a health and care workforce crisis, with unprecedented staff shortages and vacancies. Huge numbers of nurses and doctors report plans to leave their professions. Burnout is affecting not only staff wellbeing, but the quality of patient care.
Supporting people and communities to live well	Research shows that the social determinants can be more important than health care or lifestyle choices in influencing health. Inequalities in life expectancy and in years spent in ill health are increasing. Around 70% of health and social care funding is spent on supporting people with long term conditions.

Our ways of working

Our experience during the COVID-19 pandemic has built our position both as a membership organisation with an unrivalled network of charities reaching right across the NHS and as a national charity with the capacity and capability to develop and deliver high quality, impactful programmes that provide real benefits for patients, communities and the NHS workforce.

Our network is our key distinctiveness, being able to reach almost any part of the UK health system. Our position as a national charity enables us to take a holistic, longer-term, bigger picture view, whilst members' exceptional connection into the frontline means that, together, we can mobilise in response to pressing challenges, and try out new ideas.

Key to our approach is our relationships. Through implementation of our strategy, we will evolve the relationship with members towards one that is more explicitly based upon shared ambitions, trust and mutual recognition of our distinct roles, and the value that we all bring to the collective. We will unleash our combined potential to make real and tangible differences to patients, communities and the NHS workforce.

Our network is incredibly diverse, both in its makeup and its views and priorities. This means that consensus won't always be possible, but our commitment is to listen and learn, to work with transparency and integrity and to create spaces for candid ongoing conversation. When we speak on behalf of members, we will do so with credibility, authenticity and nuance, but not shy away from highlighting the issues that matter. The services and support we offer to members will be collaboratively designed, tailored and fundamentally developmental in nature. Our grant making will become increasingly relational, and we will ensure that processes are equitable and inclusive.

Our fundraising activity will seek to grow overall investment in the sector whilst simultaneously securing our own sustainability, enabling us to maximise overall impact. We will embed diverse approaches to income generation, being considerate in our approaches and reviewing their impact, listening to and collaborating with members. We will support members to build their own capacity and capability, enabling them to grow their income.

ACHIEVING IMPACT AS NHS CHARITIES TOGETHER

As a charity and as a network of organisations we have a particular role to play in inspiring potential, unleashing innovation and creating impact right across the NHS and with the issues that affect the health and wellbeing of our population. How we work is key and we have identified four areas of focus – our enablers of change.

1 Evolving our role as a centre of knowledge, insight and expertise – building our collective capability.

Given our unique position in relation to the NHS and NHS charities, we will build our capacity as a centre of knowledge, insight and expertise.

At the heart of this will be a co-designed and refreshed member offer, ensuring that we have a range of products and services that are relevant to the full spectrum of our membership. Our model will be underpinned by developmental principles that help members move forwards, promoting charity best practice, providing peer support, raising their individual and collective profile, and cementing NHS charities' position as an integral part of the health systems within which they operate.

We will gather insight from across our network in intelligent ways, using analysis to inform and evidence our work with government, arms-length bodies and NHS providers, building strategic partnerships and influencing policy at all levels of the system.

We will adopt approaches that work directly with policy makers and NHS providers to help shape the conditions that allow NHS charities to thrive and be valued, working harmoniously alongside our member offer.

We will work together with member charities to develop strategies to effectively harness their voice. In doing so we will advocate on behalf of the network, championing impact and utilising our brand, engagement and communications activity to raise public awareness of both the role and impact of NHS charities.

Underpinning our refined member offer will be a much deeper understanding of our network. In 2024 we will launch our first 'State of the Sector' report which will be used to benchmark, monitor and evaluate the progress of our network and will provide key insights to inform both our membership development and funding programmes into the future. This will also provide valuable insight to individual member charities.

We will undertake targeted research and publish findings that help build the rationale for, and move forwards with, the key areas of change.

Importantly, this will be done in collaboration with members, recognising that together we capitalise upon the expertise of our collective.

2 Delivering and facilitating approaches to grow impact and voice

We recognise that our strength lies in our collective potential and our ability to move as a network, whilst still taking account of our individuality and diversity. There is much more that we can do to build a greater sense of collaboration and shared movement around the issues that matter most to all of us.

Through our national position and profile we will fundraise to grow investment in our network, in particular accessing funding streams that would not otherwise be available to member charities. We will facilitate joint working and collaboration between members, helping us to unlock additional investment to achieve our goals.

We will undertake national campaigns that will raise the profile of our network, its distinct positioning and of the issues that we collectively seek to address. We will carefully track the impact of our communications and engagement activity.

We will work together with member charities to develop approaches to effectively harness their voice. In doing so we will advocate on behalf of the network, championing impact and utilising our brand, engagement and communications activity to raise public awareness of both the role and impact of NHS charities.

We will create spaces for collaboration and co-production, enabling us to bring our collective resources and expertise to bear in genuinely impactful ways. As a national membership organisation, we will lead boldly, responding to the needs of members and taking our discussions into new areas as the environments within which we operate continue to evolve. We will challenge ourselves and the network to be the best it can be with an unashamed focus on the impact we deliver for the people who use and work for the NHS.

We will continue to build upon opportunities for peer support across the membership, tapping into the inherent altruism that exists across our network to develop the whole. We will also facilitate ownership and leadership from across the sector recognising that we can be much more effective when we act together.

3 Leading innovative and transformational programmes

Around each of our 'areas of change' we will develop a strategic and programmatic approach to delivery. We will start, together with members and other key stakeholders, by defining focused priorities and a theory of change in each area to ensure that our resources are used wisely, our approaches are innovative and outcomes are carefully thought through and evaluated.

We will adopt approaches that enable us to learn in real time, rather than waiting for the conclusion of activity to evaluate it.

Having established key priorities, we will undertake to understand fully the problem we are trying to tackle, drawing on insight from our network and from a range of other evidence sources. We will convene conversations that help us to frame the challenge, the outcomes we can achieve and define the approaches we will need to adopt in order to achieve them.

We know that, on their own, the programmes we deliver together won't fully address the challenges that the NHS faces, but we will step into spaces that allow us to think differently, to create blueprints for new ways of working, support innovation, enable transformation and then facilitate wider adoption, spread and scale. Our unique relationship with the NHS positions us well to achieve this.

A key part of this approach will be a strategic and sustainable programme of grants made available across our network. These grants will allow us to support projects that tackle deep system change, alongside local innovations, but critically we will play a key role maximising collective impact. We will stimulate a notable shift towards more relational models of grant making which will both optimise outcomes and enable us to respond to the diversity of the network, meaning that smaller charities will not be disadvantaged.

Through this approach we will support the network of NHS charities to work in ways that are compatible with the changing and challenging policy environments within which they operate.

4 Being a sustainable and purpose led organisation.

Our experience during the COVID-19 pandemic led to our rapid growth as an organisation, in addition to the opportunities outlined in this strategy. It is important that as we emerge from the pandemic, we ensure that, as an organisation, we are efficient, impactful and purpose led. We will continuously challenge ourselves on these three points.

To enable us to continue to deliver support to members and to lead national programmes that create change for patients, communities and the workforce we will work to ensure a sustainable future. We will be led by our vision, mission and values.

We will challenge ourselves and the sector to champion and practice the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion in all that we do; and play an active role in protecting the future of our planet.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER

This strategy isn't just about NHS Charities Together as an individual organisation, it is about our collective potential and impact. In its design we have worked hard to engage with and listen to members and other stakeholders. This engagement will be continuous and a core part of the way we work going forwards.

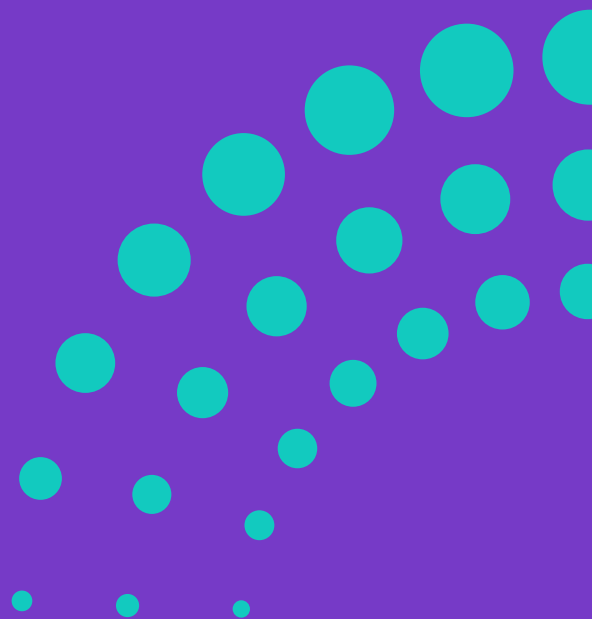
To really maximise our impact, we need to move forward together, confidently and with conviction. There is a commonality that binds us all together in spite of the differing areas of focus across the network. That commonality lies in our collective desire for a future with a thriving NHS and where everyone has access to the best possible healthcare with the broadest possible definition - ensuring that people are able to live their lives starting well, living well and dying well.

Key to this are relationships right across the network. These relationships must be founded on authenticity and trust, with open and candid communication. With those foundations we will work together to build on our experiences of the pandemic and shape a dynamic and impactful future.

To find out more and to get involved visit nhscharitiestogether.co.uk



.....
visit our website:
nhscharitiestogether.co.uk
.....



**NHS
CHARITIES
TOGETHER**