



PUTTING
YOUNG PEOPLE
FIRST

OUR STRATEGY TO 2024

LAKITA'S STORY

Our Strategy is called 'Putting Young People First' so let's hear from Lakita...

"I thought that I was healthier than ever, but I was constantly shattered. I put that down to how busy my life was then (January 2019) and I didn't think too much about it.

The following month I was teaching a class and I felt a lump in my neck. It was so random, and I knew that I needed to get it checked out. The doctor told me that he thought it was a swollen gland.

I was too embarrassed to go back, even when the lump got bigger. But eventually, I had a scan confirming I had Hodgkin's Lymphoma.



I'd googled it and found it could be terminal, but my Teenage Cancer Trust Nurse Hanna told me never to google anything and that it was really treatable. She was so chilled out, normal and calm that she made me feel like this was a normal situation.

"Hanna called my uni for me, reassured them that I could do my treatment and continue my course and ironed everything out. It was the best thing ever to have her looking out for me."

Everyone from Teenage Cancer Trust took the time to listen and remember things about me, especially my Youth Support Co-ordinators Lori and Steve. I had gained five stone during treatment and lost all of my hair; I didn't feel like myself. But when I walked into an event Lori had organised, I realised that no-one there even noticed. I looked around and people looked like me which made me feel better.



I went into remission in November just a few months before the country went into lockdown. I was gutted that I was just getting back onto my feet and then the pandemic changed everything.

When I caught Covid, I was worried about having to isolate and sitting with my thoughts for two weeks because my mental health was bad. I over analysed and over thought everything.

Lori listened to me and set me up with some counselling straight away. Just knowing I can call her makes things much less scary. I don't know what I would do without her and Steve.

I can't imagine having treatment without Teenage Cancer Trust and they totally absolutely smashed the support they have given during the pandemic."

Lakita, 20

WELCOME

Every day, seven more young people like Lakita hear the words ‘you have cancer’. Right at that moment, everything changes – for them, their family and for the life they had planned.

Our job is to ensure they have the best treatment, care and support so that cancer doesn’t stop them from living their lives.

They need our help because:

CANCER CAN HIT YOUNG PEOPLE HARD.

It’s the leading cause of death from disease in teenagers and young adults in the UK.

CANCER IS DIFFERENT WHEN YOU’RE YOUNG.

Young people are already going through a crucial time of change - physically, socially and emotionally - so going through cancer can have a dramatic impact on the rest of their lives.

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH CANCER RISK BEING FORGOTTEN.

They can find themselves shunted into services designed for children or older adults that cannot meet their age group’s unique needs.

AND, TOO OFTEN, THEIR VOICES ARE NOT HEARD.

They don’t have a say on matters which affect them or enough influence on their treatment and care.

Teenage Cancer Trust kicked off in 1990 to change the game for young people with cancer – and that’s exactly what we did. We fought for specialist, age-appropriate care and support for young people with cancer and we’ve made so much progress during that time.

But right now we face a dangerous moment for young people with cancer. As we emerge from a pandemic which has put our health service under unprecedented strain, we risk the gains of the last 30 years being unwound. Not a priority. Not visible. Not important.

In fact, what the pandemic has shown us is a disproportionate impact on young people, so we need to be thinking bigger. More accessible services for every young person with cancer. More advantage taken of new ways to communicate and reach vulnerable, isolated young people. Most of all, more listening to young people’s lived experiences and thoughts about what they need to come through cancer stronger – and acting upon them.

Everything we have done in the past as a charity has been informed by young people’s diverse voices and experiences. Everything we do in the future must be done with young people, rather than simply for them.



This will see us asking some tough questions of ourselves, our partners and decision-makers. Have we asked the right questions of young people and really listened to their answers? Have we involved them in every way we can, at every stage of delivery? And have we given them a strong platform so the right people hear – and act on – what they have to say?

Our aim is that every young person with cancer in the UK has the best treatment, care and support possible so cancer doesn't stop them from living their lives.

**Our strategic objectives
to ensure we achieve
this mean we will:**

FOCUS ON EQUITY,

making our services accessible to all young people with cancer, with no-one left behind.

**PROVIDE THE BEST
CARE AND SUPPORT**

through consistent, sustainable, high-quality facilities in NHS hospitals and specialist staff to meet young people's unique needs.

**TACKLE THE ISOLATION
OF CANCER**

for young people by providing the information, professional and peer-to-peer connections they need.

LEAD THE WAY,

using our expertise, our reach, our partnerships and our platforms to amplify the voices of young people with cancer and ensure their needs are met.

As we look to the future, healthcare systems and the treatment of cancer will continue to evolve and improve. It will be critical that our support from point of concern through treatment and into life post-cancer is fit for the future.



That's why we are also setting a Big Goal: that by 2040 young people with cancer in the UK will have the best outcomes and quality of life in the world.

Why? Because they deserve nothing less.

Cancer is a biological bully - young people get some of the rarest and most aggressive cancers and although survival rates have improved, they still lag behind some other European countries. That is not acceptable and it must change.

We're stepping up to play our part and we know that the network of clinicians, experts, partners and supporters who back our work are standing fully beside us and the young people we support.

***Together we can, and will,
make sure no young person
faces cancer alone.***

Kate Collins
Chief Executive

OUR VISION

A world where cancer
doesn't stop young people
from living their lives.



we're
DETERMINED

we're
UNITED

OUR VALUES

We put young
people at the
heart of what
we do.

we're
SPIRITED

we're
KIND

**YOUNG
PEOPLE**

OUR PURPOSE

To ensure every young
person with cancer has
the best treatment,
care and support.



OUR BIG GOAL

By 2040, young people with
cancer in the UK will have the
best outcomes and quality of
life in the world.



OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES TO 2024

1.

FOCUS ON EQUITY,

making our services accessible to all young people with cancer, with no-one left behind.

2.

PROVIDE THE BEST CARE AND SUPPORT

through consistent, sustainable, high-quality facilities in NHS hospitals and specialist staff to meet young people's unique needs.

3.

TACKLE THE ISOLATION OF CANCER

for young people by providing the information, professional and peer-to-peer connections they need.

4.

LEAD THE WAY,

using our expertise, our reach, our partnerships and our platforms to amplify the voices of young people with cancer and ensure their needs are met.

“The first time I got diagnosed I didn’t have any support. It was very stressful for me to have to find out information on my own.”

Michelle, 20



STRATEGIC **OBJECTIVE 1**

Focus on equity, making our services accessible to all young people with cancer, with no-one left behind.

BY 2024:

- We will be collecting and using data to ensure we know who we reach through our services and who we currently don’t.
- We will use this data to track, understand and improve the reach and impact of our services.
- We will understand the difference societal inequity has on the experience and outcomes of young people with cancer.
- We will be using this evidence to shape our own services and advocate for improvements to the healthcare system.

BECAUSE OF THIS:

Young people with cancer who currently receive little or no age-appropriate support outside of their standard clinical care, will have an improved experience through access to a suite of support offers from Teenage Cancer Trust.



“Conor [Teenage Cancer Trust Youth Support Co-ordinator] makes being in hospital better. Other than my mum and stepdad, he’s the one who supports me the most.”

Bobby, 13

STRATEGIC **OBJECTIVE 2**

Provide the best care and support through consistent, sustainable, high-quality facilities in NHS hospitals and specialist staff to meet young people’s unique needs.

BY 2024:

- We will continue to offer our current high-quality service provision for young people in treatment and post-treatment for cancer.
- We will have a clear plan to ensure our units are fit for the future, adaptable to changing treatments, responding to young people’s emerging needs and meeting agreed quality standards.
- We will have scoped and planned our capital investment in NHS hospital units over the next five years, recognising and responding to distinct local needs.
- We will have extended our network of nurses, youth workers and other specialist teenage and young adult cancer staff, through both direct funding and adoption.
- Our frontline staff will be better supported through an enhanced professional network and deeper connections to Teenage Cancer Trust, to make maximum use of their influence and expertise.

BECAUSE OF THIS:

Every young person with cancer will be identified by the local teenage and young adult multi-disciplinary team coordinator, will have the opportunity to access specialist age-appropriate support and will have their voice heard in shaping our future facilities and services.

“Being on the unit with other young people was a good distraction. I’ve made lots of really close friends and we are always there for each other.”

Tegan, 18



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

Tackle the isolation of cancer for young people by providing the information, professional and peer-to-peer connections they need.

BY 2024:

- We will have a clear vision for, and be implementing, a blended service provision which is informed by young people’s needs during and after treatment.
- We will be the definitive UK source of clinically accurate, age-appropriate information for young people with cancer and their family & friends.
- We will have developed and be implementing a digital strategy for our service offers.
- We will have agreed our flagship post-treatment offers and piloted hybrid delivery to reach as many young people as possible.

BECAUSE OF THIS:

Young people will know who to turn to - 24/7 - to access information and support and more will be able to benefit from our once-in-a-lifetime flagship activities including Find Your Sense of Tumour and the Ultimate Backstage Experience.

“Being diagnosed with cancer is a lot to deal with. It would definitely help young people if there was more mental health support available.”

Adam, 22



STRATEGIC **OBJECTIVE 4**

Lead the way, using our expertise, our reach, our partnerships and our platforms to amplify the voices of young people with cancer and ensure their needs are met.

BY 2024:

- We will be driving improvements in treatment and care, based on the experiences of young people and international best practice, influencing policy where it matters most.
- We will be confidently and effectively advocating for a defined model of great treatment, care and support for all young people with cancer.
- We will be seen as the UK authority in teenage and young adult cancer, by increasing the expert clinical leadership of the organisation.
- We will have taken strides on the cultural transformation required to become an organisation that is driven by data, evidence and insight.

BECAUSE OF THIS:

Young people with cancer will be shaping developments in treatment and care, using their experience to inform future services.



ENABLING GOALS

TO ACHIEVE OUR FOUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES WE WILL:

a) Focus on need

Use evidence and insights to ensure we continue to satisfy the needs of our customers and communities.

b) Increase our relevance & influence

Connect with young people, amplify their voices and deploy our expertise to drive positive change.

c) Increase our financial confidence & sustainability

Diversify and balance our fundraising so that our net income grows, and we are more financially confident.

d) Be a great place to work

Take an inclusive, people-centred approach to attract, develop, empower and retain our colleagues.

e) Move forward together

Agree priorities, align delivery and embrace technology to enable teams to be more efficient and effective.

“Teenage Cancer Trust were there on the days when I just didn’t think I’d get through it.”
Mariam, 18



