

Modern slavery statement 2025/26

This statement is made pursuant to section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. It constitutes Cancer Research UK's (CRUK's) modern slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31 March 2026. Of our group companies, this statement covers the activities of Cancer Research UK Trading Limited and Cancer Research Technology Limited.

Introduction

Foreword from Michelle Mitchell OBE



Image credit: David Vintiner

Cancer Research UK exists to beat cancer. Acting responsibly in pursuit of that mission is fundamental to who we are, and it includes taking seriously our responsibility to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking in our work and across our value chain. We do not tolerate exploitation, and we are committed to protecting the people who contribute to and are impacted by our activities. This statement sets out how we identify, assess and manage those risks, and the steps we are taking to strengthen our approach.

Over the past year, our focus has been on three areas. First, we have continued to work collaboratively with other major UK research funders to strengthen assurance in the research we support. Second, we have improved how concerns are identified, escalated and managed, supported by targeted training to ensure our people know what to look for and how to respond. Third, we have taken additional actions to improve our understanding of supply chain risks, developing better tools and oversight to focus attention on our higher risk suppliers.

Looking ahead, we will continue to embed stronger assurance, improve due diligence in higher risk areas and respond to emerging regulatory and sector developments.

We are committed to being transparent about our progress and the challenges that remain, and to playing our part in the collective effort to eliminate modern slavery and human trafficking.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "M. Mitchell".

Michelle Mitchell OBE
Chief Executive

Our approach to managing modern slavery risk

This statement details our approach to identifying, preventing and reducing the risk of modern slavery across our charity's operations and supply chains in the following six areas:

1. Organisation and supply chains
2. Policies
3. Due diligence
4. Risk assessment
5. Training
6. Key performance indicator

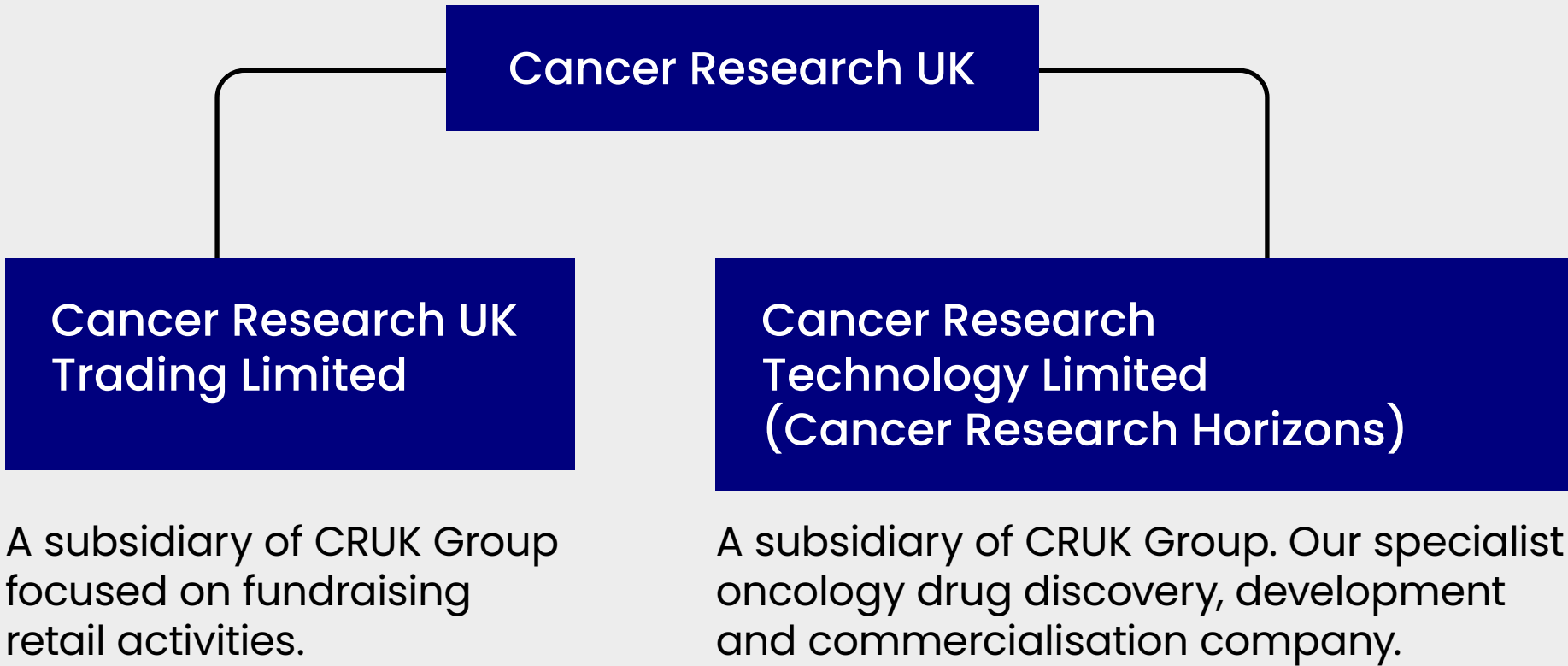
Cancer Research UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1089464), Scotland (SC041666), the Isle of Man (1103) and Jersey (247). It is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales (4325234) and the Isle of Man (5713F) with its registered address at 2 Redman Place, London, E20 1JQ.

Cancer Research UK is governed by our Council of Trustees who:

- set the charity's strategic direction
- oversee the delivery of our strategy and objectives in line with our organisational values and governance
- guide, advise and support our chief executive, who leads our Executive Board

Our organisation and supply chains

Cancer Research UK (CRUK) Group structure



Our governance structure

The Council has several committees, including our Audit and Risk Committee, which is responsible for ensuring we have effective governance and risk management controls in place. The day-to-day running of the charity is the responsibility of the chief executive and Executive Board.

The Executive Board manages our approach to being a responsible organisation, including human rights and modern slavery. Our internal modern slavery working group supports the delivery of our annual plan and includes key stakeholders for areas relevant to modern slavery, such as safeguarding and procurement. This representation enables effective feedback from a wide range of stakeholders and ensures key messages and actions are communicated clearly throughout the charity.

The working group reports to our Operational Risk Committee, which meets quarterly and reviews Cancer Research UK’s modern slavery risk as a standing agenda item. It also has oversight of our policy framework and works to help make sure our policies and approaches to combat modern slavery remain aligned. The committee reports to the Executive Board and onto the Audit and Risk Committee and Council of Trustees.



Our key activities [1]

Research

The grant funding we award to world-leading researchers.

Operations

Activities that support the running of Cancer Research UK, including finance, IT and human resources.

Fundraising

Activities that raise funds, such as events, corporate partnerships and philanthropy.

Trading

Retail activities that raise funds, for example through our 435 stores and 48 superstores.

Our trading strategy

Last year, following a comprehensive strategic review, we decided to close our online marketplace and a number of our high street shops, while opening more superstores. Though a reduction in shops, staff and potential suppliers will reduce the volume of our activities, the modern slavery risks associated with warehousing, transport and retail activities remains the same in our retail estate.



[1] This reflects sites wholly operated by Cancer Research UK. Several of our sites are operated by third-party suppliers on our behalf (these are included in the supply chain structure) or are shared spaces with other partners, such as certain laboratories.

Our people

In most cases, our people work at sites wholly operated by Cancer Research UK or work remotely. However, some of our people are based at partner sites (such as partner laboratories) or locations operated by third-party suppliers on our behalf. Our volunteers support our work across the charity, both in our shops and at our events..



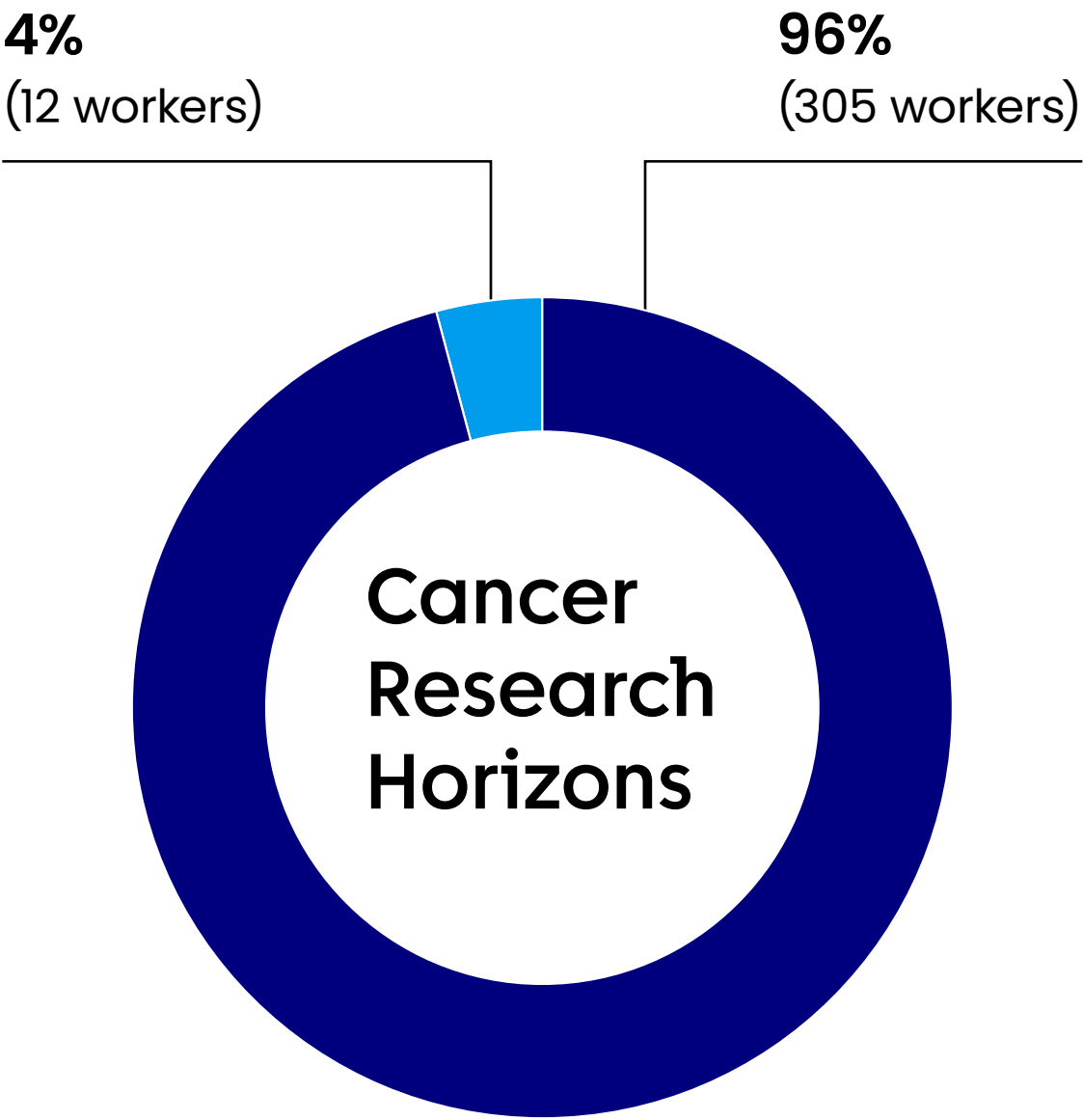
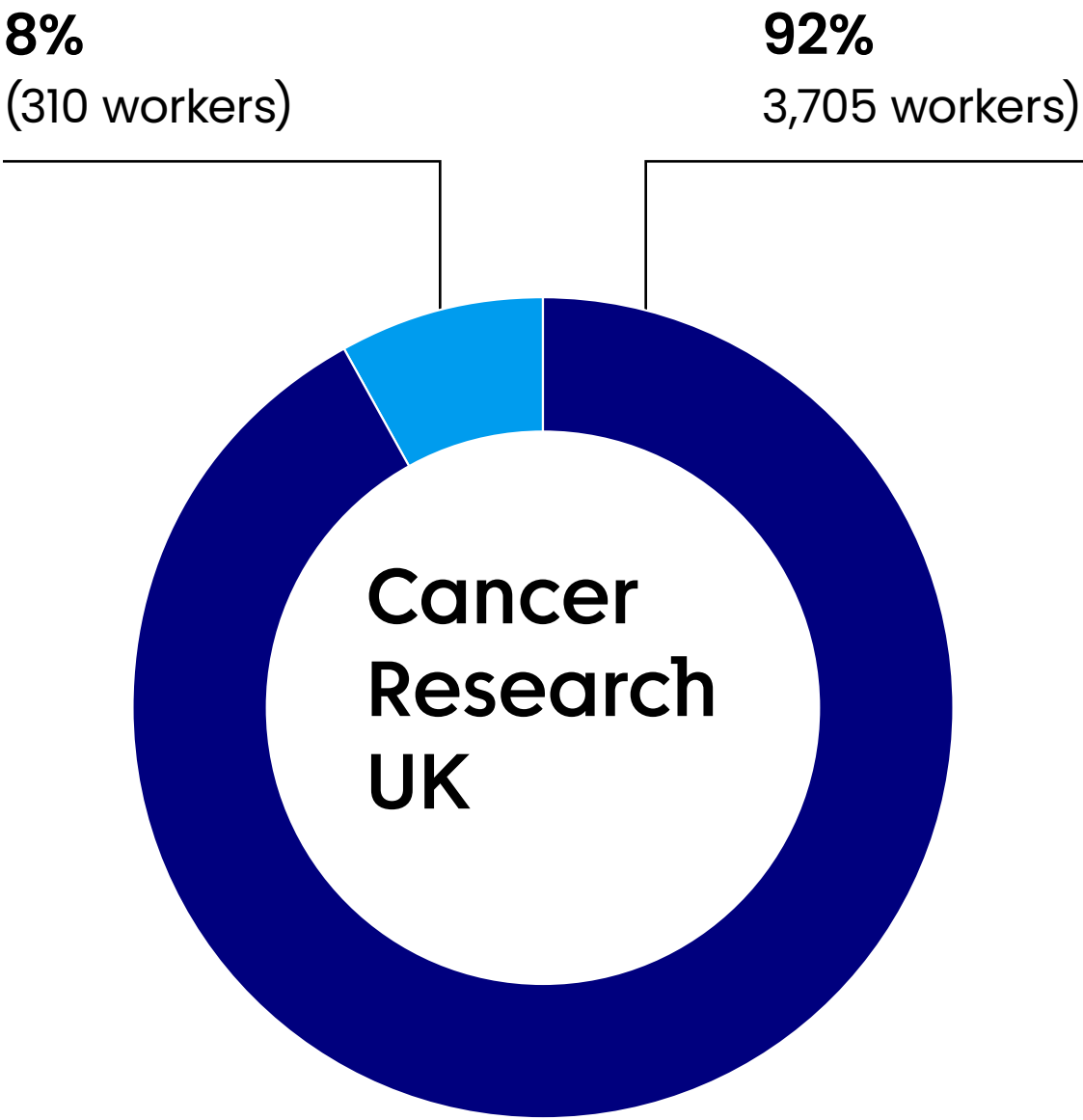
Permanent workers

Most permanent workers are based in the UK and work in our offices, shops, research institutes and warehouses.



Temporary workers

Temporary workers include agency workers, contractors and consultants who work across a variety of functions, including fundraising events, stores, customer services and warehouses.



Alongside our staff, more than 27,000 volunteers contributed to the charity's work this year.

Policies

Our policy framework helps us make the right decisions, act with integrity and protect our reputation. We regularly review and update the policies and requirements in the framework to ensure they support our evolving organisational needs.

Our Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics are the foundation of the framework, supplemented by nine key policies. These key policies are supported by requirements, learning resources, processes and guidance.

We review and update our key policies at least every three years. Colleagues have online access to our Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics and all our policies and requirements. Our people also complete mandatory training on our key policies upon joining the charity and periodically thereafter.

Here is a breakdown of the relevant policies and requirements that support our operational integrity and ethical practices for our people, suppliers and research grantees:

Our policies and requirements

Our people	• Dignity at Work • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion • Fundraising Responsibly • Safeguarding • Health, Safety and Welfare • Recruitment and Selection • Fraud, Theft, Bribery and Corruption • Whistleblowing
Our suppliers	• Supplier Code of Conduct • Working with Suppliers • Working with Partners
Our research grantees	• Dignity at Work in Research • Research Grant Conditions

Due diligence

Last year, we made improvements to our due diligence processes to better identify modern slavery risks. By improving our visibility of risks through better checks and controls, this gives us greater assurance that we're taking the right steps to identify and prevent modern slavery.

Our people

Our recruitment process is committed to making sure modern slavery and human trafficking have no part in our operations and supply chains. Modern slavery controls focus on ethical hiring, compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, fair treatment and anti-coercion measures.

We continue to mitigate modern slavery risks by requiring right-to-work documentation from individuals we employ directly. Last year, we introduced digital identification checks so we can verify candidates' right to work remotely.

We conduct a weekly audit to ensure anyone we've hired with an upcoming start date has gone through a digital check. If they haven't, we conduct a physical check on or before their first day of employment. These checks are carried out for all permanent and fixed-term temporary staff by our Human Resources team using a specialist third-party provider. We operate a clearly defined escalation process for any identified issues that aligns with the regulatory requirements of the Home Office and UK Visas and Immigration.

Contingent workers may be vulnerable to exploitation due to the nature of their employment. Our contingent worker documentation embeds Modern Slavery Act expectations into classification, onboarding, safeguarding, right-to-work checks, ethical recruitment, supply-chain oversight and the general duty to prevent exploitation.



Our suppliers

All new suppliers go through our onboarding process, which flags high-risk sectors and sourcing locations. We review any new suppliers in high-risk categories for modern slavery risks as part of their onboarding.

For existing suppliers, we apply ongoing due diligence through contract reviews and adherence to our Supplier Code of Conduct. For our most critical suppliers, we've enhanced supplier visibility through our developing Supplier Relationship Management programme.

This past year, our work on modern slavery risks within our supply chain has focused on the goods we purchase for our retail operations. Some of these are sourced through global supply chains or from regions where modern slavery risks are higher. For new suppliers in these categories, we introduced an assessment at the tender stage to evaluate the strength of their modern slavery management practices.

Alongside this, we're using third-party auditing platforms (Sedex and Amfori) to carry out due diligence checks on our existing bought-in goods suppliers and help identify any areas of concern. Where audit results flag any concerns around modern slavery, our buying teams will address this with suppliers through a remediation plan. We're using data from these platforms to inform our risk assessment and identify and prioritise the highest risk suppliers that need to be actively engaged in this way.

Our research grantees

We continue to work to reduce modern slavery risks within the research we fund. Last year, as part of a group of major UK research funders, we were involved in the pilot stage of a new joint research funders' assurance process. The aim of the process is to monitor the funding policies of the host institutions we fund, including their modern slavery policies. We expect the results of the pilot to be analysed in the coming months to determine next steps.



Risk assessment

Our Operational Risk Committee has oversight of any risks related to modern slavery and receives a regular update on how we're managing our approach. We assess that we are within our risk appetite for modern slavery risk.

We have a comprehensive risk management framework that meets Charity Commission requirements and is aligned with ISO 31000. The framework supports informed decision-making regarding the risks that affect our ability to achieve our objectives and overall mission of beating cancer.

To support the identification and evaluation of our risks and assess their relevance, we use a model that considers our risk universe in the context of our strategic objectives. This model allows us to consider the full range of risks we face across our core activities, as well as the key areas for enabling those activities.

Modern slavery remains a risk item in our risk universe and we report on it twice a year to our Executive Board and Council of Trustees. As part of these formal reviews, we draw on the expertise of functional specialists to identify, evaluate and address risks.



Training

In the past year, we’ve strengthened our escalation process to provide clearer guidance and better support for the teams responsible for managing it.

We delivered additional training through our expert partner, Unseen, to make sure those involved understand how to identify and respond appropriately to modern slavery risks. We also delivered mandatory modern slavery awareness training for high-risk teams, which takes place as required to ensure we maintain our key performance indicator as new starters join. In 2025/26, we delivered training on modern slavery to 331 of our people.

We continue to provide optional modern slavery training on our central learning platform for all staff with access to computers and our network. In 2025/26, 306 people took part in this optional training. For our volunteers, we updated our Welcome to volunteering booklet to include a section on modern slavery, including guidance on how to raise concerns.

Escalation and remediation

We require our people to report actual or suspected cases of modern slavery using our safeguarding reporting form that’s accessible to all staff, or through whistleblowing for volunteers. There were no reports made through the escalation process relating to modern slavery or human rights in 2025/26.

Last year, we updated our internal escalation process to align with existing formal processes for safeguarding concern and incident reporting. All modern slavery concerns are reported through our safeguarding incident reporting page, providing a single and centralised log.

Once a concern is submitted, our Safeguarding team receives the report and investigates it following existing safeguarding procedures. If the issue indicates a potential serious incident, the Safeguarding team notifies our Sustainability and ESG team and coordinates next steps, sharing relevant information and actions. If the safeguarding assessment indicates that the matter may be a serious incident, it’s escalated to our Legal team to conduct an investigation in line with our Serious Incident Process. Throughout this workflow, the three teams stay in regular communication.

Our employees have access to a whistleblowing facility to assist them in speaking up. The hotline number and online access details are included in our Whistleblowing Requirement and the facility is run by an independent third-party service provider. It’s designed to allow employees to raise concerns in confidence and disclose information they believe may indicate serious breaches of standards or conduct, financial irregularity or possible unlawful action.

Key performance indicator

We’ve retained our key performance indicator on training from 2024/25. In 2025/26, 100% of our colleagues working in high-risk areas were trained in modern slavery.

	2024/25	2025/26
Percentage of colleagues working in high-risk areas trained in modern slavery	94%	100%

Key activities for 2026/27

We will continue to track emerging legal and regulatory changes to make sure we incorporate any new obligations. Where needed, we'll seek specialist third-party expertise to help us put in place effective measures to identify, prevent and reduce the risk of modern slavery.

Our modern slavery working group will continue to support the ongoing delivery of the following:

- **Supplier risk management:** We will strengthen our supplier onboarding and due diligence practices to make sure we have the right tools, systems and knowledge in our teams to identify higher-risk suppliers across our chain and prioritise areas of action.
- **Partnership with UK funders:** We will continue to work with other UK research funders to roll out the joint funders' assurance approach. This will help make sure the research we fund has the right controls in place, in line with our grant conditions.
- **Key performance indicators:** As we increase the visibility of our high-risk suppliers, we will build on our existing key performance indicator and define further key performance indicators to make sure we're appropriately measuring the effectiveness of our actions to tackle modern slavery.
- **Risk assessment:** We will define a risk appetite statement.





This statement has been formally approved by the trustees of Cancer Research UK and signed on their behalf.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sim Stevens', with a horizontal line underneath.

Lord Simon Stevens Chair,
Cancer Research UK
22 July 2026