Life-saving breakthroughs, thanks to you

See what we've achieved in 2025/26

CANCER RESEARCH UK

Together we are beating cancer

Read Graeme's story on page 12

We've exceeded our goal of committing £1.5bn to research over the past five years, so people like Stella can spend more time with their loved ones.

Thanks to you, we're...

That's real progress.

And you made it possible.

Stella with her husband, Joseph

Read her story on page 15

Outnumbering cancer

There was no stopping our community this year. Together, you donated, volunteered, campaigned and fundraised to bring about a better future for people affected by cancer.

Thank you for being incredible.

You gave...

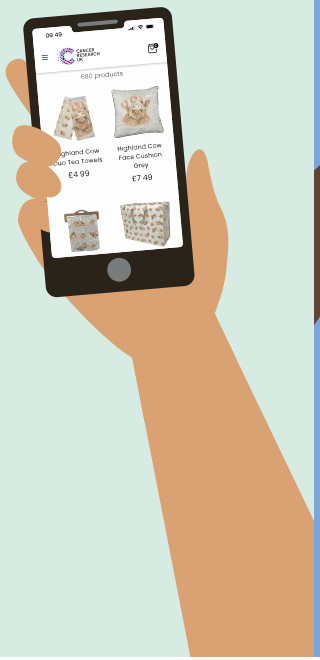
£62m in regular gifts, helping us commit to long-term projects with **huge potential to change lives.**

2.3 million hours of your time **volunteering** in our shops, serving happy customers to **support cutting-edge science.**

hope to future generations, as **8,600** of you pledged a **gift in your Will** to help back tomorrow's breakthroughs.

You bought...

£1.7m worth of items from our **online shop**, placing more than **114,000 orders** to help drive discoveries.



7,000 Christmas cards featuring our **Clover the Highland Cow** design to really get in the festive mooo-d!

You took part in...

29 social fundraising challenges, as **79,883** of you walked, swam and squatted to raise over **£19m.**

Race for Life, with **240,107** of you going All In to raise **£36.4m** across **476 events** in 2025.

the Dance 20 Challenge for the Bowelbabe Fund for Cancer Research UK, busting out your best moves to continue Dame Deborah James' legacy and raise around **£530,000.**

more than **150 sports events**, representing **Team Cancer Research UK** at marathons, cycles, treks and triathlons.

Beating cancer on the catwalk

The NHS doctor and beauty queen who hit the runway to help research

Meet Niru

I'd just finished runner-up at the Mrs India UK pageant. I was on top of the world! But just a few months later, I was diagnosed with breast cancer.

After surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy and immunotherapy, I'm now having yearly MRI scans and taking tamoxifen, a drug Cancer Research UK helped develop, to lower the risk of the cancer coming back.

When I finished my treatment, I wanted to use my passion for fashion to give something back. So, I organised Courage and Couture, a glamorous fashion show and gala dinner hosted by the Panjabi Doctors and Dentists Association. Together, we raised over £20,000 for Cancer Research UK's life-saving work.

I'm proud that I turned my cancer journey into something powerful and it's a reminder of the magic that can happen when we come together for a cause. I can't wait to see all the lives we'll touch with this gift.

Taking on cancer from every angle

With your support, we spent £416m on new and ongoing research this year. That's not just a big number – it's the fuel that's powering breakthroughs.

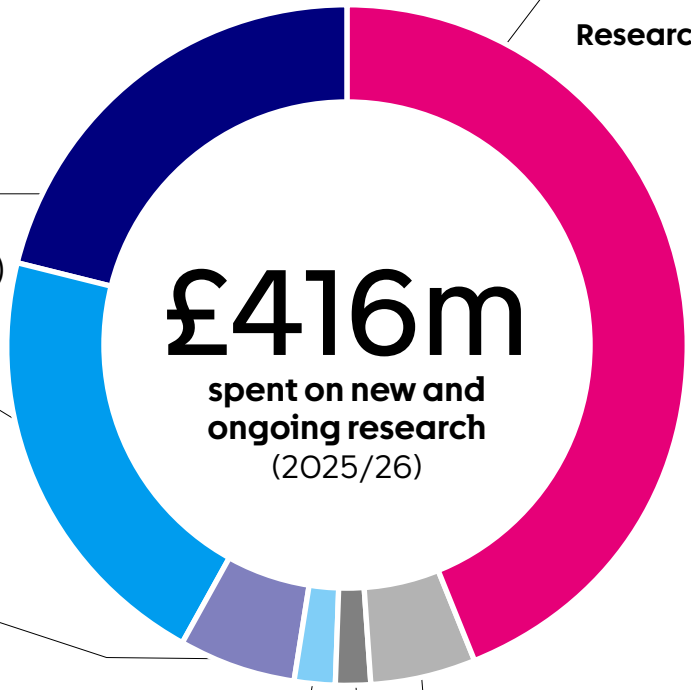
Here's how we used that money to help prevent, detect and treat more than 200 types of cancer:

£88m
Discovery research
(understanding the fundamental biology of cancer)

£87m
Relevant to all types of cancer
(e.g. research infrastructure and research studies looking at cancer survivorship)

£24m
Research admin and support costs
(e.g. peer review, grant management, IT and other support costs)

£8m
Revenue shares
(share of royalties from sales of innovations developed from our research, which we pass on to others involved in it)



How do we choose the research we fund?
Watch our video to find out at **cruk.org/funding**

Children's and young people's cancers
In 2025/26, of the £185m we spent on research into specific cancer types, **£31.5m** was spent on research into cancers that affect 0-24-year-olds. This makes us the biggest charitable funder of research into children's and young people's cancers in the UK.

£185m
Research projects focused on specific cancer types (in £m)

Colon and rectal	32	Kidney	3
Lung	22	Stomach	2
Brain	19	Cervical	2
Leukaemia	18	Adrenocortical	2
Breast	15	Endometrial	1
Pancreatic	11	Pharyngeal	1
Prostate	9	Oral cavity and lip	1
Liver	7	Bladder	1
Ovarian	7	Skin (excluding melanoma)	1
Melanoma	5		
Oesophageal	5	Nervous system	1
Sarcoma	4	Laryngeal	1
Neuroblastoma	4	Small intestine	1
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	4	Hodgkin lymphoma	1
Myeloma	3	Other cancer types	2

£18m
Cancer Research Horizons translational activity
(efforts to advance, develop and commercialise cancer research)

£6m
Cancer Research Horizons Cancer Tools
(a biorepository of tools for the global research community)

Pioneering a vaccine to prevent lung cancer

Our scientists are launching a world-first clinical trial to test LungVax – a new vaccine that could stop lung cancer before it starts.

In the UK, only around 1 in 10 people diagnosed with lung cancer survive for 10 years or more. But by training our immune system to recognise and attack cells that show early warning signs of developing into cancer, LungVax could help prevent the disease in people at high risk, potentially saving thousands of lives.

The vaccine is now ready for its next big step. With support from the CRIS Cancer Foundation, we've awarded the LungVax team up to £2.06m to begin testing the vaccine with a small group of people, with the trial expected to start in 2026.

Five years ago, LungVax didn't exist. Now, it's on the path to people who need it. Your support is turning research into reality.

Read more at **cruk.org/lungvax2026**

2014

We launch **TRACERx**, our flagship study into lung cancer's evolution. During the study, scientists identify early changes to lung cells that take place before they turn into cancer.

2023

Using insights from TRACERx, Professor Sarah Blagden and her team create and test an **experimental lung cancer vaccine** in the lab.

2024

The team **manufacture 3,000 doses** of the vaccine with help from our funding.*

2025

We award the team up to £2.06m to fund **a four-year phase 1 clinical trial** of LungVax.*

2026

LungVax is set to be **tested in people for the first time**, taking it another step closer to saving and improving lives.

*Supported by the CRIS Cancer Foundation

Cancer Detectives: Finding the Cures

This year, we partnered with Channel 4 on the three-part documentary series **Cancer Detectives: Finding the Cures**. The programme shone a light on the pioneering research we fund and the people behind it, following three world-class scientists determined to change the future for people affected by cancer.

One of the series' stars was Professor Sarah Blagden, co-founder of the LungVax project. She says:

"LungVax was a breakthrough moment in my career and shows that sometimes it doesn't take very long to go from an abstract idea to something you can hold in your hand."

Stream the series on Channel 4

"Our destination is ultimately to protect everyone against cancer."
Professor Sarah Blagden

Watch a special thank you message from Professor Blagden at **cruk.org/sbthankyou**

"I hope I can help others avoid a cancer diagnosis in the future."
Graeme, 55, from Renfrewshire

Meet Graeme

I'm proof that research saves lives. Thanks to science, I've been able to enjoy many more happy years with my family since my lung cancer diagnosis in 2013.

By 2017, the cancer was stage 4. I was treated with surgery and chemotherapy followed by a new targeted drug called mobocertinib.

I got involved with LungVax in March 2024 when I took part in an online workshop to gauge public opinion towards the vaccine.

In 2025, the team asked if I'd like to become a patient and public involvement representative. This means I'll be part of a group that's helping scientists prepare for the LungVax clinical trial.

I won't be able to benefit from LungVax myself. But I hope I can help others avoid a cancer diagnosis in the future.

Making bowel cancer cells self-destruct

"Because of you, team REWIRE-CAN is developing better treatments for people with bowel cancer."
Professor Bart Vanhaesebroeck, Team Lead of REWIRE-CAN

Cancer cells replicate uncontrollably because the signals that tell cells when to grow or divide are pushed 'on'. While drugs that block these signals can be effective, the cancer sometimes evolves, allowing it to keep growing and become resistant to treatment.

Cancer Grand Challenges team REWIRE-CAN is exploring a different approach to treat bowel cancer. Instead of blocking growth signals, they aim to unleash them. Cancer cells rely on a precise level of growth signals. And if there are too many, they self-destruct. Finding ways to overload bowel cancer cells with growth signals could lead to new, more effective treatment options for the disease.

Answering cancer's toughest questions

Team REWIRE-CAN is one of five new teams who were each awarded up to £20m in funding from **Cancer Grand Challenges** in 2026. This global initiative, which we set up with the National Cancer Institute in the US, unites world-leading scientists and empowers them to push beyond the limits of what's been possible in cancer research before.

Team REWIRE-CAN

Read more about REWIRE-CAN and the other Cancer Grand Challenges teams at **cruk.org/rewirecan**

"On 17 June, I got the good news. On 19 June, I was back at the allotment!"
Stella, 73,
from London

Meet Stella

In May 2025, I found out I had a colon tumour through taking part in the national bowel screening programme. I had no symptoms and felt fine, so it was a big shock.

Just 10 days later, I had robotic surgery to remove the tumour, which was amazing. The doctors prepared me for the possibility that I might need a colostomy bag afterwards, but thankfully I didn't.

I wasn't able to lift anything for six to eight weeks after surgery. I'm a keen gardener with a huge allotment and I was dying to go and tackle five weeks' worth of weeds! On 17 June, I got the good news – there was no more cancer to remove. On 19 June, I was back at the allotment!

I've taken part in five Cancer Research UK swimathons alongside my two sons and eldest granddaughter. I'm so grateful for research, and excited to see how fast it's moving. Teams like REWIRE-CAN are revolutionising how bowel cancer is treated, so more people like me can keep embracing life.

Team REWIRE-CAN will also be supported by the National Cancer Institute, Yosemite (oncology-focused venture firm) and the Bowelbabe Fund for Cancer Research UK. In 2026, the Bowelbabe Fund celebrated raising £20m for cutting-edge bowel cancer research since being set up by Dame Deborah James and her family in 2022.

Bowelbabe Fund
for Cancer Research UK

Starting conversations about cancer

In 2025, our **Cancer Awareness Roadshow** supported **50,550** people in **157 locations**, bringing vital health information to communities who often experience worse outcomes. The roadshow is a welcoming space where people can chat to a nurse about national screening programmes, reducing their cancer risk and spotting signs and symptoms of the disease.

We delivered **63 Talk Cancer** workshops to more than **1,000** people who work or volunteer in underserved communities, equipping them with the knowledge and confidence to have conversations about cancer and health. Our nurses delivered accessible training in all four UK nations and in different languages, including Somali and British Sign Language.

Our **Cancer Awareness in the Workplace** team visited companies across the UK to deliver **303 activities**, including cancer awareness talks and webinars. They spoke to more than **8,500 employees**, prioritising people who face greater barriers to making informed health choices and accessing services.

"I was having difficulty getting a doctor's appointment. The nurse helped me phone the GP about two years ago. Since then, I've had two skin cancers removed. I'm so grateful and I'll never forget that day."
Cancer Awareness Roadshow visitor

Find out more at **cruk.org/communityengagement**

Going further for children and young people

Cancer in children and young people is different to cancer in adults, yet they're often treated with the same drugs.

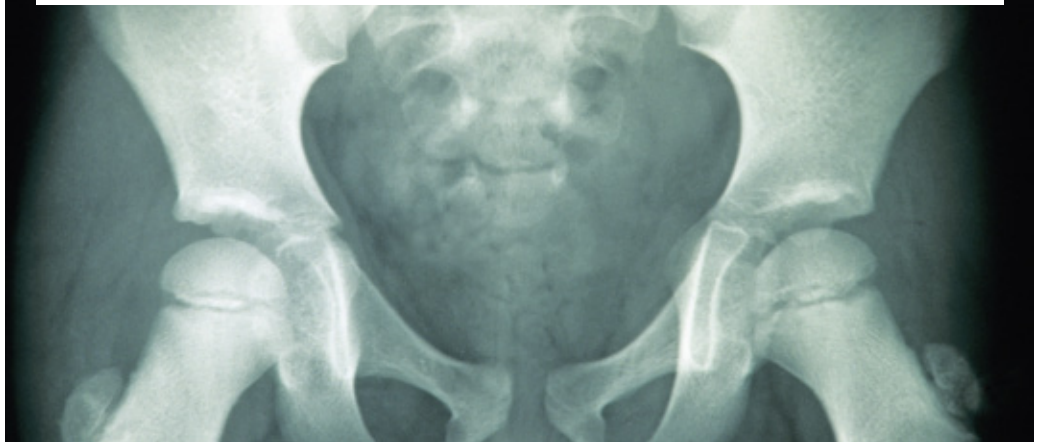
These are harsh on developing bodies and often lead to lifelong side effects. Through C-Further, our game-changing £37m initiative with the charity LifeArc, we're developing new cancer medicines exclusively for children and young people.

There have been some exciting developments this year. In September 2025, Great Ormond Street Hospital Charity came aboard, bringing their vital expertise and experience. And in March 2026, C-Further announced its first two research programmes.

C-Further's ultimate goal is to help produce twice as many treatments specific to children and young people in the next 20 years.
With you on our team, we'll make it happen.

Programme 1

aims to advance a potential new treatment for Ewing sarcoma, a cancer of the bone and soft tissue that mainly affects children and young people.



Programme 2

is seeking a potential new treatment for multiple children's and young people's cancers. Developing drugs specifically for the unique biology of these cancers could significantly reduce serious long-term side effects.

"I'm playing my part to make sure research keeps progressing."
Catherine, 34, from Southampton

Catherine with her husband, Ash

Meet Catherine

I was diagnosed with blood cancer aged 14. Now, I'm a cancer scientist.

After a year of chemotherapy, I went back to school. But when I was 17, it returned. The treatment left me infertile, caused permanent organ damage and increased my risk of developing cancer again. I've since had more than 25 skin cancers removed.

Most people assume treatments for children's and young people's cancers are the same as those for adults. But it's the opposite. As a clinical trial scientist, I know there are some incredible technologies and treatments being tested in laboratories that could change this. They just aren't available to everybody yet due to lack of funding for trials.

I went through the menopause at 17, but with IVF and my sister donating her eggs, my husband and I have two wonderful children.

I'm now playing my part to make sure research keeps progressing.

More than 9 in 10 children and young people who receive cancer drugs in the UK receive at least one drug developed by or with us.*

*Estimated based on Cancer Research UK analysis of NHS England data in 2023

Using tears to detect brain tumours

At the University of Manchester, Professor Petra Hamerlik is leading groundbreaking research to see if tears could help detect brain tumours earlier.

"Brain tumours are often detected late because their symptoms are vague," she says. "Most of the time it's just a bad headache, not a tumour. But when it is a brain tumour, the delay in diagnosis can cause huge anxiety for patients."

Professor Hamerlik's team have shown that, by collecting tears using a standard test already used for dry eye disease, they could detect brain tumours with high accuracy in the lab. Now, they hope they can develop the test further to give doctors a quick and reliable tool to decide if someone needs an urgent MRI scan.

Funded by STAND UP TO CANCER

Find out more at **cruk.org/tears**

One of the people who donated tears to Professor Hamerlik's study was Alex Davies from Bolton. A devoted husband to Emma and dad to Joseph and Eloise, Alex lost his life to glioblastoma, one of the fastest-growing adult brain cancers, at the age of 50.

When Alex collapsed unexpectedly, initial scans didn't spot his tumour. But in the following months, his symptoms got worse and a major seizure finally led to a CT scan, which revealed the tumour.

After surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy, Alex's cancer returned and the treatment stopped working. He generously gave to Professor Hamerlik's study in the hope that people with brain tumours in the future can be diagnosed and treated quicker.

"If helping with this research means someone like me could be diagnosed sooner, it offers real hope for the future."
Alex

Alex with his wife, Emma

"Alex's contribution, and that of others like him, is helping move this research forward in a way that could transform outcomes for future patients."
Professor Petra Hamerlik

Uncovering a weakness in one of the hardest cancers to treat

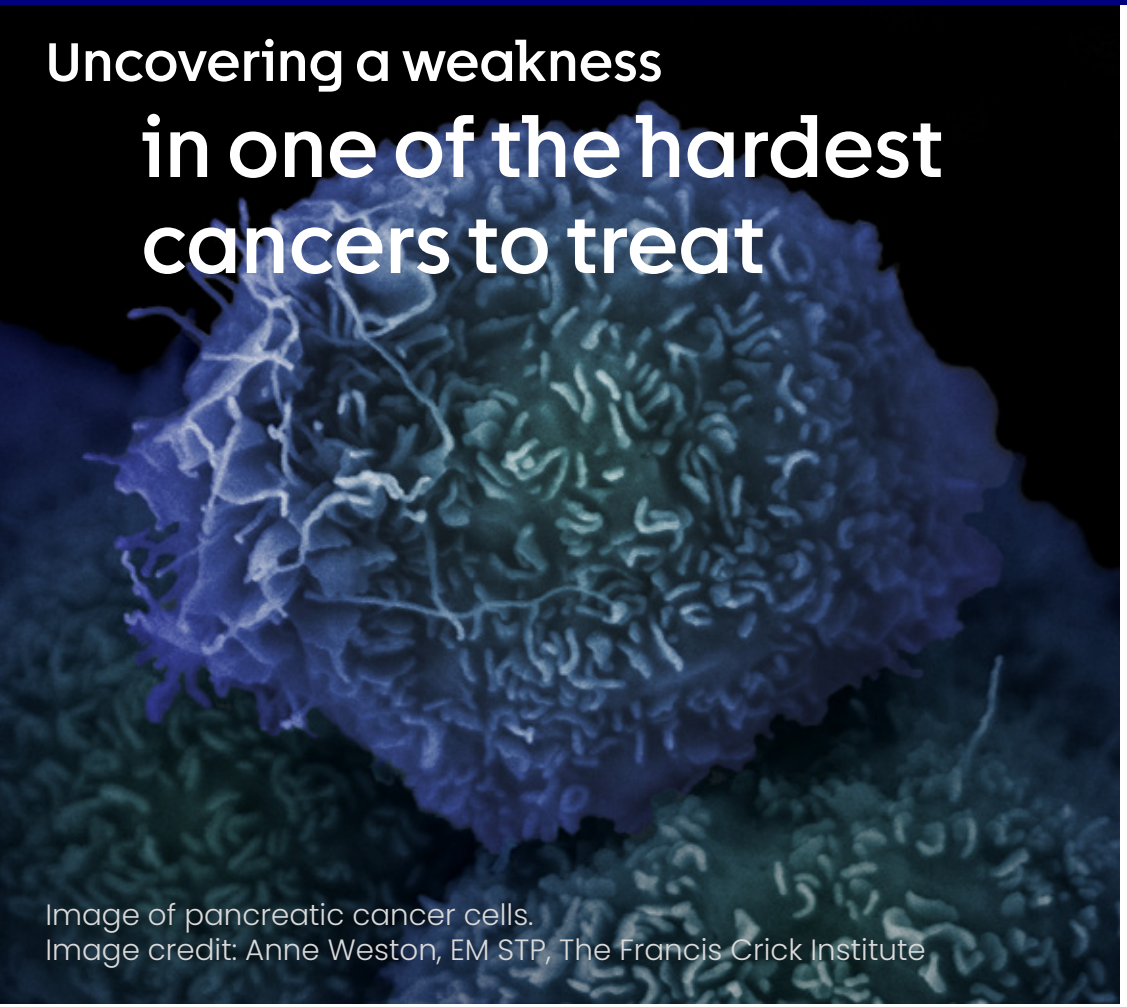


Image of pancreatic cancer cells.
Image credit: Anne Weston, EM STP, The Francis Crick Institute

Over the past 50 years, our work has helped double cancer survival in the UK. But for pancreatic cancer, fewer than 1 in 20 people survive their disease for 10 years or more. Professor Simon Wilkinson is hopeful we can change this.

His team have uncovered curious clumps of proteins inside pre-cancerous cells in the pancreas, similar to those seen in neurological diseases such as dementia. These could provide clues to how pancreatic cancer develops that could unlock new ways to detect, treat or even prevent this hard-to-treat cancer, giving more people more time with their loved ones.

Meet Dee

When I was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2021, I couldn't take it in. I just didn't feel ill enough.

Three and a half weeks later, I had an eight-hour operation to remove my gallbladder, my pancreas and quite a lot of my stomach and small intestine.

I then started chemotherapy, which was completely draining. I lost all my hair and it took me a long time to come to terms with it.

The follow-up scan came back all-clear, and I'm grateful for every day where I can get up in the morning and go to work. I was lucky that, by chance, my cancer was caught very early and was treatable. That's why early detection research is so important.

Dee with her husband, Mark

"I thank my lucky stars every day. I'm happy to be alive"
Dee, 62, from Spalding

To learn more about pancreatic cancer visit **cruk.org/aboutpancreatic**

Making history together

On 29 April 2026, the Tobacco and Vapes Act officially became law in the UK. This world-leading legislation will prevent people born on or after 1 January 2009 from ever being legally sold tobacco in the UK. That's **13 million children** alive today who'll grow up as part of **the UK's first smokefree generation**.

This is historic progress, built on decades of determined campaigning with our supporters, volunteers and partners. Thank you for your collective effort.

If this legislation has the impact intended, up to **10 million fewer cigarettes** will be smoked in the UK each day. That's enough to form a line stretching from London to Glasgow.

In February 2026, we welcomed the publication of the **National Cancer Plan for England** after more than half a decade of campaigning for a long-term cancer strategy.

More than **35,000 people signed our open letter** calling on the UK Government to make the plan bold and fully funded, and we'll keep holding politicians to account to make sure people affected by cancer get the research and care they deserve.

Towards a turning point for cancer

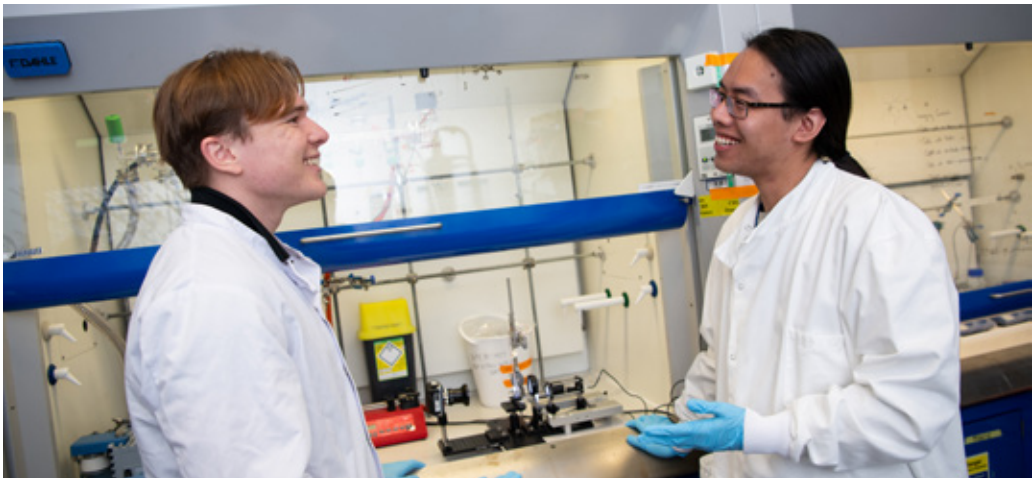
Ahead of the May 2026 elections, our **Turning point for cancer in Scotland and Wales** campaigns urged all parties to adopt the recommendations in our **Longer, better lives manifestos.**

Published in September 2025, our manifestos for Scotland and Wales showed that governments in both nations can help reduce cancer deaths by 15% by 2040. How? By cutting cancer waiting times, diagnosing more cancers earlier and investing in more life-saving research.

To find out more about our campaigns and how you can get involved, visit **cruk.org/ourcampaigns**

"I lost my father, mother and mother-in-law to cancer. Now, I build relationships with members of parliament in Wales and Westminster to help influence policy change that will improve outcomes for people affected by cancer. In 2025, I was mentioned by name during a debate on the Tobacco and Vapes Bill in the House of Lords. That was a very special moment for me!"

Tref, a Cancer Research UK Campaigns Ambassador from Anglesey



We're here for you

Speak to a cancer nurse
Our friendly nurses can answer your questions. Call for free on **0808 800 4040**

Join our community
Share your cancer experience and get support in our fully moderated online community at **cruk.org/cancerchat**

Get information you can trust
To learn more about over 200 types of cancer, visit **cruk.org/about-cancer**

Discover our progress
Keep up to date with the findings you're fuelling at **cruk.org/news**

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CANCER RESEARCH UK

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