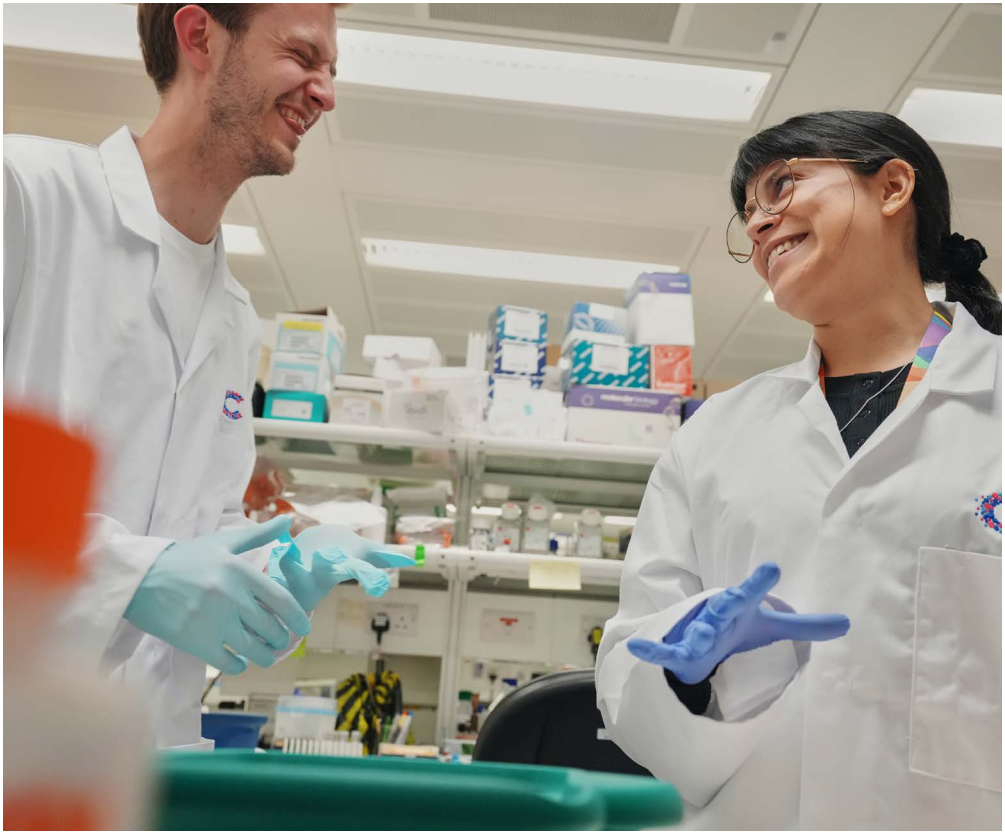
Thanks to you, we're outsmarting cancer



Our progress 2024/25

CANCER RESEARCH UK

Together we are beating cancer

2021/22
We committed to investing £1.5bn in research over five years

2024/25
Your fundraising helped us spend £403m on research this year

Future
We're on track to exceed our goal and go further for people affected by cancer

With you on our team, we're driving discoveries and giving millions of people **more time with their loved ones.**

Together, we're outsmarting cancer by...

Outsmarting cancer by

Uniting

From volunteering to donating, campaigning to fundraising, thank you for helping people live longer, better lives.
We're achieving so much more together than we can alone.

Giving

Volunteers gave over **2.4 million** hours across over 550 of our shops

Through regular gifts, you donated **£65m**

10,700 of you pledged a gift in your Will

Ahead of the UK general election, **6,081 of you** encouraged politicians to support our pledges

Shopping

85,396 of you bought something special from our online shop, raising **£2.3m**

A London 2012 Olympic torch brought in **£3,600**

A special collection of Doctor Who memorabilia raised **£30,000**

Doing

259,229 of you walked, ran, jogged and skipped in our Race for Life events, raising around **£37m**

Through fundraising in their communities, over **430** local groups raised **£7.5m**

17,000 of you took on our 100 push-ups a day challenge, raising **£2.3m**

From discos to headshaves, by fundraising your way you've raised **over £11m**

We celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Cancer Research UK London Winter Run, where you raised a record-breaking **£1m**

More than **8,000** of you and your furry friends took on our Stand Up To Cancer Walkies Challenge

The story of Pink Tutu Guy

Why did David, a retired engineer from Runcorn, don a pink wig, tutu and legwarmers to take on countless fundraising challenges?

"My inspiration to fundraise is simple: more smiles, more tomorrows."

David

When his dad died of lung cancer in 1988, David made a commitment to support our work – and to do it in style. His pink tutu has been very busy ever since. Fast forward to 2025, and his outstanding efforts were recognised at the Palace of Westminster, where he received a British Citizen Award.

He did a lot in that time:

2 Mount Kilimanjaro climbs

31 5ks in January each year

10 years of fundraising

£165k raised

From climbing mountains to baking cakes, the collective effort of people like you and David helps support research that's saving and improving lives.

Outsmarting cancer by

Backing breakthroughs

Your support is unlocking new ways to prevent, detect and treat cancer.

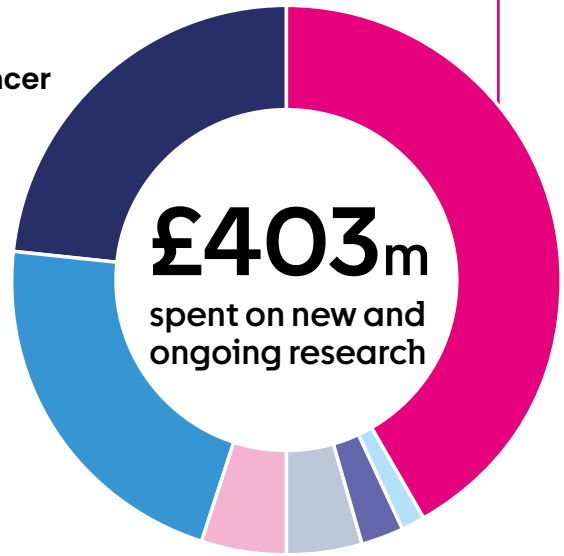
This year, we spent **£403m** on new and ongoing research – that's **£4m** more than last year! Here's how that breaks down:

£93m
Relevant to all types of cancer
such as research infrastructure and studies looking at cancer survivorship.

£88m
Basic research
understanding the fundamental biology of cancer.

£20m
Research admin and support costs
such as peer review, grant management, IT and other support costs.

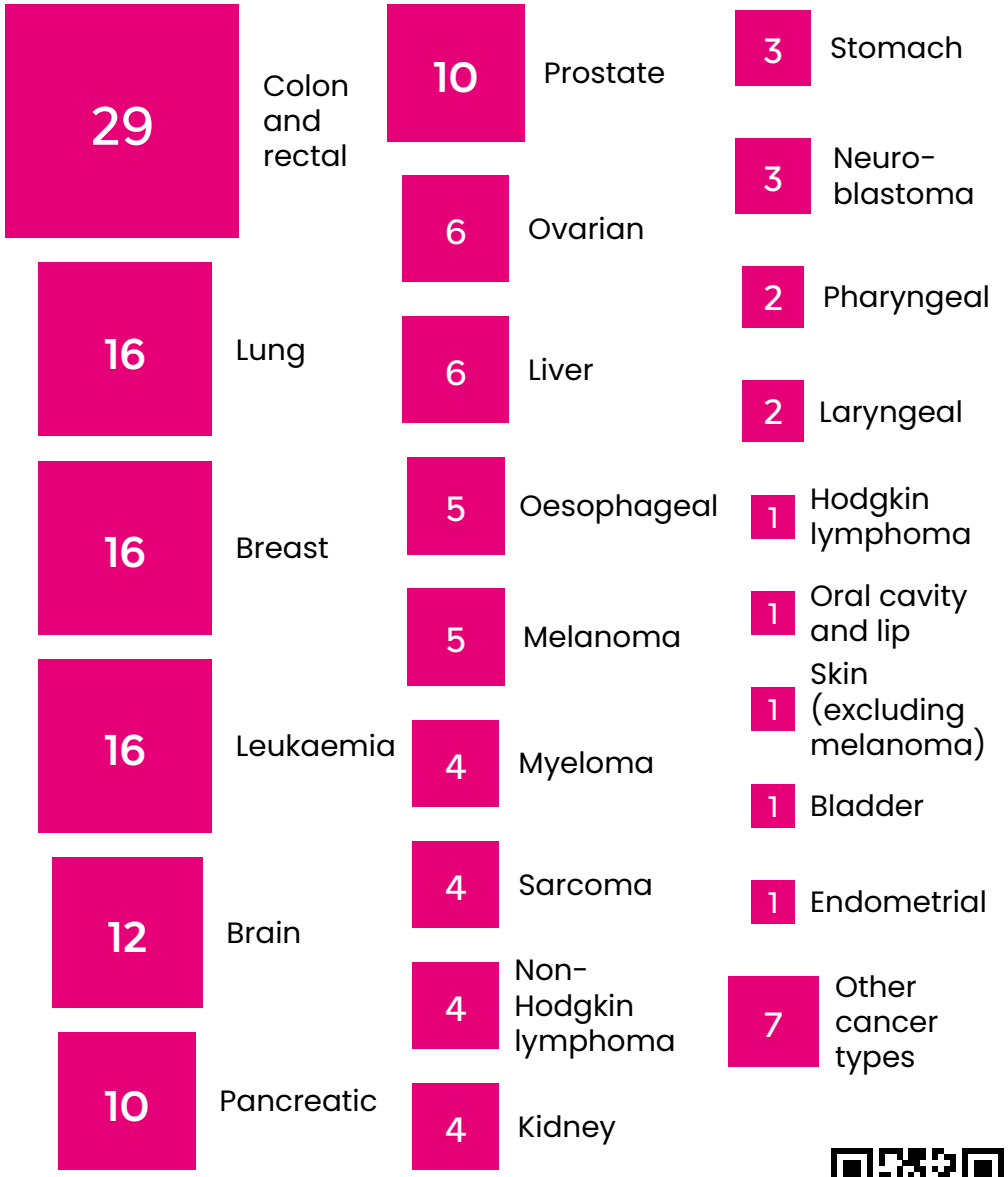
£18m
Cancer Research Horizons translational activity
which unites our drug discovery capabilities and our commercialisation expertise to translate more discoveries into treatments for patients.



£10m
Revenue shares
of royalties from sales of innovations, developed from our research, which we pass on to others involved in it.

£5m
Cancer Research Horizons CancerTools.org
which is a biorepository of tools for the global cancer research community.

£169m
Research projects focused on specific cancer types (in £m)



Watch this short video to see how we decide what research to fund. Visit **cruk.org/fundinginfo** or scan here:

Outsmarting cancer by

Transforming treatment for children and young people with cancer

How you've helped us team up with the not-for-profit organisation LifeArc to launch a pioneering international initiative to develop new medicines specifically for children's and young people's cancers.

Cancers in children and young people are complex and different to cancers in adults, yet the limited number of treatment options available are largely based on adult therapies. This can lead to long-term side effects, such as fertility and developmental problems.

C-Further is changing the game. With a £27m investment, the consortium is bringing together researchers, clinicians and partners worldwide to create new therapeutics designed to target cancers affecting children and young people. The aim is that children and young people don't just survive their cancer, but thrive after it.

Read more at **cruk.org/c-further**

Between 2007 and 2022, only five drugs specifically for childhood cancers were approved by the Food and Drug Administration in the US, compared to 14 new cancer medicines for adults in 2023 alone.

Meet Katie

As a member of our Involvement Network and Cancer Research UK for Children & Young People Insights Panel, Katie helped shape C-Further.

Age 2
I was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, a type of blood cancer.

Age 8
After radiotherapy and chemotherapy, there was no sign of cancer.

Age 13
I learned that the treatment had damaged areas of my brain, causing lifelong epilepsy.

Age 27
I was diagnosed with head and neck cancer, which likely developed because of the treatment I'd had as a child. I've since had extensive surgery and facial reconstruction.

Now, age 46
My experience has sparked a drive in me to help make a change. We need better treatments that are designed specifically for children and young people, rather than adjusted doses of medications designed for adults. We need treatments that are kinder, more targeted, less toxic and less invasive. That's why I was thrilled to hear about C-Further. Its fresh, modern and collaborative approach fills me with hope for positive outcomes for children and young people, for better survivorship and for fewer long-term side effects.

People affected by cancer are at the heart of our work.

They understand the needs of patients and their loved ones. Our Involvement Network brings them together to guide our decisions. This year, we increased patient involvement by 35% compared to last year!

Want to find out more about joining our panel? Visit **cruk.org/involvementnetwork**

Developing vaccines to prevent cancer

Discover how our researchers in Oxford are stopping cancer before it even starts by developing pioneering vaccines.

Vaccines train the immune system to detect and destroy diseases. So, what about cancer? Last year, we told you about our work to develop LungVax, the world's first vaccine to prevent lung cancer. Now, with your support, our researchers have started two more groundbreaking vaccine projects.

OvarianVax

A better choice

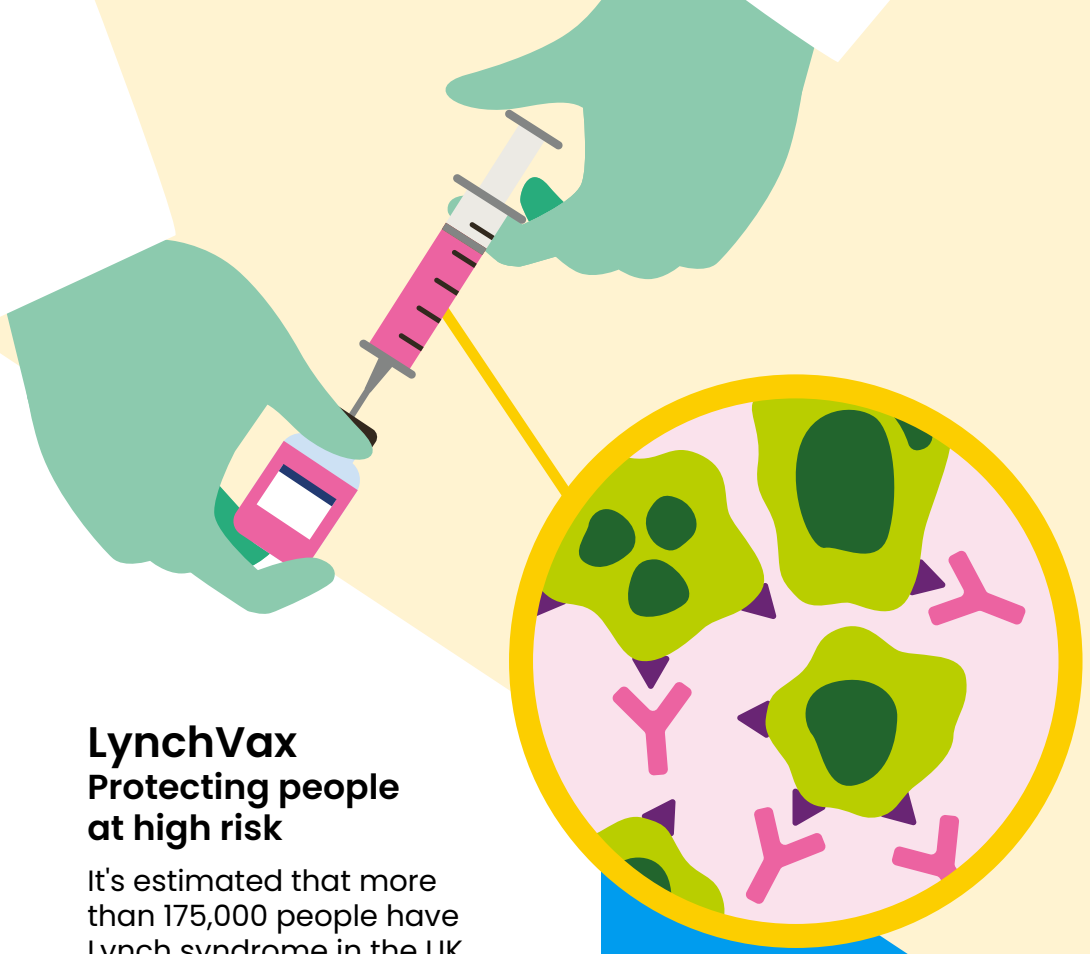
Young adults with a higher genetic risk of ovarian cancer face a difficult choice. They can be monitored and seek treatment if they develop cancer. Or they can have preventative surgery to remove their ovaries and fallopian tubes, triggering early menopause and meaning they can't get pregnant.

Our team is developing OvarianVax, a vaccine to prevent ovarian cancer. It's being tested in lab-grown 3D models of fallopian tubes and ovarian cancer tissue that closely resemble the human body. These tests are a crucial step before clinical trials.

"Thanks to Cancer Research UK funding, our research can take a big step towards a viable vaccine for ovarian cancer."

Professor Ahmed Ahmed
OvarianVax team lead

Read more at
cruk.org/ovarianvaccine



LynchVax

Protecting people at high risk

It's estimated that more than 175,000 people have Lynch syndrome in the UK. They have a higher lifetime risk of developing bowel and other types of cancer.

LynchVax aims to train the immune system to destroy abnormal cells before they become cancerous. Even though the vaccine is still in its early stages, it could one day help to prevent cancer in people with Lynch syndrome.

Read more at
cruk.org/lynchvaccine

Developments like this rely on a whole community of people coming together, united by a common purpose: to beat cancer. **Thank you for being part of our community.**

Meet Professor Ahmed Ahmed

You've heard about the promise of OvarianVax. Now hear from the scientist leading the way.

Q **When will the first person receive OvarianVax?**

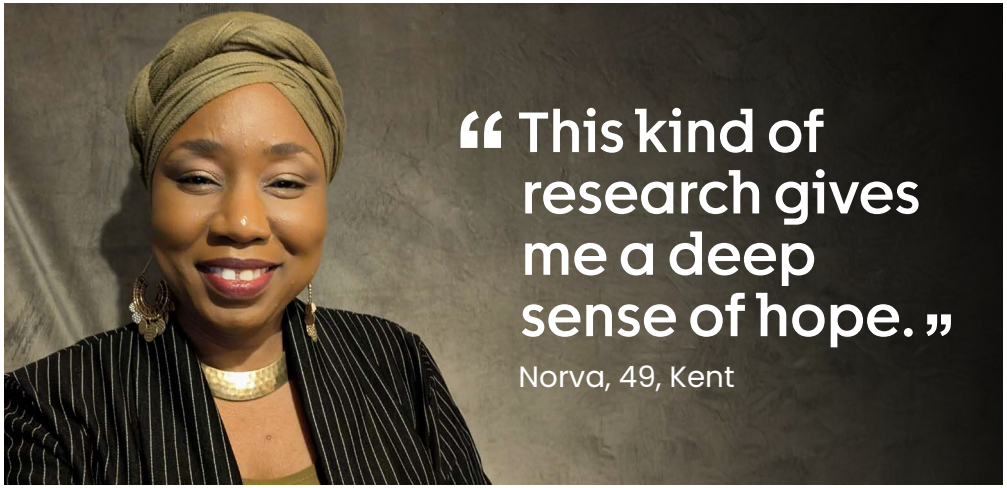
A If our lab work shows the vaccine works against cancer without serious side effects, clinical trials in people will start in a few years. We're shaping the trials now.

Q **How are vaccines shaping the future of cancer care?**

A The success of the COVID-19 vaccine created a huge boost for vaccine research worldwide. There'd been research into using vaccines to treat cancer – there's promise, but it's a very complicated area. Preventing early-stage cancer is a completely different picture: because the cancer is smaller, the immune system has a better chance of clearing it.

Q **What does this work mean to you?**

A If OvarianVax can be given to someone at risk of ovarian cancer and successfully prevent it, it would be a dream come true.



“

Every donation is helping to build a future where our loved ones might not have to face what so many of us already have.

I was 35 when things started to go wrong. I needed to wee more often and my tummy grew and hurt. I thought I might be pregnant, but an ultrasound showed a 15cm mass on my right ovary. In the two weeks before surgery, it doubled in size. I was diagnosed with a rare form of ovarian cancer and had chemotherapy.

Since completing treatment, I'm doing well. I'm embracing life: I'm running my own business and I've written three books.

Research like this means everything and the support that makes it possible honestly warms my heart. In our culture, we know how to rally around each other: we cook, we pray, we give what we can. **People coming together to back research like this is a community effort on a bigger scale – it's for all of us. ”**

Your support means more people have more time with their loved ones. Since finishing treatment, Norva and her husband Dr Adesoji welcomed two daughters to their family. Odelia (13) and Jahzeel (12) have joined big sister Shernorva (26) and they're all doing well.

Tackling cancer inequalities

Beating cancer means beating it for everyone. But today, unfair differences in cancer outcomes are leading to health inequalities. This year, thanks to you, we've continued taking action to make sure no one is left behind.

Meet Iyna

"Being diagnosed with breast cancer at 30 is difficult enough. But being from the South Asian community, where there can be real stigma about it, makes it harder still.

Of course, cancer never comes at a good time, but it felt like the worst time: my son was four, we'd just moved to a new house with a bigger mortgage, and I'd recently started a new job and wasn't entitled to sick pay.

It was very lonely. So, I started a support group, Cancer Chaii & Chat, so South Asian women going through cancer can get the support and sisterhood they need in a way that feels comfortable.

This was 10 years ago, but cancer doesn't end when your treatment ends. Despite all the challenges, it's made me stronger and given me the drive to make a desperately needed change within the South Asian community.

People don't talk about cancer or seek support when they need to. I hope my story and work in the community can change this."

Iyna, 40, Maidenhead

Launching our cancer and health inequalities strategy

Iyna's continued to make sure everyone gets fair, timely access to cancer care by supporting our five-year cancer and health inequalities strategy.

Health inequalities are driven by a complex interplay of determinants, such as exposure to cancer risk factors and variation in access to healthcare. Inequalities exist by socioeconomic status, ethnicity, sexual orientation and many other factors. This means there are unfair differences in cancer risk and survival.

Now we have a clear and actionable plan to deepen our understanding, work with communities and influence policy to reduce health disparities. You can read it at **cruk.org/healthinequalities**

Outsmarting cancer by

Investigating cancer biomarkers

Step inside our National Biomarker Centre in Manchester, a cutting-edge facility dedicated to transforming how we detect and treat cancer.

At this state-of-the-art centre, opened this year, scientists are developing tests to measure biomarkers — biological clues that reveal vital information about a person's cancer. We can measure biomarkers in samples of blood, urine or saliva, or in a small piece of the tumour itself.

This can help doctors:

- detect cancer at an earlier stage, when treatment is more likely to be successful
- tailor treatments to each person's unique biology
- predict the risk of cancer returning, helping people avoid unnecessary treatment

We hope the work of expert teams at the centre will mean more people can receive the right treatment at the right time and do more of what they love.

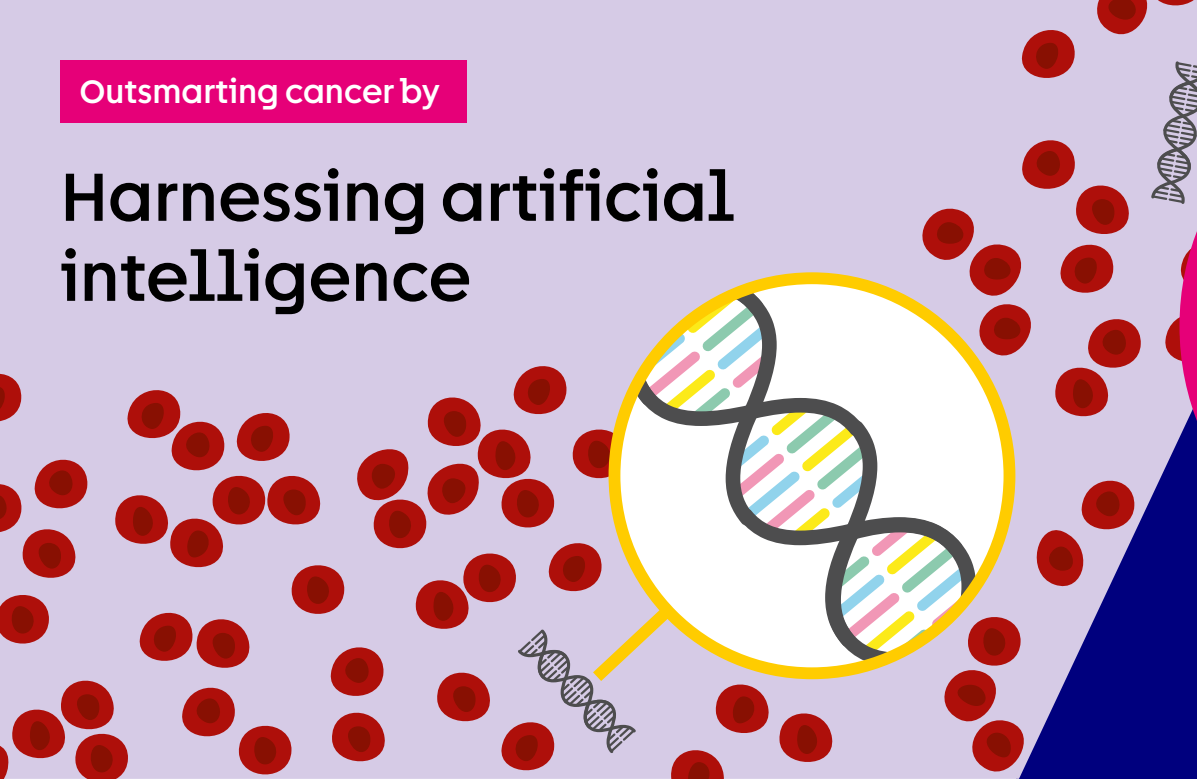
"We're very lucky to do world-leading research at the centre, but it's very expensive. And all of it is funded by Cancer Research UK. I'd like to thank everyone who supports us. You're helping patients for generations to come."

Dr Dominic Rothwell
Deputy Director, Cancer Research UK National Biomarker Centre

In the past 50 years, our work has helped **double** cancer survival in the UK.

Outsmarting cancer by

Harnessing artificial intelligence



"It's been two years since I was diagnosed. I wake up every morning with a smile, because I've got another day."
Lee, 59, Denton

Lee with Dr Alicia-Marie Conway and Dr Alex Clipson

Can artificial intelligence (AI) be used to help doctors make faster, more accurate treatment decisions? CUPiD, an innovative blood test, is already delivering exciting results.

When cancer spreads but we don't know where in the body it started, it's called a cancer of unknown primary (CUP). CUP is much harder to treat because many treatments are targeted to work on specific cancer types.

Lee, a garage owner and dad from Manchester, was diagnosed with CUP in 2022. He says:

"I've had loads of tests, tissues taken and sent everywhere, blood tests, everything – and they still can't find the primary cancer. The prognosis for CUP isn't very good. I was told I had nine months to live."

Each year, around 8,000 people are diagnosed with CUP in the UK

(Three-year average in 2018, 2019 and 2021)

Enter CUPiD

At our National Biomarker Centre, Dr Alex Clipson, Dr Alicia-Marie Conway and their team have developed CUPiD – a cutting-edge, AI-aided blood test.

Alicia-Marie says: "Patients with CUP are in desperate need of better and faster diagnosis that will enable access to treatments more specific to their individual cancer. This blood test holds real clinical promise."

It may seem like a simple blood test, but it uses AI to analyse cancer DNA and pinpoint where it began.

So far, when CUPiD makes a tumour prediction in the lab, it's right 96.8% of the time. The next step will be testing CUPiD in clinical trials.

Lee says: "There's no doubt a test like this would have made things better for me." Thanks to a separate clinical trial, Lee's tumour has shrunk and he's doing well.

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

Funded by STAND UP TO CANCER

Outsmarting cancer by

Personalising bowel cancer treatment

For over a century, we've been at the forefront of work to prevent, detect and treat bowel cancer. Now, with you on our team, we're embarking on our most ambitious project yet.

Everyone's cancer is unique, so it shouldn't be one-size-fits-all when it comes to treating it. To tailor people's treatments more successfully, we need to learn more about how bowel cancer behaves.

That's why, in partnership with the Bowelbabe Fund for Cancer Research UK and the Scientific Foundation of the Spanish Association Against Cancer, we've committed £5.5m to a world-leading research team tasked with making personalised medicine a reality for people with bowel cancer.

The CRC-STARS initiative unites 40 research experts from the UK, Spain, Italy and Belgium to better understand how different bowel cancers respond to current treatments, why certain bowel cancers spread and whether we can predict which treatments will work for individual patients.

A comprehensive approach

To see how cancer cells change in response to treatment, the team use cutting-edge techniques to grow and study model tumours that more accurately represent the environment of our bodies than earlier models.

To understand the differences between people's tumours, they're analysing data and samples from clinical trials. And to better predict the best course of treatment for each person, they're linking the changes that happen in people's bowel cancer to their outcomes.

Watch this short video to learn more. Scan here or visit **cruk.org/CRC-STARS**

We've had a hand in developing many new drugs that have improved bowel cancer survival. One of these is the targeted drug cetuximab, which helped Dr Mari Isdale, a GP from Salford who's now lending her support to CRC-STARS.

Mari says: "At 31, I was diagnosed with stage 4 bowel cancer and told I had 18 months to live. Now, 10 years later, I'm living an amazing, fulfilling, active and happy life despite cancer.

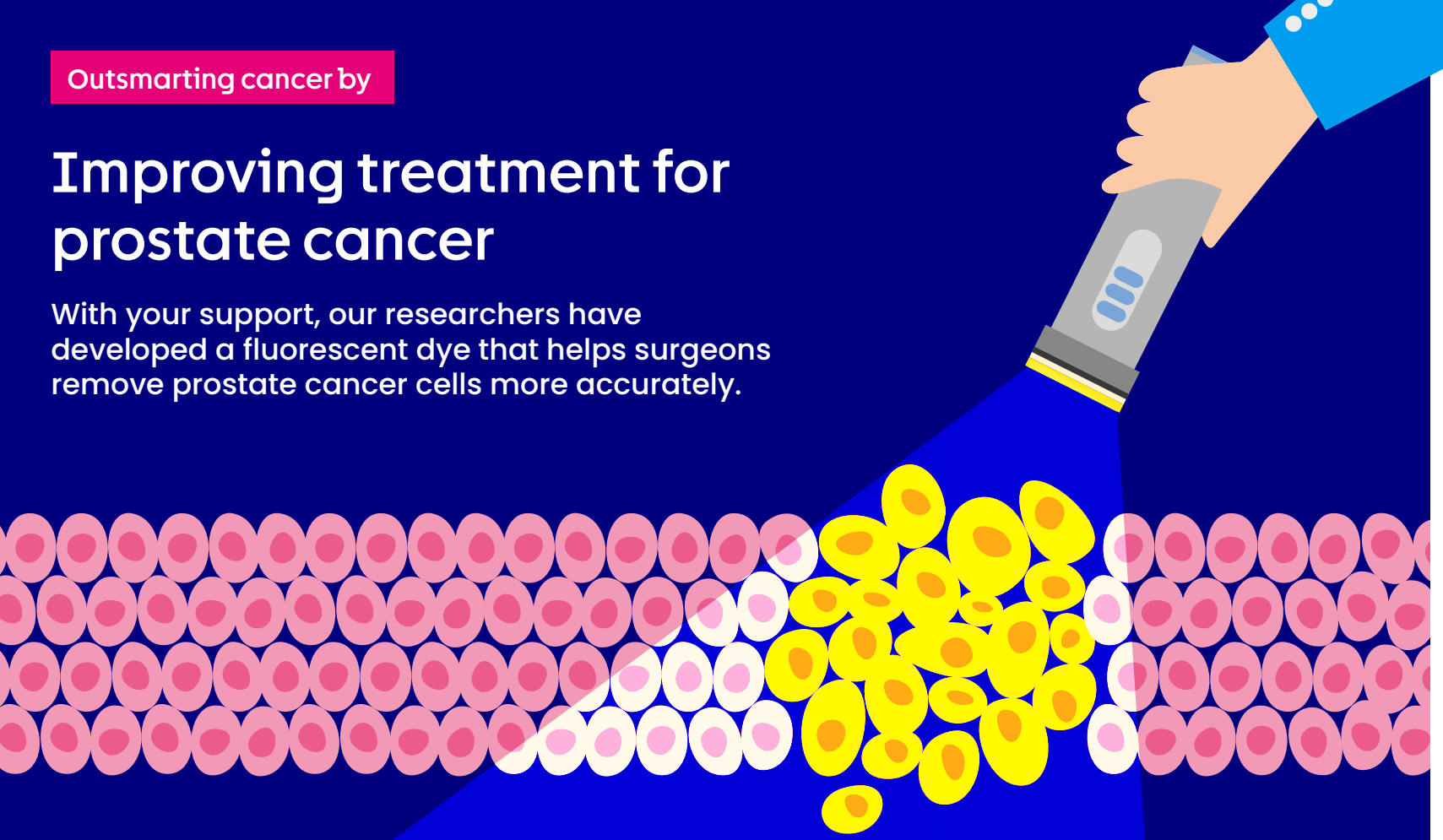
"Thanks to research, I've been able to spend lots of quality time with my loved ones and enjoy every precious, beautiful day."

Thank you for making more special moments possible for people like Mari.

Outsmarting cancer by

Improving treatment for prostate cancer

With your support, our researchers have developed a fluorescent dye that helps surgeons remove prostate cancer cells more accurately.



Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the UK. For around 150 people diagnosed every day, surgery is an option, but leaving behind even a small number of cancer cells means the cancer can come back. The problem? Cancer cells look a lot like healthy cells.

Illuminating results

Oxford's ProMOTE team have found a way to light up cancerous tissue during surgery, making it easy to spot and remove.

How? They've developed a fluorescent dye linked to a special targeting molecule that sticks to the surface of prostate cancer cells, giving surgeons a clear view of what to remove and what to leave behind.

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

Longer, better lives

In early tests with 23 patients, the dye helped surgeons operate more accurately. Larger trials are now underway, and the team hope this approach could be adapted for other cancers, reducing side effects and improving lives.

The ProMOTE team lead, Professor Freddie Hamdy, says: "We're effectively giving the surgeon a second pair of eyes to spot the cancer cells."

For David, the dye used in the ProMOTE trial not only helped doctors remove his tumour but also discover that his cancer had spread. As a result, David had radiotherapy. Now, five years on, he's cancer-free.

"I retired early to make the most of life's pleasures – gardening, playing bowls and walking. Taking part in the study has allowed me more of these pleasures for years to come."

David, 78, Oxfordshire

Shaping government policy

We use evidence and insight to inform and influence government policy changes that reduce the impact of cancer on people's day-to-day lives. And this year, you've helped us hit some major milestones.

Getting a commitment for a national cancer plan

Your support for our general election campaign helped secure a commitment from the UK Government to develop a dedicated long-term cancer strategy for England. We're working hard to make sure the plan delivers for people affected by cancer, both now and in the future. And over 20,000 of you have joined us in calling on the health secretary to make sure the plan is the turning point for cancer we need.

Junk-free TV

Our campaigning paid off as the UK Government passed a law for a 9pm watershed on junk food advertising. This comes into effect in January 2026 and will help curb childhood obesity and reduce cancer risk.

Ending cancers caused by smoking

Last year, we told you about our Smokefree UK campaign. This year, we celebrated a big campaign milestone as MPs voted in favour of legislation to help create a smokefree generation by progressively raising the age of sale of tobacco.

The Tobacco and Vapes Bill, which includes this landmark legislation, has now passed through the House of Commons and is making its way through its next stages in the UK Parliament.

Smoking is still the biggest cause of cancer in the UK. With your help, we continue to champion this legislation in all four UK nations.

2024 Parliament Day

People make this possible. People like Josh:

"I know the decisions we make in our teens feel inconsequential. But what I've learned through my health battles is this: every choice is an investment in your future self. That's why asking the government to protect young people from preventable harm isn't just about policy, it's personal."

Josh
Campaigns Ambassador, 34, London

Thank you

"Research into better treatments has given me the greatest gift – more precious time with my loved ones."

Bami, 48, Ammanford

More than 8 in 10 people who receive cancer drugs in the UK receive a drug developed by or with us.* People like Bami:

"I was offered the drug exemestane, which Cancer Research UK helped develop. Now, I've seen my daughter grow into a strong young woman and start university.

"Special moments like these wouldn't be possible without the dedication of scientists who are relentlessly striving towards new milestones month after month."

Bami's right. But it's not just researchers who make progress possible, **it's supporters like you.**

*Estimated based on Cancer Research UK analysis of England data

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**

If you'd like to change the way in which we communicate with you about our latest breakthroughs, campaigns and how you can support our life-saving work, please contact us on **0300 123 3379** or **preferences@cancer.org.uk**

Cancer Research UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1089464), Scotland (SC041666), the Isle of Man (1103) and Jersey (247).

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