

**New -
puzzle
included**

SUPPORTER NEWSLETTER ♦ WINTER 2025

together

♦ **Caring for our
youngest patients**

How your support
is helping p8

♦ **A decade of Barts
Heart Centre**

Celebrating 10 years
of cardiac care p4

Hello!

Welcome to your winter edition of *Together*. This season, we're focusing on the youngest patients in our East London hospitals – and the incredible ways your support brings comfort and joy to children during challenging times.

At Christmas, you can give a gift that makes a child smile. And thanks to your generosity, these moments can continue all year round. Inside, you'll discover how your donations help fund projects that support children throughout their hospital journey – from the amazing children's Play Team (p8), to toys that give a welcome distraction from blood tests (p10).

You'll read about more funding across all age groups – from life-saving cardiac care (p4), to a new centre supporting healthy ageing (p3).

We're so grateful to every supporter who makes these projects possible – people like Alessandro (p6) who ran in thanks for his daughter's care. This winter, we want to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who helps us be there for patients – young and old – through it all.

Rachel
Together Editor

Together, we can go above and beyond for families in East London.

Here at Barts Charity, we support NHS staff and pioneering research. We help to refurbish wards and equip Barts Health hospitals with the very best equipment. And we provide the little things, too – like new furniture so that patients and families can wait in comfort. Because we know that in the toughest times, even the smallest things can mean so much.

With your support, the adult critical care unit at St Bartholomew's Hospital refurbished their relatives room.



"It's a really important space and makes a huge difference," says Family Liaison Nurse Jane.

Latest news



With your help we've launched a new Centre dedicated to healthy ageing for people in East London: bartscharity.org.uk/ACHA



We've teamed up with Octopus Legacy to offer a free Will writing service. Read more on page 15.



Research you supported found that our breath could give clues about blood cancer: bartscharity.org.uk/breath-test



217 brilliant supporters signed up for Hike for Health 2025, walking the streets of East London to raise vital funds.



Since our funding for three extra robots last year, over 600 more patients have benefitted from robotic surgery!



Your support has helped to provide scalp-cooling devices across the hospitals to help prevent hair loss during chemotherapy treatment.



The difference you make



10 years of better heart health

Thanks to our supporters, this year we're celebrating a decade of care at Barts Heart Centre – the UK's largest and busiest heart hospital. East London has some of the highest rates of heart disease in the UK.

With a multi-million pound investment from Barts Charity, the Centre opened in 2015 and has transformed heart health for thousands of patients. From developing the first blood test to detect deadly heart inflammation, to pioneering robotic surgery on a beating heart, the team has been there for East London – through it all.

The goal was to treat 80,000 patients and save over 1,000 lives each year. Last year alone, the Centre cared for 85,000 patients – going above and beyond expectations.

Between April 2024 and April 2025, the Centre delivered:

Over

2,000

heart surgeries

48,000

heart scans

Treatment for

6,000

critically ill patients

Ian's story

Ian was on holiday with his wife when he suddenly started experiencing some tightness in his chest. He thought nothing of it, but went to see his doctor when he got home. He was shocked to discover he'd suffered a serious heart attack. "My first thought when I found out was that I don't want to leave my wife on her own," Ian explained. "The thought of leaving her widowed really upset me."

After being referred to Barts Heart Centre, Ian was deemed high risk for traditional surgery. He had a minimally invasive direct coronary artery bypass instead, using the latest robotic techniques.

Despite it being a six-hour operation, Ian recovered quickly and was able to go back home after just four days in the hospital. Ian is now able to do all the activities he enjoyed before.



"The treatment in there was fantastic. Being able to leave hospital so quickly was amazing. Thank you so much for the treatment – it was really outstanding." – Ian

None of this would be possible without you. Your support has helped turn a bold vision into a world-class service.





Inspirational supporters

Little legs, big journey

In 2021 Alessandro and his partner Cinzia were overjoyed to welcome the arrival of their baby daughter, Elettra. All was going well, until a scan revealed that Elettra was suffering from severe hip dysplasia, a condition where the hip joint doesn't develop properly.

Despite being just three months old, Elettra needed urgent treatment.

Elettra was referred to The Royal London Hospital, where she had to have surgery. She then had to be placed in a hip cast for the next three months whilst she recovered. With the cast in place, Elettra struggled with the usual baby activities.

Alessandro explains: "Bath time and nappy changing were a nightmare. When other kids were starting to crawl, play and sit at the table we couldn't do any of that with Elettra. When all the kids around you are walking and playing, and your daughter can't even stand, it's tough to see."

"I really want to give back to help other parents who are going through the same thing we did."





"All the nurses and doctors were so supportive."

It was a worrying time for Alessandro and Cinzia, but they were supported every step of the way by the hard work and dedication of the team at The Royal London Hospital.

"All the nurses and doctors were so supportive," Alessandro says. "The orthopaedic surgeon explained everything to us and answered all of our questions so well."

Elettra is now a healthy and happy little girl who loves swimming, going to ballet classes and running everywhere she goes!

To say a big thank you for all the support they've received, Alessandro decided to run the Hackney Half this year, to raise vital funds for Barts Charity.

Elettra was so excited to see her dad running in the race. "Elettra loves to watch and clap all the runners going past. She had such an amazing day - she managed to watch me at three different spots on the route! She still talks about it now."

Alessandro raised an incredible £900!

Alessandro, Cinzia and Elettra at The Royal London Hospital.



Inspired by Alessandro?

Join our biggest ever Hackney Half Marathon team in 2026!



Sign up today at
**[bartscharity.org.uk/
Hackney26](https://bartscharity.org.uk/Hackney26)**





Make a difference



Support our youngest patients this winter

The winter season should be a time of joy and wonder – especially for children. But for those spending time in hospital, it can feel anything but magical. By donating to our Winter Appeal, you could help bring joy to our youngest patients during the festive period and throughout the year.

When faced with unfamiliar surroundings, new people and strange-looking equipment, Play Teams across Barts Health are on hand throughout the year to make things seem that bit less scary for children – all through play. And play isn't just about fun – it's a vital part of the treatment process.

“Barts Charity’s support makes such a difference to children across the Trust. It helps our Play Team to go above and beyond for our young patients and turn their hospital experience into a positive.” – Gemma



Dayaan with his Play Specialist Gemma

The Play Teams use your donations to make things better for children – whether it's refurbishing spaces or buying sensory toys to distract from distressing procedures.

Gemma Melisi is a Play Specialist at The Royal London Hospital. Every day, she works with children like Dayaan. When Dayaan was diagnosed with retinoblastoma – a rare type of eye cancer – at just two years old, his family's world fell apart. Through years of hospital visits and gruelling chemotherapy treatments, Gemma and the Play Team have been there to support Dayaan through thick and thin.



Dayaan's mum Shamila says:
"There's been times where he's been on the floor screaming, and Gemma will come over to play with him. He's always much better after that. She has been an absolute godsend to us – we honestly couldn't have done it without the Play Team."

Give now and you could help us be there for children like Dayaan



[bartscharity.org.uk/
winter-together](https://bartscharity.org.uk/winter-together) or
scan the QR code

Your generosity could help to fund:

- * Refurbishments to indoor and outdoor spaces for play and peace
- * Toys, arts and crafts, and sensory items to entertain and distract
- * Gifts and activities over the festive season

Donate today and together we can help make hospital feel a little more like home this winter.



The difference you make



We're here for our Barts Health children

Hospitals can be overwhelming places, with lots of people and strange noises, and where emotions run high. For children and young adults, navigating this maze of uncertainty can be scary and daunting.

With your support, we're there to help children feel safe and supported – through it all. Here are just three great initiatives you've helped make possible.

Toys to entertain and distract

Procedures like blood tests can often be an unpleasant experience, and for young children this can cause a lot of anxiety and upset. Thanks to you, children at the Whipps Cross Hospital Paediatric Department have the perfect distraction with brand new therapeutic toys. The toys, which includes a sensory panel and a gaming cart, are already proving vital in reducing distress and speeding up procedures across children's services.

One nurse said: "the toys have transformed how we support children – what used to be a tearful experience is now often met with curiosity and calm."

Coping with bereavement

For a parent or guardian with a terminal illness, telling their child is one of the most heartbreaking things they will ever have to face. It can be impossible to know how to start the discussion, and how to answer any questions your child may have.

With your support, the Palliative Care team at The Royal London Hospital now have a range of bereavement books that can help families begin these difficult conversations. They are also providing valuable support and advice to help children deal with grief and loss.

A safe space for all

The Newham Paediatric Emergency Department treats hundreds of children and young people, some of whom are autistic or have a sensory processing disorder. That's why we funded a brand new sensory room and cubicle with comfy furniture and audio and visual equipment.

The warm and welcoming spaces have helped patients to be much calmer during procedures. Feedback from staff and families has been amazingly positive, with parents describing the rooms as "fantastic" and a "great distraction for my autistic child".



The difference you make



A new centre for tuberculosis care

It's a common misconception that tuberculosis (TB) is a disease of the past - over 1.25 million people across the world died of TB in 2023 alone.

Right now, East London has one of the highest rates of newly diagnosed cases in Western Europe. And the average age of a TB patient seen at Barts Health is just 30-35 years old.

Delays in diagnosis can cause life-long issues for patients and have devastating physical effects that can also impact mental wellbeing. A number of patients in East London die of TB each year, despite the world class treatment available.

That's why, with the help of our supporters, we've committed to fund the new Queen Mary and Barts Health Tuberculosis Centre.

Teams of researchers, clinical experts and TB advocates will work together to deliver improvements in how we understand, diagnose, treat and campaign for TB care, helping patients not just in our local community but around the world.

Find out more



Visit
[bartscharity.org.uk/
TB](https://bartscharity.org.uk/TB) or scan the code.

“Talking to someone else who’s had it makes people feel less lonely and motivates them to keep going with the treatment. I’m really excited to be working with the team.” – Amy



Amy is a TB survivor and advocate, who’ll be working with experts at the Centre. She knows first-hand just how important this support will be for other TB patients, after developing TB when she was at university. Amy had to have her left lung removed and will experience the effects for the rest of her life. “TB is quite a lonely disease,” she says.



A UK-first for emergency care

Thanks to you and our partners The London Ambulance Service and London’s Air Ambulance Charity, we’re supporting a new Cardiac Arrest Team in rapid response cars and helicopters.

When someone experiences a cardiac arrest, their heart unexpectedly stops beating and blood stops pumping around the body. Within minutes, brain cells start to die. Now, response teams will be using a technology called ECMO-CPR, which temporarily takes over a patient’s heart function if resuscitation hasn’t worked.

This means that patients can receive the treatment they so desperately need as soon as possible, before being transferred to a cardiac centre for further treatment.

Watch the video



Scan the QR code to watch our video.

Spotlight on our supporters



Purpose on the pitch

Eight members of Quantifi's London-based team braved the cold to compete in last year's Winter Business Fives 5-a-Side tournament. Their charitable spirit and enthusiasm earned them two trophies and they raised an incredible £1,514! "We believe it's important to support our local community and chose to play for the amazing hospitals of Barts Health."



From research to running

Along with colleagues at the Academic Centre for Healthy Ageing (ACHA), Liz took on the Hackney Half marathon and raised a brilliant £2,000. "We wanted to fundraise for Barts Charity because ACHA is unique. I think it's a really bold move for the charity to support ageing research in North East London," says Liz.



Healing, hope and hiking

Loren's life turned upside down after a broken leg led to a bone infection. To give back to the hospitals who took care of her, Loren took on the 15k Hike for Health this September. She says: "It was really hard for a couple of years, not being able to walk. I feel like I've come full circle, and now I'm walking to help others."

Be there for the people of East London, always

Your Will is a powerful way to look after the people you love and the causes you care about. It's a great way to leave a lasting legacy and to help build a better future for your community.

Thanks to our partnership with Octopus Legacy, you can write or update your Will at no cost to you – online, over the phone, or even in person.

While many who use this service choose to leave a gift in their Will to Barts Charity, there's no obligation to. But if you do, you'll help to transform healthcare right here in East London.



Care from day one

Gifts in Wills helped refurbish the Women's and Neonatal Unit at Whipps Cross Hospital, giving babies the best possible start



Transforming trauma treatments

Groundbreaking trauma research is saving thousands of lives across London, thanks to gifts in Wills



Catching cancer earlier

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, new CT and MRI scanners have been introduced at the Early Diagnosis Centre at Mile End Hospital



With a gift in your Will, you can help us be there for decades to come.

scan to get started
or visit
**[will.octopuslegacy.com/
bartscharity](https://will.octopuslegacy.com/bartscharity)**



Try our wordsearch

Complete the word search and let us know which word is missing. Submit your answer online for a chance to win a £15 Marks & Spencer voucher.

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1. Barts Charity
2. Heart
3. Helicopter
4. Hike for Health
5. Play Team
6. Research
7. Sensory
8. Supporter
9. Toys
10. Treatment



To enter the competition and see full T&Cs please visit bartscharity.org.uk/puzzles or scan the QR code.



Contact us

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Email us: hello@bartscharity.org.uk

Visit our website:
bartscharity.org.uk

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