



CHILDREN'S  
HEART  
SURGERY  
FUND

# our impact 2024

Last updated April 2025

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## A word from our Chair

“Hi, I’m Kieran Brady, Chair of CHSF Trustees - I feel incredibly proud to introduce this 2024 Impact Report on behalf of CHSF.

“Throughout this report, you will see the tangible impact your donations and support made in 2024 - from our support for families at a vulnerable time, through to medical equipment, start-up NHS roles, training and research. These stories and statistics are a powerful reminder of what can be achieved when people come together with a shared purpose. Whether you’ve given time, made a donation, taken on a fundraising challenge, or simply shared our story - thank you.

“At the end of 2024, we introduced our new strategy. With your help, we can continue to pursue our updated vision of empowered lives for everyone born with heart disease in our region.

“Our CHSF staff show amazing dedication, and I would like to thank them all for their energy, skill and compassion which drives everything we do. My thanks also to our incredible NHS colleagues across the Leeds Congenital Heart Unit and region by delivering world-class care and treatment with such skill, and to my fellow Board members who help me to guide this incredible charity as Trustees.

“1 in 125 babies are born with congenital heart disease and our family support service has become an increasing focus at CHSF. Some affected families urgently need practical and wellbeing support, and many are also having to navigate through financial challenges. We are committed to improving the future welfare of everyone affected by congenital heart disease in our region, and we can’t thank our supporters enough for helping us put them first.

“I hope you feel as proud as I do of everything we accomplished in 2024 - because we certainly couldn’t have done it without you.”



*Kieran*

**Kieran Brady**  
Chair of Trustees



## About CHSF

Children's Heart Surgery Fund (CHSF) was started in 1988 by surgeon Duncan Walker operating out of Leeds Killingbeck Hospital with the motto "*Each Child a Childhood*" - which was the goal of the region's Heart Unit at that time.

Decades later, there are now more adults than children living with congenital heart disease (CHD), and over 90% of CHD patients reach adulthood.

1 in 125 babies are born with CHD in our region, and CHSF has never been more essential to their wellbeing. Thanks to our supporters, our charity provides a holistic support service for heart families and dedicated support for young people, championing patients of all ages throughout their lives. Donations also provide vital resources and services including parent accommodation, life-saving medical equipment and staffing beyond the scope of the NHS.

The charity mission is only possible thanks to our special relationships with individuals, organisations, trusts, foundations, communities and businesses - and their incredible fundraising. Our charity directly supports the life-saving work of the Leeds Congenital Heart Unit and the network's regional clinics.

CHSF provides tailored support and essential resources, ensuring everyone affected in our region has greater control and choices.

**Empowered lives, *because of you.***

[Make a donation >](#)



## About us

## Our impact in 2024

## Case studies

## Looking ahead

## Who's who?

### Meet the team behind CHSF...

The team at CHSF is made up of the following staff, and we work closely together to achieve our aims. Each role and every department is driven by our vision to help build empowered lives for patients and families across our region.



**Ruth Davany**  
CEO  
ruth.davany@chsf.org.uk  
07933 519998

"I am responsible for the overall management of the charity. This includes managing the CHSF team, working with the Board of Trustees and overseeing the delivery of our charitable objectives."

## Family Support

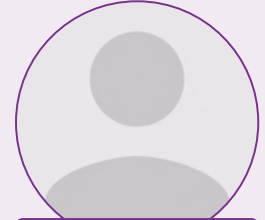
Our Family Support team offers access to practical services, wellbeing support and financial help to heart families when they need us most. We also have a dedicated Youth Support worker who works with young patients as they go through transition in their care to adult services.



**Sarah Cherry**  
Head of Family Support  
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07929 509227



**Lucy McMahon**  
Family & Youth Support Worker  
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**Inclusion Worker**  
Coming soon in 2025!

## Income Generation

Income Generation is key to the success of our charity, and it's all because of you! The team nurture relationships amongst individuals, businesses, communities and trusts to facilitate engaging fundraising opportunities for supporters to join us in our vital mission. Our Corporate, Community, Events and Trust and Foundations staff are inspired by our amazing heart heroes and families to help encourage the donations which keep the charity going.



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## Marketing

Marketing help grow the charity's profile through media coverage, website, social media, campaigns, events and digital. We manage everything supporters read, receive and hear and aim to ensure all is compelling, clear and consistent.



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Head of Marketing  
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**Olivia Lewis**  
Digital Marketing Manager  
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## Finance, Resources & Governance (FRG)

FRG are responsible for co-ordinating budgets and financial reporting to help ensure we deliver as much support as possible for our beneficiaries. The team assist with grant applications, general charity administration and process the generous donations received from supporters.



**Cath Cook**  
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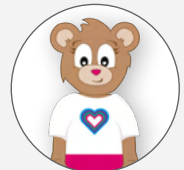
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**Katie Bear**  
CHSF Mascot

Katie Bear is our Mascot, and a pivotal figure used as a tool to show key elements of the CHD journey to children. CHSF give a Katie Bear teddy to each child who has open heart surgery.

[Find out more](#)



# Katie Bear

Beloved mascot and forever friend



## A special gift

Katie Bear is given as a teddy to every patient who has had open heart surgery at the LCHU, along with a medal.

[Read more >](#)

## Katie's story

Rumour has it that the design for Katie Bear was drawn by a young patient called Katie, encouraged by her grandfather. She has changed a bit over the years, but still has the same amazing heart.



## Say hello!

Your favourite bear is available for hugs and photos at CHSF events, which take place throughout the year and bring families, staff and patients together.

[Family events >](#)



## Vision

*“Empowered lives for everyone born with congenital heart disease in our region.”*

## Mission

*“We enable children, adults and families affected by congenital heart disease to live empowered lives, through our holistic family support services and by providing vital resources to the Leeds Congenital Heart Unit and region.”*



## Values

Our core values reflect who we are as a charity, and can be proudly illustrated by the following heart heroes...



### Trustworthy

Read [Isabel's story](#), written by mum Natalie for World Autism Day 2024



### Compassionate

Read amazing [Adalee's story](#), and why her parents call her a miracle baby



### Approachable

[Read](#) how our Family Support team helped heart hero Abraham's family



### Dedicated

[Read](#) how Arthur's mum Jessica felt supported by CHSF since day one



### Respectful

We are so grateful to Beau's parents Tilly-May and Sam for sharing [Beau's story](#) with us for Baby Loss Awareness Week in October 2024



## Our region Our impact

CHSF supports over 23,000 patients with congenital heart disease, heart families and NHS staff across our region per year with family support, parent accommodation, medical equipment, distraction tools, ward facilities, staffing and clinical training and research.



is the specialist cardiac centre for over **5.7 million** people

and every year

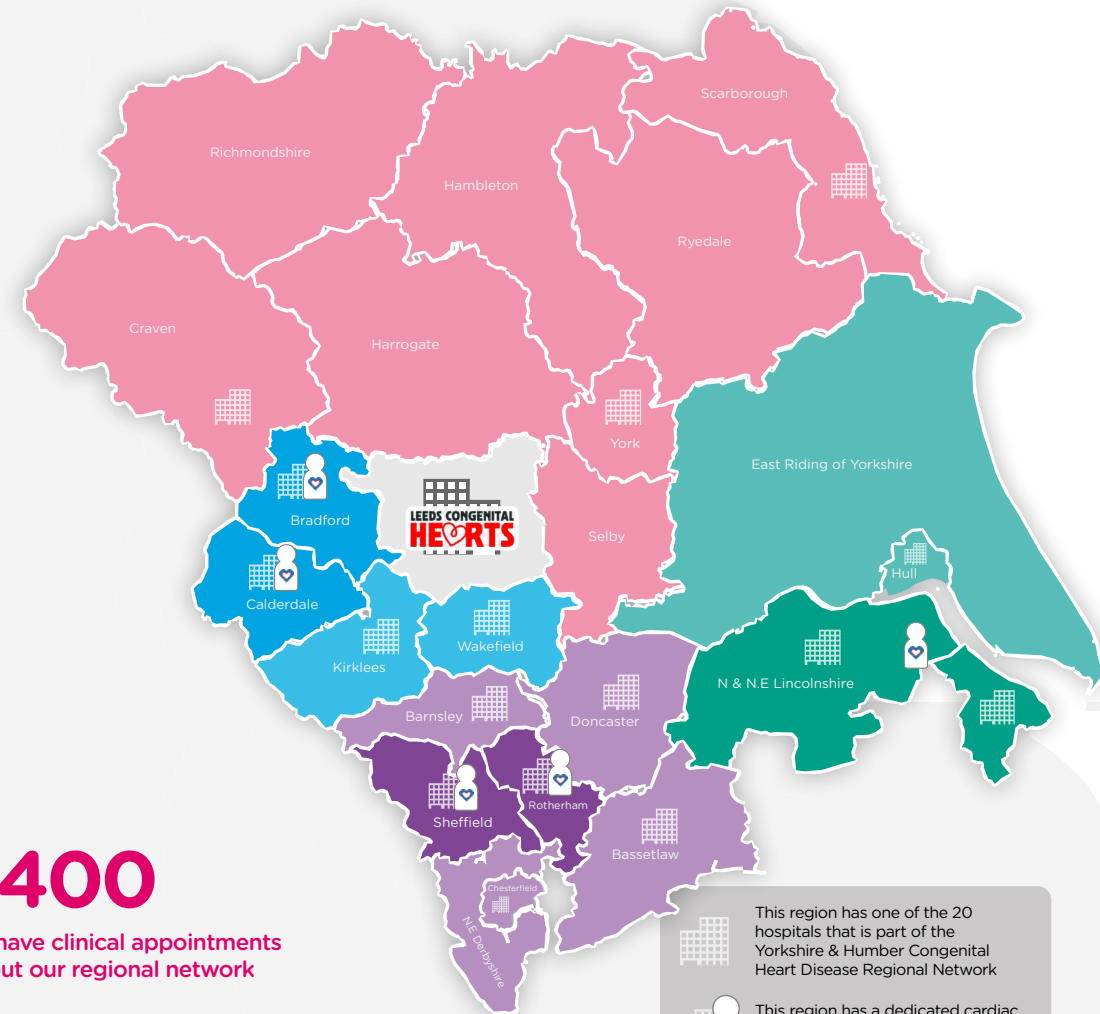
over  
**17,000**  
babies, children and adults  
are treated as outpatients

approx  
**385**  
have open  
heart surgery

approx  
**580**  
have interventional  
cardiac procedures

over  
**13,400**  
patients have clinical appointments  
throughout our regional network

As the **only dedicated heart charity for the region**, CHSF aims to support each and every one of these patients, and their families.



This region has one of the 20 hospitals that is part of the Yorkshire & Humber Congenital Heart Disease Regional Network

This region has a dedicated cardiac nurse specialist based at their local hospital

[About us](#)[Our impact in 2024](#)[Case studies](#)[Looking ahead](#)

Lu and Sarah - the CHSF Family Support team!

# Support for families

During 2024, **288 families received tailored support** from the CHSF Family Support team - a mix of wellbeing, practical and financial help.



In our 2024 annual survey, families **rated our Family Support service 5/5!**

*"We were so grateful for all the things provided for us - accommodation, financial support, essentials, vouchers for Tesco and the cafe and also a treat night out."*

*"There was always someone to speak to and discuss feelings and problems with. Being in hospital with your poorly child and then having to deal with everything else can be stressful but the immense support made things easier for parents."*

*"The staff are so good, caring and always there to help you. Kept coming to see how we were doing or if we needed anything. Helped a lot with vouchers and everything I needed. Not enough words to say thank you!"*

*"The team checked in with us on the wards and ensured we had the support we needed including financial and sibling support."*

From: Sarah CHSF

Subject: **Going the extra mile for mum...and baby!**

I recently supported a mum during her pregnancy to attend regular appointments at the LCHU's Fetal clinic. Mum had to be scanned regularly due to Baby's irregular heartbeat.

The family live in Hull and Mum travelled by train to Leeds weekly. CHSF funded the train tickets, and I met Mum at the station to help carry her bag which she brought to each appointment should they need to admit her to hospital.

When Mum was admitted for an emergency C-section I visited Mum on the delivery suite to take a care pack of toiletries and essential items. When I arrived I was told that Mum had already been taken to theatre and I was asked if I could arrange transport for Dad to come to Leeds to support Mum. After speaking to Dad we made a plan to purchase a train ticket to Leeds the following day due to commitments at home, as they have a young son.

The nurse told me how scared Mum was, and I felt that she needed support now more than ever and I wanted to be with her. I was given some scrubs and taken to Mum in theatre where I held her hand and wiped away her tears. We talked we cried and we laughed, whilst her beautiful baby girl was brought into the world.

A message from Mum and Baby, who is doing amazing and growing so fast: *"Hello, kind one, lovely soul, a sister I didn't have. Thank you for being by me always, thank you for the confidence you built in me in the theatre. Seeing you cry melted my heart. We love you so much and I know your family is grateful for your being. I know we have really stressed you and yet you are still cheerful. Thank you for all you have done and are still doing for us. God bless you greatly."*

Sarah x



[Find out more and request support >](#)



Youth support

- 67 Young people supported through our dedicated service
- 3 Youth events
- 3 Transition days
- 1 Dedicated [Youth Hub](#) on our website

Meet Lu, Family & Youth Support Worker and find out more about the impact of her role [here](#).



Comfort & Care packs

- 140 Comfort & Care packs delivered to families
- 47 Welcome to the World packs delivered
- 82 Emergency packs delivered



Vouchers

- 376 Tesco vouchers given to families
- 222 Meal vouchers for the hospital canteen

See how our Family Support team can help [here](#)





- ✓ **186** Travel grants completed to support parents when travelling to and from hospital while their child is being treated
- ✓ **12 months** The equivalent time of free parking given to parents



Travel help



Cardiac Cafes

### ✓ **6** Cardiac Cafes across the region

These social events are for parents and adult patients around the region, hosted by our Family Support team. We regularly invite guests from across the CHD network.

**They are now monthly - find your local events [here](#).**

These resources and experiences provide everything from days out to snacks, treats and a listening ear, and some have been kindly sponsored by partner organisations:

- **7** Wellbeing days provided to families and siblings of long term in-patients
- **28** Wellbeing Wednesdays delivered on Ward L51
- **62** parents supported through a wellbeing station in the Fetal Clinic



Wellbeing

# Support for families

[About us](#)[Our impact in 2024](#)[Case studies](#)[Looking ahead](#)

# 2555 nights

of parent accommodation provided each  
year, in CHSF's own rooms on  
Brotherton Wing



We also fund places in Eckersley House thanks  
to your donations, giving families vital respite,  
and saving countless hours of extra travel,  
cost and worry.

# accommodation

## Jude

Heart mum Sofie from Bolsover near Chesterfield found a nearby room incredibly important when little Jude was diagnosed with CHD at birth and needed surgery at just a few months old.

She said: *"The charity providing a 'home' for us parents at such a worrying time means the world and there aren't the words to thank CHSF enough for all they do"*

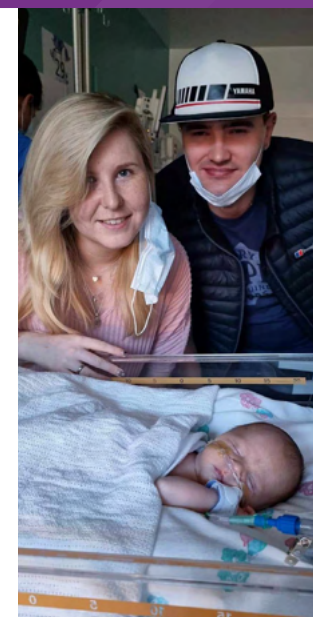
Photo: Jude and Sofie on the children's heart ward, Dec 2024

[Read more >](#)

## Finley

Heart mum Tamra lives in Malton. She told us why our parent rooms help her and her partner cope better throughout her son's hospital treatments...

She said: *"This is the second time we've stayed at LGI while Finley has had heart surgery. The CHSF rooms gave us somewhere to go to just clear your head. There's so much going on when you're on the wards it's nice to go away for a few hours. This is ideal when you need a place to go to just relax, have some food, space from the wards, and some rest so you have your energy for your poorly child."*

[Read more >](#)

Since our charity was founded in 1988, *many thousands* of families have stayed in CHSF-funded accommodation - thanks to you!



What you've funded

# Medical equipment

## 40 Blood pressure monitors

Blood pressure machines allow adult patients to manage their own health at home by monitoring and managing their blood pressure.

**Hannah Swift, Adult CHD Nurse Specialist** said:

*"These monitors funded by CHSF supporters have given patients the benefit of checking their blood pressure at home. Some congenital heart conditions mean that we need to be proactive in the monitoring of patients' blood pressure and it is much easier for patients to do this at home rather than attending appointments."*

*"Blood pressure monitoring can also be more accurate when the patient is in their own relaxed environment. Having access to these home monitors has aided the management of patient's blood pressure and reduced the need for hospital and GP appointments."*

*"The demand for remote monitoring has significantly increased, so we are very grateful."*



## 70 INR blood testing kits

An INR machine is a portable device which allows an individual to measure their own INR at frequent intervals. This is done via a machine which involves a finger prick, and a small amount of blood is analysed. Results can then be telephoned into the clinic.

Clinicians calculate that affected children attending mainstream school could miss up to half a day's education every week without these bits of equipment! **So these machines could have saved up to 1400 schooldays last year**, meaning young patients don't miss out on vital education!

They are also given to teenagers and adults. Read five good reasons why ALL our patients benefit from INR machines [on our blog](#).



Watch heart hero Roman showing us how he uses his INR machine

[WATCH NOW](#)



## 60 KardiaMobile personal ECG monitors

These transportable and easy to use devices are effectively personal ECG monitors, which work with smartphones..

They monitor heart rhythms amongst patients who have experienced symptoms, either providing peace of mind or vital data to enable clinicians to reach a diagnosis. A patient can simply email a reading straight to the heart unit!

Over recent years, CHSF have provided **hundreds** of Kardia mobiles to patients of all ages, and here's what their feedback tells us about the benefits:

"Simplicity & speed"

"Reassuring"

"Can be used by all patients"

"Avoids needless in-person appointments"

"Helps with diagnosis"

14-year-old **Jude** was diagnosed with supraventricular tachycardia (SVT) after using a Kardia device. [Read more](#)





What you've funded

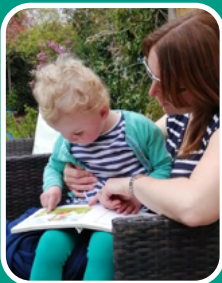
# Ward facilities



## 40 Kindles for PICU from Rose's Library

Heart hero Rose O'Leary-Hall died in September 2023 aged just 4, of an ultra-rare condition called Interrupted Aortic Arch, a congenital heart condition which affects one in 50,000 babies.

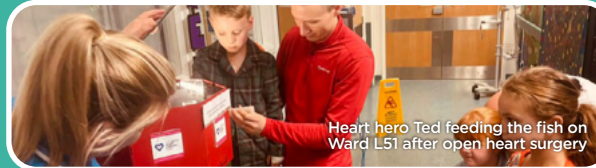
Around 40 Kindles have been purchased through CHSF thanks to donations from Rose's family and friends, and Run For All. They form **Rose's Library** within the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit in Leeds, where Rose and her family spent so much of their time during treatment.



Katie said: "Rose loved stories and it was one of the things that took her mind off being in hospital. We hope that Rose's Library will do the same for so many other children who have to stay in hospital. Rose would have loved the thought of it."

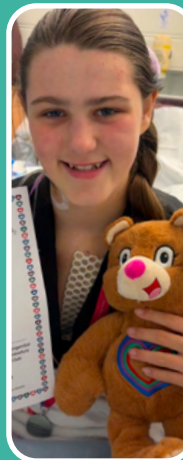
Read more about Rose's Library [here](#).

## Distraction & Wellbeing



### Fish tank on the heart ward

Ward 51's famous fish tank was once again funded by your generous donations in 2024. Children use the tank as a goal to walk towards while recovering from surgery, while others simply love chilling out with the fish. Read more about our fabulous fish tank [here](#).



### 250 Katie Bears given in 2024

Katie Bears and medals are given to every child who has open heart surgery at Leeds. They are treasured by patients and forever a symbol of their resilience. 13-year-old Grace has had numerous procedures to treat her poorly heart and Katie has been a comfort all through her journey. Read all about amazing Grace [here](#).

### Cot mobiles and mirrors

"The mirrors give a baby feedback to their smiles when parents are in need of a break and means they aren't laid on their back staring at a ceiling with no other means of stimulation."  
- Emma Marshall, Play Specialist Team Leader.

Read more on our blog [here](#).



## 80 Loop Recorder Penguins

Loop recorders are implanted monitoring devices which help identify or rule out cardiac reasons for symptoms such as palpitations.

Children and their families are often worried at the news there may be something wrong with their heart, and schools can be concerned about using an activator to record heart activity.

But these Loop Recorder Penguins are a product of 3D toyshop, a solo business in Leeds. They replicate the devices children have implanted and provide comfort, support and education.

**Xander's** mum, Tara told us: "He may be 11 and out of his 'teddy phase' but he loved receiving this penguin as it was the first time he had seen something fitted with a device like his. The penguin also comes with a 'clicker' which starts a reveal device when having a heart episode."

"This will help Xander understand more about what is actually in his chest when he has a new reveal device fitted. It has also been very helpful in explaining things to Xander's siblings - something as simple as this Teddy really does help so much."





What you've funded

# Staff, Training & Research



Paula Cowgill, CCNS in Calderdale Royal, whose role was funded by CHSF because of you!

## Local CCNS nurses

CHSF has been able to fund local Children's Cardiac Nurse Specialists (CCNS). They have become an extension of the Leeds team and their hard work is valued greatly.

In some cases these regional roles have been initially funded by CHSF, and then maintained by the particular Trust. There are currently regional CCNS's in post at hospitals in Sheffield, Grimsby, Scunthorpe, Rotherham, Bradford and Halifax.

Paula Cowgill works at Calderdale Royal, and her work in 2024 included:

**69** Electrocardiograms (ECGs) given to check a patient's heart activity

**10** patients given Kardia devices to check their heart rhythms at home

**92** parents were directed to further support within the hospital and externally

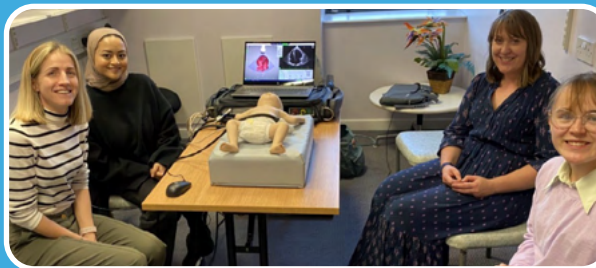
**151** patients got information to help manage their condition (e.g dental hygiene, endocarditis, diet and the basics of CPR on request of a parent)

**7** home visits to give continuity from clinic

Read more about the local CCNS's and their impact in [our blog](#).

## Echocardiogram Training

Rosie Brakefield was appointed as Lead Cardiac Physiologist for the Yorkshire and Humber Congenital Heart Disease network in 2024, thanks to CHSF supporters.



As part of her role, Rosie is facilitating essential training and support for echocardiographers across the region. These specialists use ultrasound devices to examine hearts of patients of all ages, and are vital in providing diagnosis, treatment and monitoring.

Rosie told us: "Since starting the role we have identified 3 trainees from across the network who have already gained some crucial skills that they can utilise across the network."

We are in discussion with one centre in South Yorkshire to set up an adult congenital heart disease (ACHD) clinic which would provide around 260 patients per year an opportunity to have the same follow up care as they receive in Leeds - but in their local hospital."

Rosie's role wouldn't have been possible without you - thank you!



## The Gerlis Project

Last century, Dr Leon Gerlis established a collection of 785 hearts with defects for scientific study. They are being brought to life in 'The Gerlis Project' - a set of stunning 3D holograms and models to help train cardiac surgeons.

CHSF, Heart Research UK and Leeds Hospitals Charity have jointly funded the project, led by cardiac surgeon Miss Carin van Doorn.

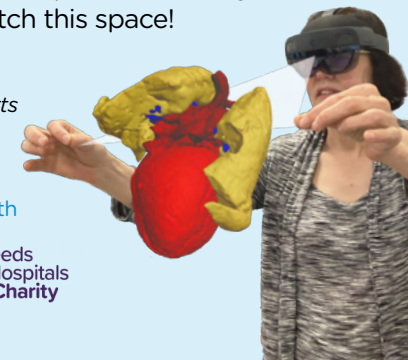
The research team have so far MRI-scanned 100 hearts from the Gerlis collection, each representing different types of congenital heart disease (CHD). The data is then being adapted to create holograms by Norwegian company Holocore which can be viewed and manipulated using virtual reality headsets.

**Miss Van Doorn** said: "As with all innovative projects, there are always some teething problems, but we are very excited with what has been achieved so far and look forward to building the other holograms."

This project will eventually open the Gerlis collection to many different groups for training and teaching. The digital archive will also enable access for research groups to further their understanding of CHD or help design new treatments.

We're really excited to be part of such a ground-breaking project - watch this space!

Photo: Ms Carin Van Doorn demonstrating the VR hearts



Funded in collaboration with



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Case study

# Speech & Language Therapist

**Around 60% of all patients who have cardiac surgery can be affected by swallowing problems, which creates difficulties around drinking and eating.**

This in turn can lead to delays in development and missed milestones as babies and children lack the nutrients they require to grow at a healthy rate.

In January 2024 with the help of Caddick Group and The Hospital Saturday Fund, CHSF funded a new Cardiac Speech & Language Therapist (SALT) at the Leeds Congenital Heart Unit, Jess Symonds.



SALT impact  
in 2024...

**100%**

**of high risk babies  
orally feeding at  
discharge**

*compared with 66% in 2023*

**69%**

**of patients referred on  
the same day**

*despite only being a 3-day  
week position*

**69%**

**of referred patients  
had an increase in their  
Paediatric Functional  
Oral Intake Scale  
(PFOIS) outcome  
measure score**

*PFOIS is a way to measure  
how well a child can eat and  
drink safely.*

**68**

**referrals to SALT  
Jan - Sept 2024**

*89% increase from 2023*

[Read more about Jess's role >](#)[Latest feedback >](#)

Thanks to your donations, the SALT team also received some new equipment and resources to help with clinic appointments and ongoing care.

A special play mat and chairs, along with special puree pouches and bite melt foods are being used for physiotherapy, speech and language assessments during high-risk clinics. [Read more...](#)

This role is only possible thanks to

**Caddick  
Group.**



**mazars**





## Case study

# Sensory trolley

**The Rhino Sensory Voyager Hurricane Trolley provides a much-needed immersive multi-sensory experience for children and young people with additional needs on the children's cardiac ward.**

The ward only had a limited supply of sensory lights and a small supply of suitable toys, and the play specialists were running out of options to offer these children.

As it is a mobile unit, this trolley transforms different areas of the ward into calming spaces. It turns the patient bedroom into a multi-sensory environment to create a relaxing ambience. It is particularly beneficial to patients stuck in side rooms where it changes the environment for them. If it stays in the playroom, it is switched on to provide a colourful and inviting space.

## The Play Team say...

*"The young patients lying down have been drawn to the moving colourful designs of the bright visual ceiling projector. The lights can be draped over cot sides and played with on a play mat, and the patient can press buttons to change the colour of the lights. Families have loved connecting to the Bluetooth facility to access music."* -- Anna Grisdale, Play Specialist

*"It is an invaluable piece of equipment which allows us to create a calming environment, a playful environment, a chill out zone or a safe space. It is surprisingly light to steer which ensures we do move it and use it regularly with all patients."* -- Emma Marshall, Senior Play Specialist



***"Hollie absolutely loves the coloured lights. It gives her a great distraction from other things around her. It's amazing that it is on wheels, so it comes right up to the bedside."***

-- Kim, Hollie's mum



This was only possible thanks to



Changing childhoods.  
Changing lives.



## Case study

# Revolutionary MRI care

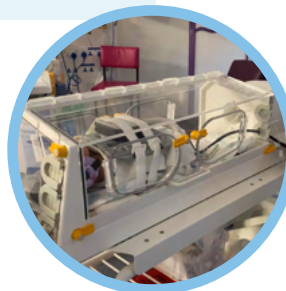
**New MRI equipment at the Leeds Congenital Heart Unit allows seamless and mobile monitoring of vital sign measurements in the poorest babies from the bedside before, during and after an MRI scan.**

The new MRI monitor, purchased thanks to donations from J9 Advisory, is completely MRI safe with no need to disturb the baby if they are sleeping (and risking the success of the MRI scan) to change monitoring equipment.

The monitor works alongside the state-of-the-art MRI Baby Incubator which was installed in 2021. *Leeds is the only European heart unit which can conduct MRI scans while a baby is awake in an incubator.*

In 2022, J9 Advisory also funded two infusion pumps for the incubator allowing the medical teams to continue giving lifesaving medications during the MRI scan.

*"This revolutionary MRI process is transforming how we look after and image the youngest patients - especially our newborn babies." -- Dr Malenka Bissell, Consultant in congenital cardiac MRI at Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust*



*"Just over 24 hours after Sophie was born, Dr Malenka came with the incubator to take Sophie to her MRI. After all the poking and prodding our babies have to go through with having congenital heart disease the MRI is extremely beneficial as it is completely non-invasive."*

-- Emma-Jane, Sophie's mum



This was only possible thanks to



and the support of their business contacts



## Case study

# Family & Youth Support Worker

**Thanks to your donations Lucy McMahon has been in the post of Family & Youth Support Worker within the Family Support team for over a year.**

On top of her general work supporting our families, in 2024 Lucy made a huge difference to the lives and wellbeing of 67 teenagers and young people transitioning or who have just transitioned to adult services.

## Lucy's vital work has included...

- A tailored support package for every teen, including referrals and signposting
- A series of events like online transition get-togethers, cardiac cafes and youth activities such as walking with Alpacas!
- Outpatient chats
- In-patient support including a listening ear, toiletry packages or ideas of fun things to do!
- Signposting local youth services and information e.g help completing application forms
- Developing a dedicated '[Youth Hub](#)' on the CHSF website



***"A huge thank you for helping us when my son Jack (17) was in Leeds recently for emergency open heart surgery. CHSF's support, information packs, vouchers, treats, Xbox from TheRockinR and presence made Jack's time on Ward L16 much easier. Thank you."***



***"Reflecting on this year, it's clear that the work we're doing at CHSF is making a meaningful difference for children, young people, and their families. From hospital wards to community events, each initiative has provided opportunities for connection and support."*** -- Lucy McMahon, Family & Youth Support Worker

[Read more about Lucy's Impact in 2024 >](#)[Visit the Youth Hub >](#)

This role is only possible thanks to





## An introduction to our **2025-26 Strategy**



### Supporting heart families every step of the way

We exist so children, adults, and families affected by congenital heart disease (CHD) can live empowered lives by providing practical, emotional, and financial support. This includes:

- **Family Support:** Tailored help and support for families and young people, helping with travel costs, parent accommodation, and providing Comfort and Care Packs for hospital stays.
- **Wellbeing & Community:** Offering parent and patient support like Cardiac Cafés and organising events to bring heart families together
- **Support for young patients:** Providing a dedicated Family & Youth Support Worker, as well as special touches like Katie Bears, medals and certificates to celebrate every step of a heart warrior's journey

### Funding life-saving resources beyond the NHS

We work alongside families, medical teams, charities and businesses to fund essential roles, equipment and research that go beyond the limits of NHS resources. This includes:

- **Funding key NHS roles:** Helping to establish crucial positions like local Congenital Cardiac Nurse Specialists to support heart patients across the region
- **Providing vital medical equipment:** Working with teams at the Leeds Congenital Heart Unit to fund specialist equipment and training
- **Partnering with other charities:** Supporting essential projects like Eckersley House, run by The Sick Children's Trust, to ensure as many families as possible can stay close to their loved ones during treatment

Our strategic objectives for 2025-26 were devised using feedback from supporters and families in our 2024 surveys, and further refined within CHSF staff workshops. **Thank you to everyone involved!**



## Looking ahead

“I am excited to join the charity at the beginning of our new strategy and to lead the organisation through our next stage of development.

“In 2025, we are working on improving our supporter database and website, so we can give you the information you need more efficiently, and improve our services.

“We will continue to develop mutually beneficial relationships with businesses to help fund continued family support and NHS resources. We are also looking to expand the CHSF team this year so more families and patients can become empowered. Watch this space!

“A huge thank you to all our supporters for the huge difference they make - we are 100% self-funded and need ongoing help to empower the lives of patients and their families across our region.

“Please do get in touch if you or your business can help CHSF in our vital mission.”

**Ruth Davany**  
CEO

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**CHILDREN'S  
HEART  
SURGERY  
FUND**

**Children's Heart Surgery Fund**

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