



London's
Air Ambulance
Charity

LONDON'S AIR AMBULANCE CHARITY

ANNUAL REVIEW 2023/24



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ABOUT US

We are the only air ambulance service attending to the 10 million people who visit, live and work in our capital. When someone in London is so critically injured that they do not have time to get to hospital, our advanced trauma teams are there, whether by helicopter or rapid response car.

We bring the emergency department to the roadside, delivering a doctor and paramedic team who can perform life-saving procedures, some of which only we can administer on scene in London.

For 35 years, we have been there for all of London, travelling across the city within minutes to provide vital treatment at the scene.

Our vision is to end preventable deaths in London from life-threatening injury. Our mission – to save more lives in London through rapid response and cutting-edge care. We are a charity that works alongside the NHS, with 95 per cent of our funding reliant on public support.

We also provide the Physician Response Unit, a unique community emergency medicine service that delivers safe, effective and patient-centred emergency care in North East London.

Whether it’s large-scale tragedy or individual incidents, we are there for London 24/7, 365 days a year. Thanks to your support, we can be there when someone needs us most.



CHAIR'S STATEMENT

BOB FORSYTH, CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

This has been a significant period of change for the charity. Not only has the Directors' Group been driving our largest appeal ever, but it has been facilitating the programme required to ready our people and processes for the new fleet operations. As an ambitious service, thoughts are now turning to what the future holds and we are now planning for our new 15 year strategy, which we will launch publicly in 2025.

The new strategy will reset the charity's ambitions for a new period of innovation of clinical care in the pre-hospital environment. There will be a new vision and mission to inspire our work, alongside new objectives and outcomes that will focus what we do. The strategy will take us through to 2039 and the charity's 50th anniversary and it is exciting to be at the start of this journey.

I have to give a massive thank you to all our donors who have helped us this financial year. You have been amazing! We are approaching our Up Against Time appeal target and the new state-of-the-art aircraft will improve our resilience and ensure that we can keep flying for many years to come.



Through our partnership with the London Ambulance Service (LAS) and Barts Health NHS Trust (Barts Health) the joint service has continued to provide world-leading trauma care which we continue to innovate, whilst looking to extend pre-hospital care into medical cases such as certain cardiac arrests and the introduction of pre-hospital extra corporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) very close to being launched.

On behalf of all our patients, let me thank again all our donors, volunteers and supporters who help this service keep at the cutting edge of pre-hospital medicine. I would also like to recognise HRH The Prince of Wales for his active patronage and leadership support, the value of which cannot be overstated.

The trustees of this incredible charity feel privileged to be part of this joint service and have continued to do our best to reach the same world class governance quality that our clinical and operations teams pursue.

Thanks to all of you, the service is in a strong position to protect more and more Londoners for the foreseeable future.

CEO'S STATEMENT

JONATHAN JENKINS,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



This year we marked our 35th anniversary. A milestone like this is always a good time to reflect and take stock.

What strikes me most about looking back over our 35 years is that the charity and the service has always looked forward. The operational crew never rest on their laurels – it is why they have introduced world first pre-hospital procedures like resuscitative endovascular balloon occlusion of the aorta (REBOA) and blood transfusions and now they are working on their next clinical innovations that can save the next generation of trauma patients.

The charity also has never been content to sit still. We are a regional charity but we think big. Over 35 years we have been part of national TV documentaries, secured multi-million donations and in 2019 welcomed our new royal patron to the charity.

So it is no surprise that the theme for the work we have undertaken over the last year really has been “momentum”. Every aspect of the service and charity continues to look ahead, striving to achieve its goals. The focus has been on the Up Against Time appeal, making sure we reach our £15 million target to replace the helicopters, but at the same time we have been driving forward with new projects and campaigns across the organisation.

These have been wide-ranging, from technical projects that support teams to work smarter and better, with progress on our new CRM system for the charity and also data transformation for our clinical teams moving forward.

We have always known that a majority of Londoners still don't realise we are a charity and we have been bold with our messaging to try and reverse the misconception that we are NHS funded. We have launched a London-wide out of home advertising campaign and secured impressive media coverage of our work including the BBC London live broadcast.

Fundraisers have kept this level of work up with a hugely successful Big City Collection in the autumn, the launch of the London Legends project, a programme of successful challenge events and six-figure donations and corporate support secured.

At the end of the financial year in March 2024 the appeal was at £8.4 million raised. The charity held its most successful ever gala, raising £1.5 million towards the appeal thanks to the tireless work from our Philanthropy Board and with the support of our patron HRH The Prince of Wales. We are so grateful for their backing and belief in our vital cause.

The sheer ambition and scope of our work over the last year is only possible through wide-ranging support and that is where we are so lucky. Our partners Barts Health and LAS continue to enable our work and the

tripartite goes from strength to strength. Our volunteers provide thousands of hours of help – from office work to bucket shaking and everything in between – to ensure we can raise funds. Our donors back us with their hard-earned pounds and make sure we make the £15 million each year it costs to deliver the service. Not to forget our frontline crew, who support us in their own time, always going above and beyond. Thank you to every single person who is involved. You are all life-savers.

So our momentum carries us on, but as always, every project we have undertaken is for one reason – to help our patients. To recognise that our work goes beyond the frontline care and also encompasses the aftermath of trauma, this year we also launched a world-first resource for those who sadly know someone that we couldn't save – our bereavement booklet, which aims to be a guide and solace to those who may find themselves having to navigate the painful path of sudden and unexpected loss. My thoughts are with all those that we have treated, their loved ones and families. My aim is to ensure that our momentum continues so that we remain able to do our very best for people when there is no other hope available to them.

SUPPORTING OUR PATIENTS

SARAH DE LAGARDE'S STORY

On 30 September 2022, on her way home from work, Sarah slipped and fell between the platform gap and the door of an underground train at High Barnet. With no one having witnessed the fall, the train departed and another one arrived. Sarah was left bleeding on the tracks, severely injured.

Sarah was on the tracks for 15 minutes before the alarm was raised. Someone struck by a train is an immediate dispatch for London's Air Ambulance's advanced trauma team, hence our crew was dispatched within two minutes of the 999 call.

From the platform, the severity of Sarah's injuries was obvious. She was awake and talking – which on its own was surprising given what had happened – and the team were able to see that Sarah had a near complete amputation of her arm and a complete amputation to her leg. The immediate priority was therefore to work with the London Fire Brigade (LFB) to extricate her from under the train as it is impossible to treat someone in that very confined space.

Upon extrication to the platform, the team worked with LAS paramedics, police and LFB to quickly treat Sarah. They sedated her to enable them to manage and dress the wounds to her limbs. A tourniquet had already been applied to her leg and another was applied to her arm. Sarah was then carried to a waiting ambulance and while being transported to hospital had antibiotics and more painkillers administered.



GOING INTO THEATRE AT 03:00 I HAD TO SIGN A CONSENT FORM - WITH MY NON-DOMINANT HAND - TO GIVE MY PERMISSION TO HAVE MY LIMBS AMPUTATED. I ALSO HAD TO CALL MY HUSBAND TO TELL HIM I HAD BEEN RUN OVER BY NOT ONE, BUT TWO TRAINS."

Unfortunately, Sarah had to undergo surgery to have both her right arm and leg fully amputated.

Two years later, after intense rehab and an immense fundraising challenge, Sarah is now living at home with her family, using a prosthetic leg and an AI-powered, robotic, bionic arm.

"Going back to work was good, it gave me a sense of purpose again and helped me reclaim some of myself. Now, I want to do what I can to help people understand what an essential service London's Air Ambulance Charity is."

In September 2023, Sarah nominated the crew from London's Air Ambulance who attended to her that night for The Sun's Who Cares Wins 999 hero award. At the awards ceremony hosted by Davina McCall and attended by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, it was announced that the team, Dr Benjamin Marriage and Paramedics Kevin Cuddon and Chris Doyle had won.

"That evening was brilliant," said Sarah. "It was just a small gesture to say thank you to the team, but also to draw attention to these jobs themselves. We need to inspire the younger generation to follow in these heroes' footsteps."

BEING THERE FOR LONDON, 24/7

Our primary purpose as a charity - achieved alongside our partners LAS and Barts Health - is to provide critically injured patients with the world's most innovative and effective pre-hospital care.

The service is operational 24/7, with three medical teams: Medic 1 is the duty team from 07:00 to 19:00, Medic 2 from 19:00 to 07:00 and Medic 3 (which was launched in 2021) working Monday to Saturday from 14:00 to 24:00.

Our clinical model remains a doctor-paramedic partnership model, with consultants also available 06:30 to 24:00.

In the financial year ending 31 March 2024, the service treated 2,000 patients suffering from trauma and other medical emergencies. (2,037 in 2023).



OUR 2023/24 YEAR IN NUMBERS:



MISSION MAP

2023/24



PATIENT DESTINATIONS

In the majority of our cases, our medical team will stabilise the patient on scene so that they can then be taken to the nearest major trauma centre in a land ambulance, provided by London Ambulance Service. Our medics will accompany the patient in the land ambulance.



- The Royal London Hospital (38%)
- St Mary's Hospital (27%)
- King's College Hospital (18%)
- St George's Hospital (13%)
- Other (4%)

PROGRESS UPDATES

FROM ACROSS THE CHARITY



Our MD902 helicopter

NEW HELICOPTERS

The charity operates a fleet of two helicopters, so that we can still reach patients if one helicopter experiences mechanical issues or is undergoing routine maintenance. It also provides greater resilience for London in the event of a major incident. Our current helicopters – MD902's – have served us very well for over 20 years. However, the number of MD902 models is in decline in the UK. As a result, our current fleet has become difficult to maintain and find parts for.

In 2022 we launched our biggest ever appeal – the Up Against Time appeal – to raise an additional £15 million required to buy two new Airbus H-135 T3H helicopters and fit them out to our specifications. At the end of the financial year, the charity had raised £8.4 million, the majority of this income generated through our Philanthropy, Partnerships and Special Events programmes.

We have received over £3 million from charitable trusts, philanthropists, foundations and Livery Companies towards our new helicopters, with cornerstone support from London Freemasons (£1.7 million of their £3 million pledge) and Julia & Hans Rausing (£1 million). Our Black and White Gala in February 2024 raised gross income of £1.5 million, significantly exceeding the income of our 2022 gala. Our fundraising continues in order to ensure that our new helicopters will be operational in autumn 2024.



PHYSICIAN RESPONSE UNIT (PRU)

Alongside the HEMS trauma team, the PRU continues to provide care for patients every day through the provision of Community Emergency Medicine. In the financial year 2023/24, the PRU treated 3,816 patients (3,502 in 2022/23), of whom 73% were managed in the community rather than being conveyed to hospital via an ambulance.

Passing its 20th anniversary, it has been decided that the PRU will transition to a wholly NHS funded service. London's Air Ambulance Charity will continue its role in supporting the PRU operationally and financially until 2026, and discussions are ongoing with the NHS around the future funding model. The PRU continues to receive excellent patient feedback and is playing an important role providing emergency medical treatment to patients with complex medical needs in their own homes.

PROGRESS UPDATES

FROM ACROSS THE CHARITY

DATA AND TECHNOLOGY

As part of our digital strategy programme, 2023/24 saw the launch of a new software system, Centrik (Trustflight Limited), for helipad operations management. Onboarding Centrik is a key part of our aviation safety and risk management improvement because reporting and compliance management are integrated with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) communication and with regulatory updates. Centrik also addresses other longer-term digital strategic objectives around document management, workflows and training for the clinical and operations teams.

Strict data and confidentiality restrictions mean it is difficult to quantify the impact and contribution we make to our patients' outcomes, however we're continuing our digital strategy to enhance research and understanding. Outstanding pre-hospital care is recognised as an important contributor to the documented significant improvements in trauma mortality in the UK. In hospital our patients often undergo complex treatment and rehabilitation via various care providers due to the severity of their injuries. We plan to focus on data quality, data sharing and integration with wider NHS and research endeavours to improve our understanding of patient outcomes and provide the infrastructure to support our research.



THE INSTITUTE OF PRE-HOSPITAL CARE

The Institute of Pre-Hospital Care is the training and education department of London's Air Ambulance Charity that delivers training to our own clinical teams and to other UK and international clinicians.

Our two degree programmes are run in partnership with Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) and Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry. We had 43 MSc students and 17 BSc students in the 2023/24 year. Both programmes attended two symposiums this academic year: Toxicology Symposium and Resuscitation Science Symposium kindly supported by Zoll. In addition to the running of the degree programmes the agreement between QMUL and London's Air Ambulance Charity was successfully renegotiated for a further five years.

RESEARCH

Members of our team from multiple disciplines participate in research and quality improvement projects and work in the fields of ECMO, REBOA and thoracotomy has been submitted or accepted for publication.

London's Air Ambulance is a key participant in the national randomised controlled trial of whole blood versus standard of care for bleeding patients. Along with other air ambulances and Barts Health we have funded this SWIFT trial and our clinical service is the largest contributor of patients to it. In addition, we have been recruiting patients to the ReWiRe trial – a randomised controlled trial involving a heart-protecting drug to treat patients in severe shock.

We are working in collaboration on projects with colleagues at the local level such as the Centre for Trauma Sciences at Queen Mary, University of London and LAS. In addition, we are building new partnerships with colleagues from air ambulance services across the UK through our participation in the National HEMS Research and Audit Forum.



FINANCE UPDATE

THE COST OF DELIVERING OUR SERVICE

In 2023/24, it cost the charity £16.8 million to provide London with our 24/7 advanced trauma service. Expenditure during the year included the maintenance and fuel costs for our two helicopters and eight rapid response cars, operational and charity staff salaries, medical and training equipment, and fundraising costs. Some costs are paid by London Ambulance Service NHS Trust and Barts Health NHS Trust as part of the partnership that provides our service: Barts Health NHS Trust provide our doctors and our helipad facility at The Royal London Hospital, while London Ambulance Service provide our paramedics who are seconded to the service. We do not employ our medical team directly, therefore the true cost of the service is not represented in our audited accounts.

WHERE OUR FUNDING CAME FROM

We are a charity and rely on voluntary support to run our service – 95% of our income comes from public support. During this financial year, we raised £24 million thanks to the continued generosity of our supporters. This is an increase of 49% year on year, which is an exceptional increase due to the included £6.1 million restricted income for our Up Against Time appeal, which brought the appeal total to £8.4 million.

INCOME BREAKDOWN BY CHANNEL

- Individual giving £7,438k (32%)
- Philanthropy, Partnerships and Special Events £6,715k (28%)
- Lottery and trading £5,774k (24%)
- Legacies £1,562k (6%)
- Community fundraising £1,117k (5%)
- Investments £580k (2%)
- Charitable activities £555k (2%)
- Gifts in kind £336k (1%)



HOW RESILIENT ARE WE?

Our board have agreed to hold no less than six months’ running costs in free reserves – this does not include costs that are covered by our restricted or designated funds which include our Up Against Time appeal and smaller restricted projects. At the end of financial year 2023/24, our free reserves were £14.1 million, sufficient to fund 10 months of future budgeted running costs.

Our designated funds stand at £4.1 million and have been earmarked towards the cost of new helicopters and the CRM project. Our restricted reserves of £8.7 million include the £8.4 million for the new helicopters, which is expected to be spent by autumn 2024.

As a charity we maintain the balance between ensuring we are spending all funds as diligently as possible whilst ensuring we have the best people to ensure the safe and effective running of the charity, service and fleet. Our trustees stringently review our expenditure and reserves policy on an annual basis.

We are putting together a long-term strategy in the form of our 15-year vision to ensure we can continue saving lives for many years to come. A financial surplus in future years will enable us to invest in new strategic clinical and operational projects to continue improving our service.

OUR FUNDRAISING STRATEGY

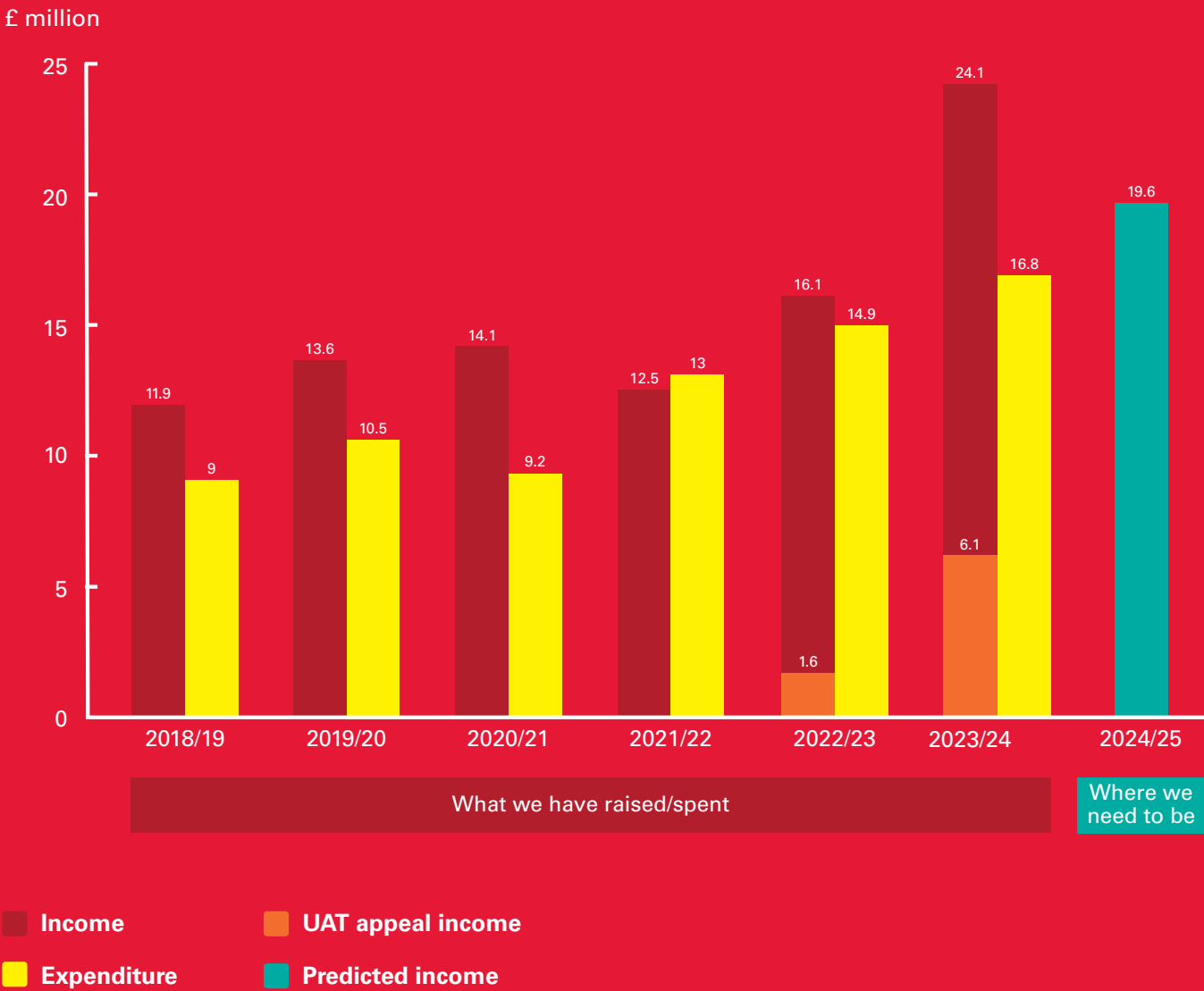
We aim to develop diverse and sustainable income streams to ensure our financial security and fund our organisational objectives.

The Up Against Time appeal, to raise £15 million for two new helicopters, is predominantly funded by higher return on investment (ROI) streams such as gifts from private philanthropists, charitable foundations and corporate organisations. Appeal income is allocated 100% to a restricted fund, with the fundraising costs to be borne by the charity’s unrestricted reserves.

Our charity’s business as usual (BAU) is primarily funded by lower ROI unrestricted mass market products, such as face-to-face fundraising, which raises both individual and lottery donations and represents approximately 55% of our income.

We are working to ensure that our BAU fundraising covers a diverse range of income types, including our regular givers as well as higher ROI income such as legacies.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE HISTORY



THE YEAR IN HIGHLIGHTS 2023-2024



OUR FUTURE STRATEGY

The charity developed its mission statement and strategic objectives in 2018 and undertook a strategy review in 2020. Our mission remains the same:

‘To save more lives in London through rapid response and cutting-edge care’

There are five current strategic goals to achieve this. Our plans through to 2025 are set out against these goals. We are currently creating a 15 year strategy to run from the beginning of 2025 through to 2039, our 50th anniversary. This will be published in early 2025.



01

SAVE TIME

Treat everybody who needs us, when and where they need us.



02

OUTSTANDING CARE

To improve patient care and end preventable deaths.



03

CONNECTING WITH THE PEOPLE OF LONDON

To increase the number of charity givers in London who support our service and understand we are a charity.



04

OUR CULTURE

To continue to develop a supportive and enabling environment that gets the best out of our people from both the charity side and the integrated operations with our partners, ensuring that our trustees are engaged and involved in this work.



05

FUNDING OUR AMBITIONS

To ensure our financial security and sustainability and fund our organisational objectives, secure long-term diverse sustainable income streams.



THANK YOU

We couldn't do what we do without our supporters. Donating, playing our lottery, sacrificing their time, committing to challenges – every generous action helps us be there when someone needs us.

Whether you have been with us from the start or have more recently joined our team, thank you. We are proud to be funded by you.

Ambassadors

Lord Maxwell Beaverbrook
Ward Hamilton
Bernardo Hartogs
Mike Hussey
Sir George Iacobescu CBE
Dr Hilary Jones
Julia Leal-Hartogs
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Radnor House School, Twickenham
Risebridge Golf Club
Swanlea School, Tower Hamlets



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You can read our Privacy Policy online:

londonsairambulance.org.uk/privacy

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