



# **The joy you bring** to children and families

Highlights 2022/23



**CHAS**

Children's Hospices Across Scotland

# Welcome

We are extremely thankful to all our supporters who enable us to provide unwavering care for children who may die young and their families, at every step on this hardest of journeys.

With love and compassion, we offer highly personalised care in hospice, home and hospital.

Knowing that your child may die before you is the unthinkable reality that thousands of families across Scotland have to face every day.

With your support, we will make sure that no-one should face the death of their child alone.



## Watch our inspiring film

Watch our short film to find out more about the amazing work we do – visit [bit.ly/showcase-film](https://bit.ly/showcase-film) or scan the QR code.



Hi My Name IS Hollie. Chas has helped me alot and I love swimming and also on going days out Roller SKating and other things. I also love the art room.

I loved all the activity packs they sendt me It help me not be bored I Was Never bored With the packs I enjoyed doing them so mach.

The staff at chas are very helpfuc and I love helping them do Jobs. Im so thankful for all the help they gave me all 13 Years Ive went to chas.

Love Hollie  
xxx



## Hollie's letter

We make things possible so that children have the freedom to be themselves, play outside, laugh, and have treasured moments of joy. Hollie, age 13, has written a letter to tell us what she loves the most about CHAS.

hollie





# Time is precious

Thanks to your loving care, we helped children and their families to make the most of their time together, no matter how short.

Together, we make extraordinary things happen every day.

## Being together as a family

Rachel House and Robin House were busy this year.

As well as end of life care, our hospices provided specialised care so families can have a break from round-the-clock care and enjoy the chance to spend quality time together, and to make precious memories.

Jessica has an exceptionally rare combination of Down's Syndrome and Achondroplasia, and is only the seventh known case. Her mum Lyn and dad Ed, tell us what they love about their visits to CHAS:

"When we go to Robin House, we can let go of all the worry and stress. Staff know what we're going through and how to look after Jessica.

They take care of everything and we can just be together as a family and have fun. Going to Robin House is our holiday.

We often miss a lot of things because Jessica can become unwell very suddenly and go into hospital."



Jessica designed this letter because she loves going outside and seeing the birds.



## Our memories

“CHAS has been amazing and has helped us experience lots of important ‘firsts’ as a family.



We had our first sit down family meal together at Robin House, and Jessica had her first swim in the pool.



Jessica had her very first real birthday party in Robin House this year when she turned five. Every other birthday, Jessica has been ill or been in hospital. The staff even arranged for some princesses to attend!



At Christmas, Jessica and James went to a special Christmas light show and met Santa. This was the first time Jessica had ever met Santa and done any kind of Christmas activity together with her brother James.”



“ Jessica is now five but with her condition, we don't know what her future is going to be like. It's so important to us that we're able to make memories together. It means the world to us.

”

**Thanks to you, this year we were able to open up Rachel House and Robin House for more respite care as Covid restrictions fully lifted.**

Since last year:

**77% increase** in admissions

**51% increase** in overnight stays for babies, children and young people

**85% increase** in overnight stays for their families







# The heart of family homes and communities

Your compassion and kindness enabled our outreach service to take care into the heart of family homes and communities.

## CHAS at Home is my lifeline

Reece was diagnosed with Batten's disease for which there is no cure. Doctors told Reece's family his life expectancy would be up to 12 years. He is now aged nine, can't walk or talk, is blind, takes regular seizures and is fed through a tube.

Mum Donna explains more, "Watching Reece go from a normal wee boy to this has been devastating.

The difference the CHAS at Home team has made is unbelievable. They help and support me to give Reece the very best care, and are always able to offer advice or reassure me.

It's not just about respite, we've had some wonderful days out that we will treasure always.



REECE

The Cairngorm reindeers were so gentle with Reece, and watching them eat from Reece's lap was so special. And the Christmas party, organised by CHAS, was great fun – it was so nice to be around other families who understand."



## Did you know?

Our CHAS at Home team made **1,295 visits** to families at home, providing a lifeline to those who cannot make the journey to our hospices.

## Music in hospital

In partnership with Nordoff and Robbins, we opened a new world for children in hospital.

Alison Ringrose, our Activities Facilitator, is passionate about the benefits of our virtual music therapy sessions which are individually tailored for each child.

"Every child is unique and gets different things out of it, but the thing I love most is seeing the joy in their eyes because they're so happy.

Rowan has Pfeiffer Syndrome and Midface Hypoplasia, and is in hospital long-term. He is non-verbal and non-mobile, so music therapy gives him the opportunity to express himself. Rowan loves dance music so his sessions are very high energy! He's very enthusiastic and he can hold maracas, so he loves to shake them.

The enthusiasm and happiness from Rowan spreads to the people around him and lifts the mood in the hospital ward – and that's the power of music!"

“ Rowan is bursting with so much happiness and love and energy when music is playing, and especially when I sing to him. It makes my heart melt so much.

Rowan's mum

”



rowan

### Did you know?

- Thanks to you, we were able to bring joy and laughter to children all over Scotland. We held **236 virtual events**, including 69 Clowndoctors visits and 68 music therapy sessions.
- 178 children, families, staff and volunteers came together to write and record an original song called 'Music and Me'. To hear their fantastic song, visit [bit.ly/music-and-me](https://bit.ly/music-and-me) or scan the QR code.





# Here for the whole family

We provided care for the entire family and not just the child who is ill. With your love and support, we will be there for them and when they need us.

More families asked for help this year and we were able to respond, thanks to you.

Our Family Support team helped:

- **193 children**  
- **25% increase from last year**
- **703 family members**  
- **22% increase from last year**



**For every child that we care for,  
we provide crucial support for  
around four other family members.**



## Individual support

The Family Support team offers support that is suited to the family's individual needs including:

- emotional support when times are tough;
- practical support such as accessing funding and benefits;
- social workers to advocate for families to access social care and support;
- supporting young people who are transitioning to adult services;
- therapeutic play such as music therapy;
- bereavement support;
- and chaplaincy.



## Cost of living crisis

The cost of living crisis touches all of our lives. Thanks to your support, our Family Income Maximisation team helped struggling families, like Valerie's, to access essential funding and benefits.

Mum Valerie said, "Kayden relies on a lot of equipment – all of which can be expensive to run when you add it all up. Our rent in our private accommodation also went up.

We are now in a much more comfortable position financially which has relieved a lot of stress. I honestly can't thank CHAS enough for their support."



Kayden

## Did you know?

We secured over **£100,000** worth of essential grants for families to help with rising costs.

We also secured funding for two advisors to help families with energy costs, and to provide emergency vouchers to keep the electricity and gas on.



## Home Support Volunteer service

Balancing family life and work is hard, and our volunteer-led Home Support Volunteer Service made **291 visits** to take away some of the stress facing families.

Trained volunteers visit families at home to help with every day household tasks and support for siblings.

Volunteer Lynn visits ten-year-old Logan and says it's a real pleasure to spend

time with him and his family, "Lots of professionals come into their home to help support his sister, so Logan enjoys my visits – time just for him.

We have an afternoon full of fun – like building dens, creating lego worlds, or making slime together. I love making this happen for him."

# No-one should face the death of their child alone

As well as creating moments of joy, we were able to stand with families during moments of profound sadness because of your loving care.

## Giving families choices

Our Diana Children's Nurses (DCNs), based in all Scottish children's hospitals, are at the heart of making sure that families facing the death of their child do so with the very best care and support around them.

Louise Esson, is our DCN based in the Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital, and explains, "I work alongside staff in the hospital and in the community, providing clinical leadership and support in the planning and delivery of children's palliative care.

“ It's a privilege to be part of a family's journey. People say we're amazing but it's the parents who are amazing. We give them the strength to have a good death. There is peace in a good death. ”

Sometimes a family wishes to be at home and we do everything we can to make it happen. Working collaboratively in this way enables more professionals in the local community to deliver end of life care, particularly for families living in remote and rural areas such as Aberdeenshire.

We all work together to give families the best care and a greater choice about their preferred place of death – whether it's at home, hospital, or hospice.”



## Working in partnership in hospitals

Thanks to you, we have staff in all children's hospitals in Scotland which is vital to achieve our ambition that no-one should face the death of their child alone. Our joint CHAS/NHS teams are helping hundreds of children have access to specialised palliative care who otherwise would not.



## A meaningful goodbye

We help families to say goodbye to their loved ones in their own way and in their own time.

Aaron

freya

Juliette

Aaron was nine-years-old when he died. Mum Rachel recalls, "Aaron spent his last hours with his whole family around him at Rachel House. He was tucked in with his dinosaur duvet and hearing the nurses talk to him and play his favourite music gave us comfort."

Baby Freya lived for 83 minutes. Mum Kathleen said, "My recollection of the whole experience was that it was calm, peaceful, settled. Robin House is always going to be a special place – it's Freya's place – it's the only place she really spent any time."

Aude's baby died during pregnancy. Aude says, "It was difficult and felt abrupt to say goodbye to Juliette. Going to Robin House to process our loss and spend time together as a family was priceless."

“Through knowing Juliette we learned that life has meaning and a purpose no matter how short. The whole team at CHAS were truly amazing at helping us to process our grief.  
Juliette's mum

”

### Bereavement support

Thanks to your support, we have established a new bereavement team who will extend the support we offer to bereaved families – and not just parents, but siblings, grandparents and extended family too.



# Every penny counts

We are extremely grateful for your kindness and generosity. Together we have raised an incredible **£11.3 million** from donations, gifts in Wills, our charity shops and Ardoch Loch Lomond.



Our Kiltwalkers jointly covered **9,581 miles** at Kiltwalk events – this is the equivalent of walking around Scotland's coastline one and a half times.



Over **1,400** people attended our CHAS Ladies Lunches, Rocking Horse Ball and Winter Wonderland events raising over **£570,000**.



Our community supporters raised over **£3,000** from making and selling knitted Easter chicks and Christmas puddings filled with chocolate.

Our virtual community took part in running, walking, squats and crochet challenges to raise over **£146,000**.





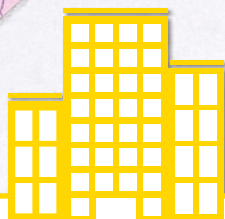
We received an incredible **£3.8 million** in legacies. We are grateful to so many people who have expressed a wish to leave a gift in their Will to CHAS.



Our generous supporters responded to our Cost of Living Crisis Appeal raising over **£46,000**.



Over **120,000kg** of pre-loved items, such as clothes, bric-a-brac and toys, were donated to our shops – almost the same weight as an adult blue whale.



Our corporate partners raised an incredible **£1.1 million** – **£400,000** more than expected.

Ardoch Loch Lomond, our exclusive use venue which was donated to us in 2019, is helping us raise money and is available for meetings, conferences, celebrations, weddings, retreats and wellbeing gatherings.



Whilst the majority of our income comes from the generosity of the public, we are also very grateful to the Scottish Government and local government across Scotland whose contributions enables us to provide our vital services.



To find out ways you can help, visit [chas.org.uk/get-involved](https://chas.org.uk/get-involved) or scan the QR code.

# Your support changes lives

**None of our work would be possible without you.**

Thanks to you, together we can be there for every family – to make things possible to have treasured moments of joy; and to be there in the really tough days, at the end of life, and after a child dies.

“ I wish we didn't need CHAS, but my goodness, my life would not be as full.  
CHAS mum ”







# Your £1



Goes directly to  
our activities  
to help families.



Helps us raise the  
next pound and  
grow our services  
in the future.

The Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23 is available  
to view at [www.chas.org.uk](http://www.chas.org.uk)

Our volunteers who donate their time, energy and  
passion are at the heart of our mission to reach  
every family in Scotland who needs us. We want to  
say a heartfelt thank you to all our volunteers who  
gave **38,302 hours** this year.

# CHAS reaches families all across Scotland in home, hospice and hospital



CHAS at Home team

Our outreach service brings care to families at home and in their communities all over Scotland. This includes the CHAS at Home team who travel across the country to provide nursing care in family homes.



Hospice



Hospital

As well as providing care at home and in the community, we also provide care in hospice and hospital in the locations listed below.

## **Aberdeen**

- Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital

## **Balloch**

- Robin House Children's Hospice

## **Edinburgh**

- Simpson Centre for Reproductive Health

- Royal Hospital for Children and Young People

## **Glasgow**

- Royal Hospital for Children

## **Inverness**

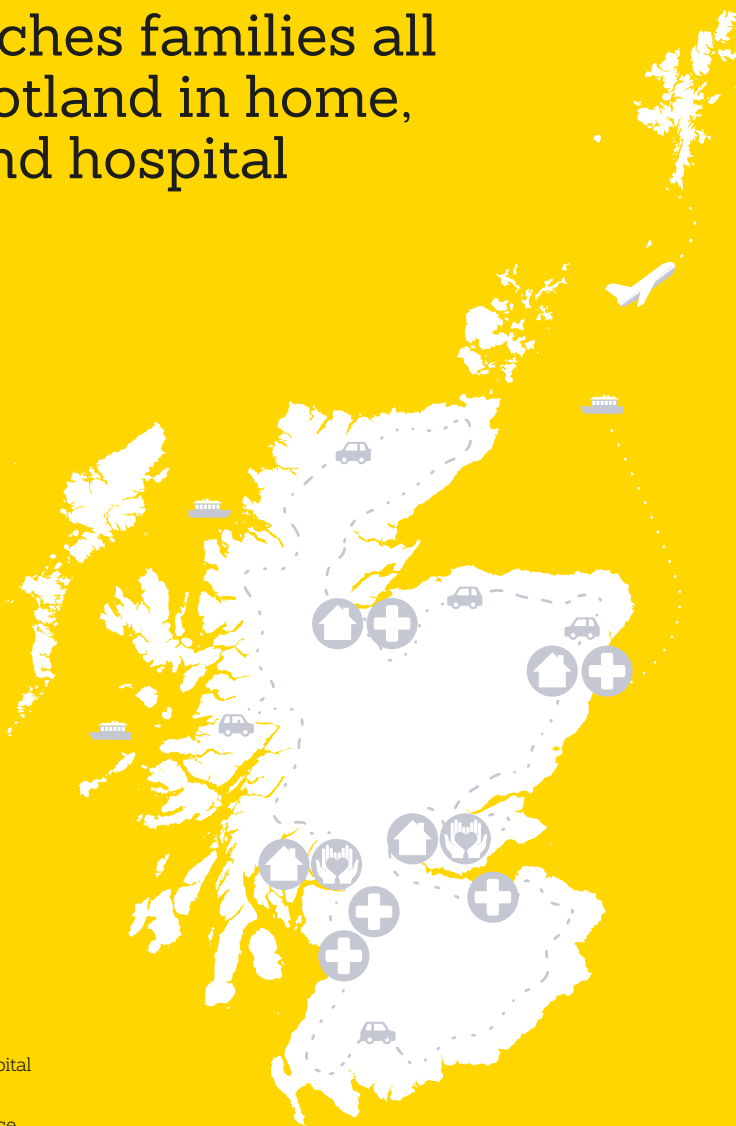
- Raigmore Hospital

## **Kilmarnock**

- University Hospital Crosshouse

## **Kinross**

- Rachel House Children's Hospice



[www.chas.org.uk](http://www.chas.org.uk)



supportCHAS



This publication relates to activities undertaken in 2022/23.