FLYING HIGH
Karen, Di and Olav take on a skydive challenge for The Blood Fund

FIGHTING FIT
Lisa reveals how outstanding care helped her battle leukaemia

RAISING MONEY
Who has gone the extra mile for The Blood Fund this time?

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What is The Blood Fund?

The Blood Fund is Imperial Health Charity’s fundraising appeal for the haematology department at Hammersmith Hospital. We’re raising money to support the department’s world-renowned research and outstanding care for patients with blood disorders, such as leukaemia, haemophilia and sickle cell disease.

The appeal has four key aims:

- increase the number of nurses providing **specialist care**
- expand the clinical trials unit to offer patients **new drugs** and the latest treatments
- provide early funding for **research projects** to develop the next generation of researchers
- improve the **environment for patient care**.

Three senior nurses with more than 60 years of NHS experience between them made the biggest leap of their careers - when they jumped out of a plane to raise money for The Blood Fund.

Karen Bradley, Di Dunn and Olav Brokka raised more than £3,000 towards the cause by taking part in a skydive from 13,000 ft.

The trio smashed their fundraising target by over 250 per cent, with all the money going back into their own department.

“We all believe passionately in the work that we do here,” said Karen. “We thought it would send out a really clear message that we are as prepared as anybody to go the extra distance for the patients we are treating.”

**Making progress for patient care**

The haematology department is always looking for ways to improve treatment for patients with blood diseases. Recently, many of our patients who have chronic myeloid leukaemia took part in the important UK Destiny study to see whether the dosage of drugs could be reduced for those in deep remission.

The team at Hammersmith performed the critical laboratory testing for the project and the results were published in July. Of 121 patients, only three had to return to the full dosage, meaning the vast majority could cope with a lower dosage and reduce the side effects of the treatment.

Early results of the next phase of the study suggest that patients in deep remission may even be able to stop their treatment completely, with as many as 70 per cent of those tested able to remain off the drugs for at least a year.

This is incredibly exciting news for a disease that has traditionally required patients to take tablets every day for the rest of their lives.
The Blood Fund will support thousands of patients with blood disease - today and long into the future. Patients like Lisa Jackson, who felt perfectly healthy before suddenly falling ill in June 2016. The mother-of-three had noticed lumps in her groin and on her breast and thought nothing of them. But after an evening out with her partner, Simon, she started to feel unwell. The colour drained from her face, breathing became painful and she felt nauseous. The next day she was vomiting and slipping in and out of consciousness.

Lisa was initially diagnosed with pneumonia but tests carried out at Hammersmith Hospital revealed something more serious. “The nurse came in and she asked Simon to sit down,” Lisa recalls. “She told me I had leukaemia. My first thought was of the children and what would happen to them.” An ambulance was waiting to take Lisa straight to Hammersmith - she remembers the journey and laughing as the radio played out ‘whatever doesn’t kill you makes you stronger’.

“Positive mental attitude was key to Lisa’s resolve during her time in hospital, especially in September when she underwent a bone marrow transplant donated by her sister. Fortunately, the operation was a success and within two months the stem cells had grafted. Looking back on her treatment, Lisa remembers the fantastic care and support provided by her clinical nurse specialist, Gill Brisley. Lisa and her family and friends have been raising money for The Blood Fund so that we can provide more clinical nurse specialists like Gill. “Gill was the stability through it all,” says Lisa. “She was the human side of what was going on and she had the answers we needed. “She supported not just me but Simon and the whole family.” Inspired by Lisa’s story? Turn the page to find out how you can support The Blood Fund.

Gill Brisley, Acute Leukaemia Clinical Nurse Specialist

I’m there to make sure patients’ needs are met throughout the entire care pathway. Whether the support they require is medical or emotional, I will be the patient’s main point of contact when they don’t know where else to go. During a patient’s hospital journey, I will constantly present, looking after the patient’s best interests and acting as their advocate throughout the whole process. My role is all about providing the highest quality service to our patients. Some will be in my care for a long time, which gives me the chance to build good relationships with the patients and their family members.

The Blood Fund is so important because we are facing an ever-increasing workload as demand for our services continues to grow. We cannot meet that demand without more people in post.

“The nurse told me I had leukaemia - my first thought was of the children”

Chemotherapy began straight away and Lisa spent the next six weeks receiving treatment on the hospital’s Dacie Ward. Meanwhile, her friends and family rallied round to support her, visiting her every day and bringing things from home. Even her hairdresser came to offer a bedside cut.
Thank You

We are extremely grateful to everyone who has supported The Blood Fund, either by raising money or making a donation. Every penny you contribute will make a real difference to the lives of patients with blood disease. In each newsletter, we’d like to say a special thank you to some of our supporters - and we hope their fundraising activities will give you plenty of bright ideas.

Staff from M&S Bayswater and Westfield

The team kindly spruced up the garden area outside Hammersmith Hospital’s Catherine Lewis building and held a tea party for patients, pocketing £137.30 for The Blood Fund. Delicious!

May Woods

Green-fingered May made sure her flowers were in full bloom by holding a fundraising plant sale. With her earlier marmalade and mustard sales thrown into the mix, May has now collected more than £1,400 for the cause. Amazing!

Teachers and pupils at the Harrodon School

Over the last six months staff and students at the school have raised an incredible £10,000 at a variety of events. Thank you so much for your support!

Theresa Hall

Theresa used her fantastic contacts in the local community to support The Blood Fund and recently held an 80s themed disco, raising more than £800. Great work, Theresa!

Richard Willoughby

Distance runner Richard zipped round the Brighton Marathon in April, raising more than £1,500 for The Blood Fund.

How can I help?

1. Donate online
   Visit www.imperialcharity.org.uk/donate and select The Blood Fund

2. Donate by text
   To give £5 or £10, text HAEM60 followed by £5 or £10 to 70070

3. Organise a fundraising event
   Let us know if you would like to hold a coffee morning, cake sale or garden party and we’ll help you make it a success

4. Take part in a challenge event
   Visit www.imperialcharity.org.uk/fundraising-events to find out about the exciting bike rides, skydives and treks you can take part in

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Imperial Health Charity is a charity registered in England and Wales, no. 1166084

Dates for your diary

SATURDAY 21 OCTOBER
Brandenburg Choral Festival of London
Join us for an evening of musical entertainment led by the Addison Oratorio Choir as part of the Brandenburg Choral Festival of London. The choir will perform Dvorak’s Mass in D and Mozart’s Ave Verum Corpus in the beautiful surroundings of the Holy Trinity Church in South Kensington. The evening also includes works by acclaimed composers Judith Weir and James MacMillan. All the money raised from this event will go towards The Blood Fund.

SATURDAY 5 MAY - SUNDAY 6 MAY
London to Paris Sportive
Up for a challenge? Sign up for this unique bicycle ride and put your pedal power to the test. Cycle 300km in 24 hours, starting at Greenwich Observatory and winding round country lanes to Newhaven before hopping on the ferry to France for the final stretch through the night to Paris. You can take on this spectacular cycle ride and raise vital cash to support The Blood Fund.

SATURDAY 19 MAY - SUNDAY 20 MAY
Snowdonia At Night
Could you trek the highest mountain in Wales and support The Blood Fund? Make it to the summit at Snowdonia National Park and see the sunrise from the mountain slopes. The park is covered with beautiful, rugged landscapes, wonderful trekking opportunities and outdoor pursuits.

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