

COBALT

AUTUMN 2025

NEWS



BIG GIVE
FUNDRAISER

A WARMER TOUCH

JEN'S STORY



Cobalt

Medical Charity

Diagnosis • Research • Education

Registered Charity No. 1090790

It's been an exciting few months here at Cobalt as we welcomed our new CEO, Jim Brown. Jim joined us in June bringing experience from his previous role as Chief Operating Officer at G DOC LTD, a not-for-profit primary care provider, and a distinguished 27-year career in the British Army.

Welcome to Cobalt News!

I'm truly delighted to have joined the team here at Cobalt. Over the past few months, I've been struck by the passion, professionalism, and patient-focus of everyone I've met. From day one, I've felt welcomed and supported - thank you to all the staff, volunteers, and supporters who've helped me settle in.



There's certainly a lot to learn, but I'm surrounded by experts and so can draw on the knowledge, skills, and experience of my colleagues. It's clear that Cobalt is a special place, with a vital aim at its heart - to make a real difference for patients through innovative medical imaging and diagnosis.

To our supporters and donors - you have been instrumental in shaping this charity over the past 60 years. Your generosity has enabled incredible progress, and we welcome your support as we look to the future and aim to do even more.

I'm looking forward to meeting many of you in the weeks and months ahead.

Warm regards,

Jim

Jim Brown, Chief Executive Officer

Keep in touch

Get our latest news straight to your inbox. You can either sign up at www.cobalthhealth.co.uk/support-us, call us on 01242 535922 or email us fundraising@cobalthhealth.co.uk. If you email please let us know how you would prefer us to keep in touch with you (by post, email or telephone)

Follow us on social media

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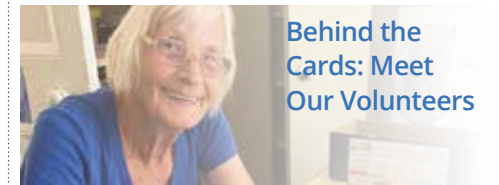
Front cover

In our last edition we spoke to Hannah who was running the London Marathon for Cobalt. We are delighted to say she raised an incredible £4,477!

'Cobalt does such incredible work supporting the NHS and without them, people like my mum wouldn't have scans and get their results so quickly so I was really proud to run the marathon for this incredible charity.'

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Behind the Cards: Meet Our Volunteers



A Warmer Touch



How AI is Transforming Patient Experience at Cobalt

The impact of Cobalt

Jen's Story

'The moment I walked in (to) the reception at Cobalt, I felt reassured looked after,' says Jen Scott, whose journey began in early 2023 with a sudden inability to swallow. Within days she was diagnosed with a 27cm oesophageal tumour - shocking news for someone who had been healthy and full of energy just weeks earlier.

Her best hope lay in joining a clinical trial. To assess eligibility and accurately stage the cancer, her oncologist referred her for a PET/CT scan at Cobalt, in Cheltenham. When NHS transport didn't show up, Jen was determined not to miss the scan. 'I got a taxi home, and drove myself to Cobalt,' she recalls.

That scan played a crucial role in guiding her treatment plan over the following months including chemotherapy via a feeding tube and daily radiotherapy. Jen returned to Cobalt for follow-up scans to track her progress.

'Every visit to Cobalt has been professional and efficient,' she says. Two years later, Jen is in recovery and building a new life. 'The last two years have been frightening, painful, amazing and wonderful,' she reflects - with deep gratitude to Cobalt's team, ending by saying, 'I truly hope to have many more visits to Cobalt.'

"The moment I walked in (to) the reception at Cobalt, I felt reassured looked after"

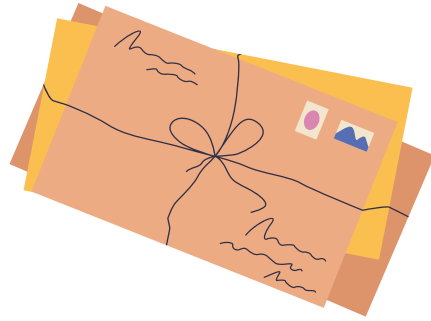
(JUNE 2025) I'M STARTING TO FEEL MORE ENERGETIC AGAIN (STARTED GENTLE TAI CHI AGAIN)



(2023) ME TRYING NOT TO LOOK TOO ILL WHEN A FRIEND CAME TO VISIT. I REMEMBER FEELING SO WEAK AND UNFOCUSED.

NOTE TRIxie THE MEDICATION PUMP ON THE TABLE WITH MY ATTEMPT TO HIDE THE TUBES.

Behind the Cards: Meet Our Volunteers



In previous editions, we explored how a Cobalt card is made and where our paper waste goes. This time, we're shining a light on two of our brilliant volunteer card makers and what inspires them to support Cobalt.

Volunteer Spotlight: Sue's Story

After losing her husband to cancer, Sue moved to Cheltenham and was invited by a neighbour to a Tuesday afternoon card-making group. Fourteen years later, she's still creating Christmas cards for Cobalt. Her group has made around 20,000 packs, raising an incredible £30,000! We're so grateful to Sue and all our amazing volunteers - every card makes a difference!



Volunteer Spotlight: Bev's Story

After taking early retirement, Bev spotted a flyer about Cobalt and was inspired to get involved. She joined our Friday morning card-making group who concentrate on making greetings and birthday cards, where she enjoys the fun, friendship, and creativity, but most of all the knowledge that she is making a difference. Bev now also volunteers in the office - sorting stamps, prepping for events, and more. We're so thankful for her energy and support. Thank you, Bev!

If you have been inspired by Sue and Bev and would like to find out more about volunteering, then contact Bheki on 01242 535922

Corporate Volunteer Spotlight: Mears Group

We love welcoming corporate volunteers to the Cobalt family - and the Mears Group has truly gone above and beyond! In early 2025, over 20 Mears volunteers rolled up their sleeves for our famous Big Sort, helping to sort and select thousands of suitable Christmas cards ready for our card makers to upcycle. Then in August, another amazing team of eight supported us at the Gloucestershire Extravaganza Vintage and Country Fair - selling programmes, running the tombola, and greeting visitors at the gate with a smile.

Corporate volunteers like those from Mears don't just donate their time - they bring energy, enthusiasm, and a passion for helping others. Their efforts directly support people affected by cancer, dementia, and other life-changing conditions.

Huge thanks to the Mears team for making a difference. Every hour you give helps us go further, together.



Driving Innovation in Dementia Research Locally.

Cobalt's Big Give Christmas Appeal

Dementia affects nearly one million people in the UK, stealing memories, independence, and precious time with loved ones. But right here in our community, Cobalt is taking bold steps to change that. At the heart of this effort are Professor Iain Lyburn and Professor Tarun Kuruvilla - two dedicated researchers leading cutting-edge work in early dementia diagnosis including brain imaging and newer treatments for Alzheimer's disease.

Professor Iain Lyburn, Consultant Radiologist and Director of Research at Cobalt, is pioneering new ways to use advanced imaging technologies in clinical research trials—particularly MRI and PET scans - to understand dementia. He also serves as a Consultant Radiologist at Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS

Foundation Trust and is a Visiting Professor at Cranfield University.

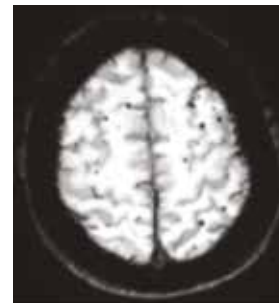
Professor Tarun Kuruvilla, Consultant Psychiatrist and Clinical Director for Research, Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust, has a particular interest in memory impairment with a strong background in research and teaching, bringing a clinical focus on early diagnosis of dementia and the potential of new treatments to change lives.

He is also Visiting Professor - School of Health & Social Care, University of Gloucestershire and Community Settings lead for the NIHR: Southwest Central Regional Research Delivery Network. Together, they are tackling one of the biggest challenges in dementia care: how to diagnose it

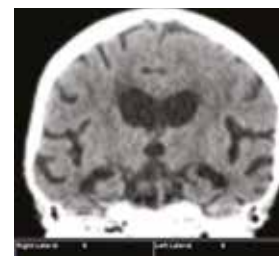
earlier and more accurately. They have been working in partnership for more than 15 years developing the memory assessment service, discussing clinical cases and undertaking research.

MRI has been around for decades, but it continues to evolve in exciting ways. MRI may show how various areas in the brain reduce in size and how brain function may change during the very early stages of Alzheimer's disease. Scan findings along with other tests and clinical assessment may help us detect dementia earlier - before symptoms become apparent in everyday life.

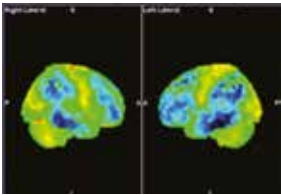
Cobalt's dementia research centres on two main areas: understanding how the structure of the brain may change in early Alzheimer's, and dramatically reducing the time it takes to carry out MRI scans. A standard MRI scan to assess for potential dementia takes 25-30 minutes. We're working to reduce the time to 10-15 minutes. Faster scans mean greater comfort for patients. The scan will be much better tolerated, with increased image quality due to less movement. Cobalt's work uses a powerful combination of CT, MRI and PET imaging to uncover the changes dementia causes in the brain.



MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) provides highly detailed images of the brain's structure, with more information about the internal architecture than CT. It can reveal brain shrinkage (atrophy), signs of past strokes, inflammation, and damage to blood vessels. It's especially useful in spotting changes in the hippocampus - an area of the brain often affected first in Alzheimer's disease.



CT (Computerised Tomography) scans use X-rays to build a picture of the brain and are often used to rule out other causes of symptoms, such as tumours or strokes. CT can also show general shrinkage and damage to blood vessels that may point toward dementia.



PET (Positron Emission Tomography) scans assess brain function using various injected isotopes. The most common - a glucose analogue assesses metabolism, highlighting regions in the brain which are not functioning properly. Others can detect abnormal protein build-up in the brain - such as amyloid, a key marker of Alzheimer's.

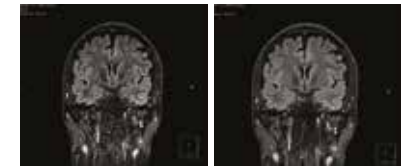
These tools allow Cobalt's research team - from radiographers to radiologists - to see the invisible, catching changes in the brain long before symptoms appear and tracking how well new treatments are working. Scan information, along with other tests and clinical assessment, helps the psychiatry and neurology teams improve day-to-day patient care and longer-term outcomes for patients. 'Our goal is to make these advanced imaging techniques faster, more accessible, and more affordable. If we can do that, we'll help more people get the right diagnosis sooner—and give them more time to plan, prepare, and live well.'

With your support, Cobalt can continue to drive forward this life-changing research. Every scan, every insight, and every breakthrough brings us one step closer to a future free from the heartbreak of dementia. We urge you to help us raise £40,000 in our **Big Give Christmas Appeal** for Dementia Research. Every £1 donated will be doubled through matched funding but only in that period! Want to help then let us know and we will contact you when it is live!! CALL us on 01242 535922 or email fundraising@cobalthhealth.co.uk

Smarter Scans, Better Care:

How AI is Transforming Patient Experience at Cobalt

This summer, one of Cobalt's state-of-the-art 3.0 Tesla MRI scanners received a powerful software upgrade - introducing artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance patient care and advance imaging in research.



Photos show a coronal FLAIR image of the brain (left hand no AI right hand with AI)

It might sound technical, but the benefits are clear. The new AI software has been developed specifically to enhance image quality and shorten the time patients are in the scanner. It helps to filter out interference and sharpen image quality, allowing radiologists to see more detail, for quicker diagnosis.

'This upgrade means we can reduce the time it takes to scan the patient, significantly improve image quality, enhancing the patients' experience,' says Karen Hackling Searle, Director of Clinical Operations. 'Some people find it hard to stay still during a scan, especially if they're anxious. Shorter scans mean greater comfort, and the images are sharper too - helping us diagnose conditions like cancer, dementia and many other conditions more accurately.'

But the impact doesn't stop there. The improved imaging opens new possibilities for research techniques which can aid earlier diagnosis and treatment monitoring for diseases such as cancer and dementia.

'This technology offers a fantastic opportunity for our research team to develop new techniques,' Karen adds.

Cobalt was the first organisation to introduce a 3.0 Tesla MRI scanner in Gloucestershire back in 2006. The charity still provides the only 3.0 Tesla in Gloucestershire, at Cheltenham imaging centre and the only mobile 3.0 Tesla MRI scanner in Europe.

Thanks to your support, we're continuing to lead the way - using technology not just to scan more efficiently, but to care more effectively.

A Warmer Touch:

Help Us Make CT scans More Comfortable for Patients

Every day at Cobalt, patients undergo CT scans at our centres in Cheltenham and Gloucester Quays. These scans play a vital role in diagnosing conditions like cancer and monitoring how well treatments are working.

To get the clearest images possible for some medical conditions, many patients are given a special dye - known as contrast medium - during their scan. This dye helps highlight areas inside the body in more detail, making it easier for radiologists to spot the smallest area of disease and make fast, accurate decisions for onward treatment.

We want to make this experience even better.

We're raising funds for two contrast warmers - simple but useful devices that gently heat the dye to body temperature before it's given. Why does that matter? Because research studies shows that warm contrast is easier to inject, more comfortable for the patient, and can reduce the risk of reactions. It's a small change that makes a big difference to both patient care and safety.

Two warmers cost around £2,000 and with your help we can buy them.

Karen Hackling Searle, Director of Clinical Operations said,

'Your donation, no matter the size, will directly improve the CT experience for people facing some of the most challenging moments of their lives.

At Cobalt we want to make the patient experience the best we can and having the contrast warmers can make having scans just that little bit nicer'.



Pink Ribbon Grant Supports Breast Cancer Research Trials



A generous grant from the Pink Ribbon Foundation is helping Cobalt fund specialist research nurses who support women through every step of clinical trials in pioneering breast cancer research. These nurses are vital in helping patients understand their options, give informed consent, and receive personalised care. The grant supports two key trials: FAST

MRI, exploring quicker scans to detect cancers missed on mammograms, and SMALL, comparing less invasive procedures to surgery.

"We are incredibly grateful to the Pink Ribbon Foundation for this grant," says Professor Iain Lyburn, Cobalt's Director of Research. "It positively impacts patients, not just protocols."

Cobalt's Teenage and Young Adult Cancer Nurse

Thanks to your donations, Cobalt helps fund Megan, a specialist cancer nurse for teenagers and young adults in Gloucestershire. Unlike other nurses who focus on specific cancer types, Megan supports young people through every aspect of their experience—emotionally, socially, and medically. She's specially trained to understand the impact of cancer on friendships, studies, work, and relationships.

"To support young people and families through such a difficult time is a real privilege," says Megan.

"I'm so grateful to everyone who donates to Cobalt."

"You made a big difference," said one patient's mum. "We've looked forward to seeing you."



Make your cuppa count for Cancer. Can We Count on You?

Love coffee? Love cake? Love catching up with friends? Then you're already halfway to making a difference!

Coffees That Count for Cancer is your chance to enjoy all those feel-good things while raising vital funds to support our specialist breast cancer research nurses and Megan, our TYA nurse.

It's Simple. It's Social. And It Makes A Difference.

Whether it's:

- A cosy catch-up over cake at home,
- A bustling bake sale at work,
- Or even evening cocktails at home.

Every gathering helps fund life-changing cancer care and research right here in your local area.

Not Just Coffee!

This is your event - your way. So, if coffee isn't your thing, how about:

- Tea & Treats?
- Cocktails for Cancer?
- Prosecco & Pastries?

Morning, afternoon, or evening, anything goes. It's all about getting people together and making a difference.

Ready to Brew Up Something Brilliant?

Sign up today for your free fundraising coffee pack – filled with everything you need to make your event a success, from posters and bunting to recipe ideas and donation tips.

Because a cup of coffee really can help make a difference.

Join us today. Let's make coffee count. Contact Emily for a fundraising pack at fundraising@cobalthhealth.co.uk

And you are welcome to join us for Cobalt's very own Coffee Morning on 27th September—enjoy cake, coffee, and good company for a great cause!



Fundraising Faces

There have been some changes in the fundraising team recently and we thought it might be helpful for you to put faces to the names in our small team. As always you are welcome to pop into the fundraising office at Linton House, to call us up for a chat on 01242 535922 or drop us an email at fundraising@cobalthhealth.co.uk

All of us are here to help with your fundraising, support and volunteering. There is always someone in the office Monday to Friday 9-5pm so do pop in and say hello.



Louise Cook, Head of Fundraising.

Rebecca (Bheki) McCorquodale
Volunteer and Administrator
Co-ordinator.

David Levick, Fundraising
Manager.

Emily Janes who has recently
joined us as Events and
Community Fundraiser.

A look back... at Cobalt Challenge Events

1981 was the year of the first London Marathon and the year of the first Cheltenham Half Marathon. The Cheltenham Half was originally organised by Cobalt supporter Mr Allan Roseberry, and within three years around 2,000 competitors were running the Cobalt Crack Cancer Half Marathon at the racecourse. Mr Roseberry continued to organise the Cheltenham Half for at least nine races.



Inspired to help Cobalt's fundraising? Then do give us a call on 01242 535922. Why not take part in the Stroud Half Marathon for Cobalt? 10% off your place if you speak to Emily. If you are already registered, then why not set up a Just Giving page and raise some money for Cobalt.

Come Along to Our Events and Support Cobalt!



Stroud Half Marathon

Join Team Cobalt at the Stroud Half Marathon this October! Register with us and get 10% off your entry. Every step helps fund vital care for patients facing cancer, dementia, and more.



Mistletoe Christmas Fair

Kick off the festive season at Cobalt's Mistletoe Christmas Fair! Enjoy the Randwick Reindeer visits, festive gifts, mince pies, and more. Join us Thursday 27 November, 5-7pm at Cobalt - Linton House. Free entry!

Highnam Success

Thank you to everyone who attended Highnam Court Open Garden in support of Cobalt. You helped raise over £2,300, plus over £400 in gifts in kind from our amazing supporters: The Nest at Little Verzons Farm, Cotteswold Dairy, Rodda's, The Comfy Pew, Huffkins, Morrisons, and Asda.



Reindeer Run

Join us for Cobalt's festive Reindeer Run at National Star School on 7th December! Sign up to receive free reindeer antlers and help raise vital funds with every step you take.

Thank you to Webbs Garden Centre

A big thank you to Webbs, Wychbold for kindly hosting our recent bucket collection.



Fantastic Day at SVTEC

We had another fantastic year at the Steam Extravaganza in South Cerney! Thanks to the incredible generosity of the local community, we raised an amazing £3,200 over the weekend in support of Cobalt's work.



Save the date- Walk for Cobalt

Walk for Cobalt returns on 21st March 2026. Join us for a scenic stroll in support of vital healthcare. More details to follow—watch this space!

Supporting Cobalt

As a charity, we need your help to enable us to do what we do best for patients.



Donating online is easy. If you are eligible for Gift Aid, we can increase your donation by 25%. To make a single donation, or to set up a monthly gift, visit www.cobalthealth.co.uk/support-us/make-a-donation/



By CAF or Cheque, payable to 'Cobalt' post to Cobalt Fundraising, Linton House, Thirlestaine Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL53 7AS. Don't forget to include your name and address so we can say thank you.



Fancy organising an event, volunteering or getting involved in some way with Cobalt? Call us on 01242 535922 or email fundraising@cobalthealth.co.uk and we'll be delighted to help.

Book a Volunteer Talk

If your school or organisation or community group is interested in a talk or presentation by Cobalt to learn more about the charity, please get in touch on 01242 535922 or email fundraising@cobalthealth.co.uk

Snowdon Result

In our last edition of Cobalt News, we told you about Ben (MRI Superintendent) and a team of our fantastic staff from Cobalt who were walking Snowdon to raise money for the charity. Well, they did it and raised £2032!



Donate to Cobalt today

Your Donation Will Make an Impact

I would like to give: £15 £10 £25 £5

Other: My chosen amount £

I would like my donation to go to (please tick): Research Equipment Nurses
Where it is most needed

I enclose a cheque, postal order or CAF cheque (please make payable to Cobalt)

I would like to donate with a debit or credit card online or by phone. Please visit www.cobalthhealth.co.uk or call 01242 535922

I would like to set up a regular direct debit donation - please send me details



Gift Aid It Boost your donation by 25p per £1 donated

Yes, I would like Cobalt to treat all donations I have made for the four years prior to this year and all donations I make from this date until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid donations. I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax to cover the amount that all charities will reclaim on my donations in the tax year and it would be my responsibility to pay any difference.

No, I am not a UK taxpayer

Please save the postage - a thank you letter is not necessary

Please email my acknowledgement to:

Full name: Telephone number:

Address:

Postcode: Email address:

If you're new to Cobalt or have supported us for a while, we would love to continue to keep in touch with you to tell you about our latest work, appeals, and upcoming events and how you can support us. Your details are safe with us. We will never share them with anyone else. Please tick your communication preferences:

Email: Yes No Email address

Telephone: Yes No Telephone number

Post: Yes No Address



Cobalt Medical Charity Registered Charity No. 1090790

