Impact Report 2025

Blood cancer UK

Matthew Wilson Multiple Myeloma Fund

Three years on, and together
we have raised an extraordinary

£7.4 million

We are so grateful for your support since the launch of the Matthew Wilson Multiple Myeloma Fund (MWMMF) in September 2022. Thanks to your generosity, we have gone far beyond what Matthew, his family, and the Blood Cancer UK team first thought possible – helping to open up new opportunities in myeloma research and, most importantly, bringing hope to everyone affected by this disease.

Thank you.

Year three in review

We invested **£1.75 milllion** in research this year alone

Events raised more than **£1.2 million** in the last 12 months

Two new research projects funded at leading institutions

Gala Dinner 2024 raised over **£925,000**

Multiple Myeloma Trek 2025 raised **£330,000** by 120 walkers

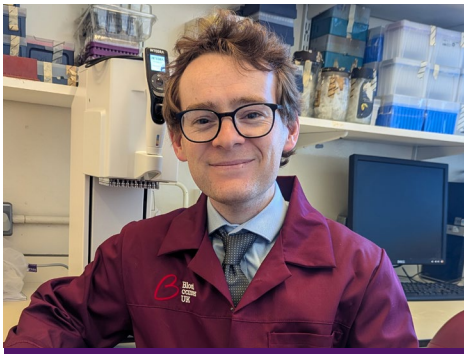
Through your support, our researchers have set themselves ambitious goals:

"Our goal is to make CAR-T therapy faster, more effective, and more accessible – so that more people with myeloma can benefit from this life-changing treatment."

Dr Charlotte Graham

"We hope to unlock new treatments for patients who urgently need better options."

Dr Nick Crump



"Ultimately, I hope we can diagnose patients with myeloma earlier and maybe even prevent it from developing in the first place."

Dr Aidan Haslam

Thank you

When I set up the Matthew Wilson Multiple Myeloma Fund in 2022, I did so as someone who knows all too well the reality of living with multiple myeloma. This fund was born out of a deeply personal determination to bring hope, better treatments, and one day, a cure – for everyone facing this disease.

At the time, setting a target of £5 million felt ambitious. To see that we have now raised over £7.4 million is truly extraordinary.

It shows what can be achieved when we come together with a shared purpose, passion and determination.

Thanks to your generosity and belief, we have, so far, been able to fund six groundbreaking research projects that are transforming what's possible for people with myeloma. We are backing the brightest scientists and nurturing the next generation of researchers who will carry this vital work forward.

When we started out, less than 3% of Blood Cancer UK's research funding focused on myeloma. Today, thanks to your incredible support, that figure has grown to more than 20%. That is real, tangible progress for people living with myeloma.

None of this would have been possible without your kindness, dedication and generosity. I am endlessly grateful and truly humbled by all we have achieved together.

Thank you for standing with me, and with everyone affected by myeloma. Together, we are driving real change towards a day when we find a cure for this disease.

With my heartfelt thanks,

Matthew Wilson
Chair, Blood Cancer UK

A year in events

Gala Dinner 2024

To mark the beginning of the fund's third year, we came together in November 2024 for a truly unforgettable night at the British Museum in London.

360 guests joined us for a fantastic evening in the iconic Queen Elizabeth II Great Court, and thanks to your extraordinary generosity, the 2024 Gala raised an incredible £925,000.

Multiple Myeloma Trek 2025

To close the year of events, in September 2025, 120 walkers took part in this year's Trek, covering 13.1 miles across the beautiful South Downs and raising an incredible £330,000 to support life-changing myeloma research.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who joined our events this year - your energy, commitment and generosity make a real difference in the continued fight against myeloma.

Save the date!
Gala Dinner 2026
3rd December

New research funded

Over the past three years, thanks to your continued generosity, we have been able to invest in some outstanding researchers and clinical projects – supporting six pioneering studies at leading institutions across the UK. These investments give real hope for people living with myeloma and are helping to accelerate the breakthroughs we urgently need.

In 2025 alone, we have been proud to award over £1.75 million to two new research projects.

Dr Charlotte Graham, King's College London

Grant award: £1,493,328
Duration: 5 years

Trialling a myeloma therapy

Dr Charlotte Graham was awarded funding through our Transformational Research Awards, a new grant scheme designed to fund ambitious, large-scale clinical research that puts people with blood cancer at the centre of the research. The goal – to accelerate breakthroughs in blood cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

At King's, Dr Graham is leading a clinical trial to test an innovative type of CAR-T therapy. The trial will recruit 20 people with myeloma whose cancer has come back after treatment. Her team will use a new technique for producing CAR-T cells in just three days, allowing people to start treatment more quickly.

Looking ahead

This approach could transform treatment for myeloma and change how CAR-T is made for other cancers too, paving the way for faster, more affordable treatment.

"Our goal is to make CAR-T faster, more effective, and more accessible, so that more people can benefit from this life-changing treatment."

Dr Charlotte Graham

CAR T-cell therapy is a type of cancer treatment that uses the immune system to kill cancer cells.

Dr Nick Crump,
Imperial College London

Grant award: £260,587
Duration: 3 years

Investigating the role of proteins in advancing multiple myeloma

Dr Crump was also awarded funding this year, and he is looking to study a high-risk type of multiple myeloma driven by the overproduction of a protein called NSD2. This form of myeloma does not respond well to current treatments, leaving patients with fewer options.

His study will compare two versions of the protein to understand what drives this aggressive subtype, and explore new ways to treat people with high-risk myeloma whose cancer has returned.

Looking ahead

This research could also help with other cancers, as changes in the NSD2 protein are also seen in childhood leukaemia and some lymphomas.

"By understanding what drives high-risk myeloma, we can begin to unlock new treatments for patients who urgently need better options."

Dr Nick Crump

Updates from our funded research

Now entering their second year, we are delighted to share some exciting progress from two projects previously funded by the MWMMF – research that is already showing promise for people living with myeloma.

Dr Paul Maciocia, University College London

Grant award: £322,447
Duration: 3 years

Developing longer lasting CAR-T therapy

Dr Maciocia's team is exploring ways to help CAR-T cells survive longer, giving people with myeloma longer-lasting remissions.

Latest from the lab:

- Just over halfway through the project, the team has already seen exciting progress.
- The team ran the world's first large-scale test of over 800 proteins that control cell behaviour, identifying those that help CAR-T cells survive longer in multiple myeloma.
- Several promising proteins were found that appear to boost CAR-T activity.
- The most promising proteins will now be tested again in both mice and human cells.

If successful, this research could lead to longer-lasting CAR-T treatments, giving patients more time between relapses, and, potentially, a path toward a cure.

Dr Tracey Chan & Dr Jen Heaney, University of Birmingham

Grant award: £309,194
Duration: 2 years

Improving diagnosis and monitoring

The team at Birmingham are undergoing a two-year research study to develop a new blood test to diagnose and monitor non-measurable myeloma (NMM) more effectively. NMM is a subtype of myeloma that currently requires painful and costly scans or bone marrow biopsies to monitor disease progression. The team are hoping to change this.

Latest from the lab:

In the first year, the team successfully adapted a blood test that is more accurate and reliable. This is an important factor in gaining official UKAS accreditation, which ensures trust in the test results.

Over the next year, the team will analyse the data of the test, share findings, and gather feedback from patients and healthcare professionals about their experiences and views on a blood test alternative.

They will also be looking at the financial and time savings this test could bring compared with current monitoring methods. This new approach has the potential to make monitoring far simpler, less invasive, and more patient-friendly, while reducing costs and inconvenience.

"I look after myeloma patients and many need bone marrow biopsies or scans, just to monitor their response to treatment – which can be lifelong.

So, our aim is to try to make that monitoring process as friendly and convenient as possible, with fewer side effects".

Dr Tracey Chan

Fellowships and Future Leaders

Investing in the next generation of myeloma leaders

We are proud to have backed two outstanding early-career researchers through dedicated myeloma fellowships who will continue the legacy of progress in myeloma treatment and care.

PhD Student,
Imperial College London

Supervised by Professor Anastasios Karadimitris

Grant award: £319,181
Duration: 3 years

Understanding how myeloma cells grow and thrive

The team at Imperial College London are studying the role of protein, cyclin D1, in the development of myeloma. So far it has proven difficult to design drugs against cyclin D1 directly, so the team are looking to understand more about how it works, and other ways to target it.

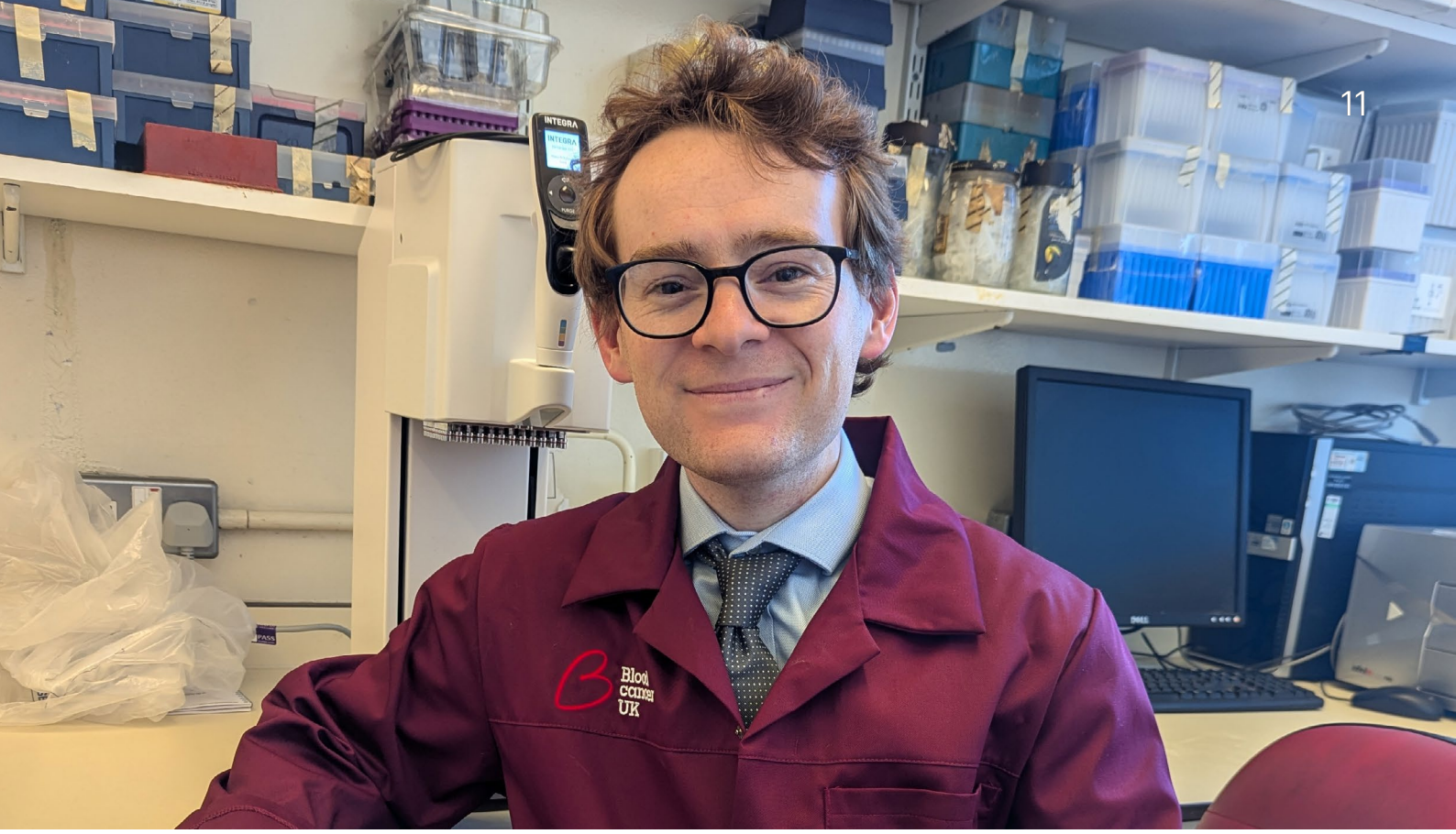
Early results from this research are showing that cyclin D1, also controls key cancer-causing genes, which is exciting progress. They are now studying which genes and other proteins depend on it to develop new treatments that stop myeloma cells from multiplying.

Within this exciting research project, Professor Karadimtitris is supporting an early-career researcher and PhD student:

"Over the past year, they [PhD student] have developed expertise in lab-based research skills and have also been supporting medical students at Imperial as a small group facilitator.

Supporting future leaders through the MWMMF gives early-career researchers the foundation to set up their own research programmes. That's good news for patients, because it's through this type of research that new knowledge about myeloma will emerge."

Professor Karadimitris



Dr Aidan Haslam (Clinical PhD student), University of Birmingham

Supervised by Professor Chris Bunce

Grant award: £319,189
Duration: 3 years

Understanding more about the causes of myeloma

The team at Birmingham are working to understand why some patients with MGUS, a precursor condition to multiple myeloma, go on to develop the disease, whilst others do not.

Early research findings suggest that molecular changes once thought to predict myeloma appear only after the disease becomes active, not before. Building on this breakthrough, the team has located rare patient samples – taken both before and after disease progression, which will allow them to further test ideas about how myeloma develops.

Alongside this, the team have been using large datasets from a clinical trial in Iceland and the UK Biobank and have identified an enzyme that appears in the blood years before myeloma is diagnosed.

As drugs already exist that target this enzyme, this discovery could accelerate the development of new treatments that prevent or delay myeloma.

Through this project, Professor Chris Bunce is supporting future leader, Dr Aidan Haslam.

"Overall Aidan is doing an excellent job. We are very happy with the progress of this research supported by the Multiple Myeloma Research Leaders award. Aidan is well placed to become a future leader in Myeloma research."

Professor Chris Bunce

"By understanding more about the biology of the precursor of myeloma, we hope to identify which patients will go onto develop myeloma and how we might intervene. Ultimately, I hope we can diagnose patients with myeloma earlier and maybe even prevent it from developing in the first place."

Dr Aidan Haslam

Thank you and what's next?

Afterword from Helen Rowntree, Chief Executive, Blood Cancer UK

As I reflect on the last three years of the Matthew Wilson Multiple Myeloma Fund, I am filled with gratitude and pride. Thanks to your generosity, determination, and belief, we are making real progress in finding a cure for myeloma.

Every pound raised, every event organised, every partnership created has brought us closer to a future where fewer lives are lost to this disease.

This year has been another shining example of what we can achieve together. From the incredible commitment of our corporate partners – with the Swiss Re team walking the length and breadth of the UK, from the Lake District to Folkestone, and Amwins Global Risks quite literally walking the 40,000km circumference of the globe – to the brave abseilers who took on the Lloyd's of London challenge, the creativity and energy of our community never fails to inspire me.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Prem Watsa, Fairfax, Mark Cloutier, Aspen and Brit Insurance, for their extraordinary support since the very beginning. Their belief in Matthew, in this mission, is helping us to push the boundaries of research and invest in the breakthroughs of tomorrow.

Looking ahead, we are setting ourselves a bold new target: to raise £9 million as we enter the Fund's fourth year. It is an ambitious goal, but one I know we can reach if we continue to stand together.

We are also delighted to announce that plans for next year's Gala Dinner are in motion, with a date set for Thursday 3rd December 2026. Keep an eye out for further details, we hope to see many of you there.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we will change the future of myeloma research – and bring closer the day when we find a cure.

Helen Rowntree

Helen Rowntree
Chief Executive, Blood Cancer UK

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philanthropy@bloodcancer.org.uk

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