



Strategy 2024 - 2027

# Bridging The Gap

In children and young people's healthcare



**Tree of Hope**

*Transforming the health of  
sick and disabled children*



# Foreword

As CEO of Tree of Hope, I am proud to introduce our new strategy, which sets out our commitment to supporting families facing the growing challenges in accessing essential healthcare for their children. At its core, this strategy is about hope—hope for a future where every child and young person, regardless of their circumstances, has access to the healthcare they need.

The healthcare landscape for children and young people in the UK has grown increasingly complex and challenging, with families of all income levels struggling to meet their child’s healthcare needs through no fault of their own. The past decade has also seen a significant rise in the proportion of children reporting disabilities—from 6% in 2011/12 to 11% in 2021/22. This trend, combined with a persistent cost-of-living crisis and overstretched local services, underscores an urgent need for enhanced support systems and action.

‘Bridging The Gap’ is Tree of Hope’s strategic response to these challenges. Developed with the goal of significantly expanding our reach and impact from 2024 to 2027, it is designed to transform the support landscape for families needing essential healthcare. Our mission is clear and focused: **to ensure that no child’s health is compromised due to a lack of resources or support.**

This strategy leverages insights from past reviews, stakeholder feedback, and an evolving healthcare landscape to implement an approach that not only addresses immediate needs but also fosters long-term sustainability and community empowerment.

Over the next three years, Tree of Hope will focus on enhancing our fundraising support model to make it accessible to a broader range of families, particularly those from underserved communities.

We are committed to innovating alongside our existing and new partners to streamline the process through which families can access funding quickly. Simultaneously, we will strengthen the tools, resources, and support offered to families to amplify their fundraising campaigns.

Moreover, we aim to expand our network, forging alliances with healthcare providers, corporates, and volunteers. This expansion is vital for strengthening community support and ensuring that no family navigates their healthcare challenges alone. We believe that through combined efforts and shared resources, we can create a supportive ecosystem that not only meets current demands but also adapts to future healthcare challenges.

As we roll out ‘Bridging The Gap’, we remain committed to listening to the families we serve. We understand that the landscape of fundraising and healthcare and the specific needs of families are ever evolving; hence, our approach will be adaptable and responsive to emerging challenges. We pledge to work tirelessly, ensuring that every child and young person can lead a healthy, fulfilling life, regardless of their circumstances.

**Becky Andrew, CEO, Tree of Hope**

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This strategy marks a pivotal moment in Tree of Hope’s journey to expand its support for families navigating the complexities of accessing essential healthcare for their children. The Trustees are committed to working alongside the leadership team, partners, families and communities to ensure we deliver on our objectives and create lasting, positive change. Together, we believe this strategy will significantly enhance the lives of children and young people across the UK, ensuring no family faces these challenges alone.

**Alexandra Noble, Chair, Tree of Hope**



# About Tree of Hope

Since our founding in 1992, Tree of Hope has been on a mission to make healthcare accessible for every child and young person. Our vision, mission, and values reflect our ongoing commitment to empowering families, inspiring action, and creating a network of support for children and young people across the UK and Ireland.

## Vision

A world where every child and young person has equal access to the best possible healthcare and support, enabling them to lead fulfilling lives and reach their full potential.

## Mission

To empower families from across the UK and Ireland to secure funding and support for children and young people requiring healthcare not freely available to them.

## Our Aims

### Empower

We provide families with the tools and support needed to confidently and successfully fundraise for their child's healthcare, ensuring they are empowered to make essential decisions without financial constraints.

### Inspire

We inspire and mobilise support for our families through impactful storytelling and highlighting the critical need for funding children and young people's healthcare and the wider societal benefits.

### Unite

We unite families, volunteers, and supporters in a collaborative network that opens doors to vital resources, amplifying fundraising efforts and helping families navigate their child's healthcare journey with confidence.

# Our Values



## Respect

We respect and honour every child and young person's individuality, ensuring their voices and needs guide our actions.



## Dedication

We go the extra mile for every child, young person and family.



## Integrity

We operate with honesty and openness in everything we do.



## Compassion

We listen, we understand, and we act with kindness.



## Collaboration

We champion the strength found in unity, embracing the power of working together for every child, young person and family.



“ The team behind this charity is a group of passionate and dedicated individuals. They not only work tirelessly to support their families they also exude genuine compassion and empathy. Their warmth and willingness to engage was and continues to be wonderful. ”

**Tree of Hope Parent**

# Our Impact

For more than 32 years, Tree of Hope has been a vital source of support for thousands of families across the UK and Ireland, helping them secure the essential healthcare their children need. Originally founded in Bexhill, East Sussex, we have grown into a national charity, addressing a broad range of medical conditions and healthcare challenges.

Whether it's surgeries that improve mobility or therapies that enhance daily functionality, Tree of Hope

## Over the last three years we have:

**£4M**

Helped families raise just over £4 million for their children's healthcare needs.

**£2.27M**

Spent £2.27 million on essential healthcare.

**65**

Supported hundreds of children and young people, covering over 65 conditions.

partners with families to ensure they can access the funding necessary to enhance their child's quality of life.

This support brings about transformative change—children achieve better health and independence, while families are able to focus on their child's wellbeing and happiness without the overwhelming burden of financial concerns.



# Our Support: Empowering Families, Transforming Lives



Tree of Hope is dedicated to supporting families as they navigate their child's healthcare journey. We offer a comprehensive range of services, including fundraising expertise, financial management, and practical support, ensuring that every child and young person can access the care they need, when they need it.

## Family First Contact Tree of Hope

Families get in touch either directly or via one of our referral routes, starting their journey toward securing the necessary support for their child's healthcare.

## Understanding Families

We dedicate time to truly understand each family's unique situation, forging a strong, supportive partnership.

## Campaign Creation

Together with the family, we create a personalised fundraising campaign that resonates with potential donors.

## Eligibility Review and Due Diligence

We verify the child's health condition and ensure their fundraising goals align with our charitable objects.

## Fundraising Action Plan

We develop a detailed fundraising action plan, outlining key activities, timelines, and goals to guide families through the fundraising process.

## Ongoing Support and Guidance

Families receive ongoing support, charitable benefits, advice and regular check-ins, helping them reach their fundraising goals quickly.

## Managing Expenditure

We pay healthcare service providers or suppliers directly relieving the family of administrative burdens.

## Managing Donations

All donations are carefully managed by Tree of Hope, ensuring transparency and accountability. We track all contributions and provide regular financial updates to families.

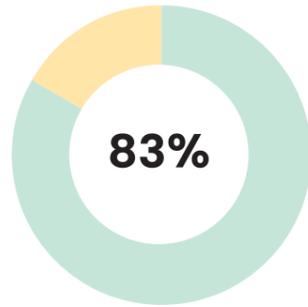
Children and young people get the healthcare support they need, enabling them to lead fulfilling lives and reach their full potential

# The Gap

As part of our strategy development for Bridging The Gap, we have engaged directly with families to better understand their needs and experiences. The insights gathered from participating families highlight significant challenges they face, underscoring the vital role Tree of Hope plays in providing support.

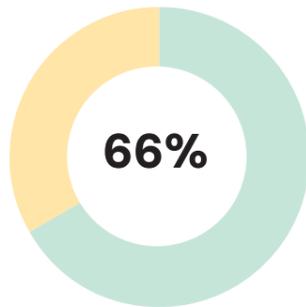
## 'Bridging The Gap' Survey Findings

### Significant Gaps in Healthcare



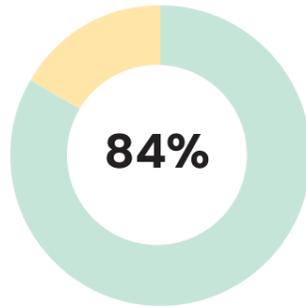
For 83% of families, less than 75% of their child's healthcare and support needs are covered by public services.

### Changing Fundraising Needs



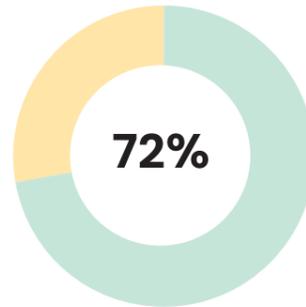
66% of families report changing needs related to fundraising as their children grow.

### Unmet Healthcare Needs



84% of families identified therapeutic services (e.g., physical, occupational and speech & language therapy) as their most pressing unmet need.\*

### Community Support Needs



72% of families expressed the need for more support networks and community connections to help navigate their child's healthcare journey.

\*Families also reported a lack of access to medical equipment (44%) and home or garden adaptations (61%).

These challenges are not unique to the families we support but reflect a wider national issue, where families across the UK are struggling to access the vital healthcare and support their children need.

Only **one in five** felt their family received the support needed for their child to fulfil their potential\*



\*The Disabled Children's Partnership 2023, *Failed and Forgotten*

The funding gap in disabled children's health and social care has continued to grow reaching **£2.1 billion from the latest data available in 2019/20\***

\*The Disabled Children's Partnership, 2021, *The Gap Widens*

"Everything takes so long it saps what little energy you have and there are constant hurdles everywhere you look."

"Services as a whole are so overstretched, this includes community and hospital... children are suffering as intervention is just not being put into place soon enough"

Tree of Hope Parents



"Waiting lists are very long and we're finding appointments are regularly rescheduled which means that review appointments can be a year or more overdue."

"The adaptations we need to do have changed as our son has grown and developed. He is now more mobile and heavier and the room he uses at home needs urgent repairs before we can do the adaptations."

Tree of Hope Parents





# Bridging the Gap

In response to the increasing challenges families are facing, Tree of Hope's new strategy, 'Bridging the Gap', will focus on expanding our reach and enhancing the accessibility of our services to more children, young people, and families throughout the UK and Ireland. Over the next three years, our strategy Bridging the Gap aims to address these three areas:

## Enhancing Support

Enhance our support for families to help them reach their fundraising goals more quickly, ensuring they receive life-changing care sooner.

## Accessibility and Reach

Enhance the accessibility of our services to ensure fundraising is a viable option for more families, particularly those in identified underserved communities.

## Network and Community

Increase our network of UK healthcare providers, suppliers, donors, and volunteers, empowering families with stronger connections and community backing for their fundraising efforts.

## Measures of Success

By 2027, Tree of Hope's success will be defined by the outcomes we achieve for the children, young people, and families we serve. Through our new outcomes framework, we will track the impact of our services, ensuring that we adapt as needed based on feedback and insights from families.

### Expected Outcomes



#### Improved Health and Wellbeing in Children and Young People

Families report significant improvements in their children's health and overall quality of life.



#### Enhanced Family Wellbeing

Families report reduced emotional and financial stress, allowing them to focus on wider family life.



#### Quicker Donations, Faster Access

Reduction in the average time taken for families to reach their goal and access healthcare.



#### Enhanced Accessibility

Increase in the percentage of families from diverse backgrounds partnering with Tree of Hope.

# Our Initiatives

Over the next three years, we aim to enhance our support for families through a series of initiatives designed to bridge the gap in services and improve access to essential healthcare. These initiatives will focus on empowering families, accelerating their fundraising efforts, and ensuring they can secure the vital care and resources their children need, when they need it most.

## Partners in Hope

Our Partners in Hope initiative aims to help families reach their fundraising targets more quickly. We will collaborate with partner organisations to establish specialised funds for essential services like therapies, home adaptations, and medical equipment. Our first-year focus will be on securing funds for 'Hope in the Home', which supports home adaptations not covered by existing services.

## Family Support Hub

We are committed to enhancing our digital capabilities to provide even more robust support to families. We will develop a comprehensive Family Support Hub—a dedicated digital platform offering enhanced fundraising tools and guidance, tailored resources, video training, and community support. This hub will be designed to strengthen family fundraising campaigns, making essential information and guidance more accessible.

## Building Our Volunteer Base

We will significantly grow and develop our volunteer base, expanding opportunities for individuals, groups, and corporate partners to get involved. This increased volunteer support will allow us to provide more hands-on help to families during their fundraising efforts, ensuring they receive the assistance they need when they need it.

## Strengthen Our Referral Network

By increasing partnerships with healthcare providers and charities, we will ensure that more children and young people are referred to Tree of Hope early in their journey. This will provide families with the best chance of accessing the right care and support at the right time, allowing children to receive the treatment and therapies they need more quickly.

## Family Centered Approach

Underpinning all of our work will be a family-centered approach, where we will continue to actively listen to families and adapt to their changing needs, ensuring that our services remain responsive and relevant.

# Our Drivers: Building Capacity

We can only achieve the above by ensuring every aspect of our organisation is working towards enabling this change, which is why over the next three years the success of this strategy will be underpinned by the following key drivers:

## With a renewed focus to:



Diversify and expand our funding sources, focusing on strengthening partnerships which directly benefit families and leveraging larger national trusts and foundations to extend our reach across the UK.



Enhance the visibility of Tree of Hope as a trusted partner to children and families in accessing financial support for healthcare, increasing engagement and support from the public, stakeholders, and the communities we serve.



Enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness through strategic use of technology, data-driven decision-making, and innovation. Working smarter with our resources to the benefit of our children, young people and families.



Build and foster an inclusive and values driven culture, where staff and volunteers feel valued, rewarded, included and inspired.

This will be underpinned by robust governance procedures and practices, with an outcome-focused, family-led approach in everything we do.

# Portraits of Hope

As part of our mission to inspire action, we are proud to feature stories of children and young people who have benefitted from Tree of Hope in our 'Portraits of Hope' series. Joey and siblings Aiza and Subhaan are just a few of the hundreds of children we support every year.

## Joey

Joey's Dad, Chris, reached out to Tree of Hope for support to help care for his son, Joey, who lives with an extremely rare and complex condition. Joey's needs are demanding and, while essential, they cannot be fully funded by the local authority or the NHS. Joey relies on specialised equipment in his home to make him as comfortable as possible, along with tailored therapies and interventions to manage his pain, mobility, and overall functionality. Without additional help, these critical resources would be severely limited.

Joey's care will be life long and the costs associated for managing his condition daily, are significant which is where Tree of Hope have been able to help make life changing differences to Joey's and his family's life.

Providing a platform for Chris and Joey, Tree of Hope have enabled them to access specialist orthotics, a home hydrotherapy spa, mobility aids and equipment, to ensure comfort for Joey when in his home as well as costs associated with the upkeep of his specialist wheelchair and a standing frame to allow him to contribute more to family life and enhance wellbeing for the whole family.

As a result, not only can Joey enjoy his home in comfort with improved mobility and functionality and reduced pain, but the support allows his family to be more present with a lot of the worry and stresses raising a child with a disability can bring, being lessened as a result.

**“ Tree of Hope are an incredible charity. They have helped me and my son over the last few years to get life changing equipment. They are amazing, caring and wonderful people. Thank you for changing lives. ”**



## Aiza and Subhaan

Aiza and Subhaan are siblings, aged 12 and 8 respectively, and live with Dravet Syndrome, a neurological disorder, causing very severe complex epilepsy and developmental delay. They are both wheelchair bound and require 24-hour care for all their needs. Their seizure management is uncontrollable and life threatening, so they are very limited to their indoor environment, impacting their health and wellbeing.

For a long time, Aiza and Subhaan had no safe access to their garden, yet sensory activity is something Aiza and Subhaan benefit from hugely, so the family wanted to provide a safe access to the outdoor space to allow them to sense the tranquillity and calmness of nature.

That's when they turned to Tree of Hope for support. Through our platform, they were able to connect with their Muslim community, which rallied around to support their fundraising mission.

In Spring 2024, Aiza and Subhaan's garden was finally completed using the funds raised, and it has transformed their lives. For the first time, the family of five can spend time together outdoors, something they had never been able to do before. The garden, once inaccessible, has become a space where the children can explore and enjoy nature safely. The sense of isolation they had felt for years has reduced, making family life more connected and fulfilling.

The health benefits for Aiza and Subhaan have also been life changing. Previously, they were prone to frequent chest infections, but since gaining access to the garden, their health has improved significantly. They are happier, sleeping better, and overall, more content. The garden has given them a sense of freedom and a connection to nature they had never experienced before.

**// Tree of Hope provide a great platform, before, we had no hope, we just couldn't see it happening. But being an established charity, we had the stability for friends, neighbours, organisations to help us. Fundraising felt really daunting, but we had the support and the Tree of Hope team to talk to and it turned into a straightforward journey, I just wish other families knew about it so they could reach their goals. //**



# Join us to Bridge The Gap in Children's Healthcare

Tree of Hope is embarking on a transformative journey over the next three years to enhance health equity for children and young people across the UK and Ireland. Every action, big or small, has the power to change lives.

## We need your support to make this vision a reality



### Families

We want to help change lives, and bring hope to many more families. If you are facing challenges in accessing healthcare for your child, reach out to us today. We are here to listen and work with you to find solutions.



### Individuals

Consider how you can contribute your time or resources to support us in our mission. From taking part in challenge events to joining our 'Friends of Tree of Hope,' there's an opportunity for everyone to get involved.



### Organisations

Amplify your CSR impact by partnering with Tree of Hope. Whether through sponsorship, fundraising initiatives, or joining 'Partners in Hope,' there's a pathway for every organisation to make a difference.

Visit our website, join our community, and be part of the change. Together, we can harness the strength of our community to bridge the gaps in healthcare access, empower families, and build a healthier, brighter future for every child and young person.





-  [treeofhope.childrenscharity](https://www.facebook.com/treeofhope.childrenscharity)
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