

Chris Westwood Charity for Children with Physical Disabilities.

Update Report - Second Quarter 2020

Background:

We approached 2020 with considerable optimism after the exceptional level of activity in Q4 2019, and after an initial slow start, activity began to pick up until the major disruption of COVID 19 and the Lockdown, which stopped face to face patient consultations with both NHS staff and supplier's equipment assessment experts, at which point application activity came to a standstill. We initially assumed (wrongly as it turned out) that this would bring a halt to our work for some time. Equally concerning was the effect on fundraising events and collections which would also have to stop, and we began to wonder how the year would progress.

We ended Q1 having completed 11 grants, and two minor adjustments, totalling £15,307.52, and with no real idea what Q2 might bring.

Progress in Q2 2020:

As expected the quarter started quietly, but, surprisingly, activity subsequently increased rapidly. We found that this activity fell into two areas:

1. Applications where the assessments had been carried out by late February/early March, and the delayed applications were still being received as they were completed and submitted once the relevant staff had started working from home after the initial disruption of the Lockdown. We also received a number of new approaches from staff in NHS Trusts, with whom we had not previously dealt, as charities they previously normally used were suspending operations due to lack of funds, and so they had decided to approach us.

2. Applications which could only proceed as far as initial queries to establish that the proposed requirement was for a case that would be at least suitable for a future full application. Assessments in these cases are still pending, and they will only progress to a full application as social distancing and working methods change and develop. In this area we probably have between 8 and 10 potential future requests for help, which means that we are aware of a considerable backlog of work (potential estimate of up to £10,000 to £15,000), once the actual details can be finalised.

After the initial pause at the start of Lockdown, the quarter became very busy as NHS Trust staff in the various special needs areas began to work through their backlog of applications. This resulted in the completion of a further 22 grants, totalling £26,810.95, bringing the totals for the year to 33 grants and £42,118.42 granted. So we actually completed twice as many grants as in Q1, and the rate in Q2, in a full year, would have been around our "normal" of just over £100,000/year in grants.

With the inevitable reduction in fundraising, and the level of applications, our reserves came under significant pressure, and we are likely to continue to suffer loss of funding during the year from:

- Company donations - in the current climate it is highly unlikely we shall receive anything this year
- Fundraising Events - again it is highly unlikely that much can be done this year
- Group Collections - there are now a large number of groups that collect for us. With meetings not currently possible, collections are being badly hit, and we expect a serious downturn in income from the many different sources within this area.

- Collection boxes - while this is a relatively small source of income, with the closure of bars this has effectively reduced to zero, and with increased use of contactless payment this looks to be an area in rapid decline.

On the positive side, our regular supporters have continued to donate and we are still managing at the moment, although reserves are low.

Progress with funding:

As mentioned last quarter, there are a number of areas we have been concentrating on and we can update as follows:

1. Gift Aid – The claim was submitted on the 6th April, and £4,831.14 (as expected) was received from HMRC on the 14th April. Their system is now streamlined and does respond rapidly if the application is filed correctly.
2. Regular Donations - We currently have 15 regular monthly donors who kindly contribute £4,962.00 in a full year (£6,187.50 with Gift Aid where applicable), which is another very useful source of income. As already mentioned, we would be very appreciative of any additions to this group, which provides a stable source of monthly income.
3. Charitable Foundations – We do receive help from some Charitable Foundations, and we have multi year agreements with several, although these are now approaching completion. We received one guaranteed £5,000 grant in January, and we do have one guaranteed payment of £5,000 due early Q3. There are several groups that, while not guaranteed, do tend to support us regularly, so we are hopeful that we will be able to raise some further useful funding. We continue to submit applications as and when possible.
4. We are not eligible for any of the additional Government assistance (COVID 19) that has been announced, as usual we are on our own.
5. We would like to highlight other areas where the amounts raised are currently small, but there is the scope for considerable potential expansion, so we are trying to develop them:

Commission Payments arising from a percentage commission on purchases made online or in a store, and we commented on these last quarter, and a new option which involves recycling:

(a.1) We are registered with Amazon Smile, so that we can be the named charity to receive the small payment from any Amazon purchase made online (usually 0.5%). You can nominate any charity, and while we would hope we might be considered, as long as this facility is used it benefits the charity sector as a whole, at no additional cost to the purchaser.

To access - please use <https://smile.amazon.co.uk> and this will take you to the Amazon page that supports Smile. Once registered with your chosen charity, you can use this route to enter Amazon to shop online in the usual way.

During our first quarter we failed to raise enough commission to reach the minimum payout of £5.00, but we received that amount anyway as a once a year donation from Amazon. Currently a very minor source of income, but with increased online shopping this does offer longer term potential, if used more widely.

(a.2) We are also registered with Everyclick, and there is a link on our *Donation* webpage of our website.

Various percentages can be claimed for a named charity on purchases online from many different Companies/Stores, and there are also In-Store cards. Both of these methods use Everyclick, and the link is, as stated above, on the Donations page of our website.

The Chairman uses a John Lewis In-Store card for Waitrose shopping, which he reloads with £100 regularly, and each payment puts the full £100 on the card and creates a payment of £1.50 to the Charity. To date, in two years of operation, this has generated £150 in commission payments at no additional cost. The Store Card is just swiped at the checkout instead of using a credit/debit card, which is quick and easy to do. This is a simple system to use, and it creates some useful income for the chosen charity at no cost other than an initial £2.50 for the relevant store card (these being available for a very wide range of stores).

For purchases from most online stores, if the same link is used and the selected online site is then entered via Everyclick, the nominated charity earns a commission bonus on the purchase. With the significant increase in online purchases, this offers scope for a large increase in commission payments received.

(a.3) We have also just registered with Recycle4Charity (<https://recycle4charity.co.uk>) and once you have registered you can select your chosen charity. The organisation pays £1.00 to the nominated charity for each used printer ink cartridge recycled, these being returned to them in Freepost envelopes supplied (there is also an option to recycle larger numbers in boxes).

There is a list of accepted cartridges on their site, most major brands being covered. While this again is unlikely to be a major source of income, if we could encourage collection and recycle of cartridges by a number of our supporters or perhaps the setting up of a regular collection by a group supporting us, it would provide another way to make a difference to our fundraising.

Any additional support this year would be very welcome, although again, whichever charity is selected helps the Charity sector as a whole.

Grants Made in Q2 2020:

Age	Amount	Details
9	1781.00	He has a diagnosis of Cerebral Palsy with a range of additional medical conditions which include Epilepsy (<i>Lennox Gastaut</i>), development delay, hip dislocation and reconstruction, and difficulties in standing. Proposal to purchase a Baffin trio Stander which will fully support him, and can cope with his need to lean forwards, as he is unable to stand upright. His Health Authority will part fund, the family has raised some funding, but COVID-19 has caused the cancellation of other fundraising events, and help urgently needed to bridge the funding gap. We agreed to fund the balance required.
3.25	235.00	Born prematurely and spent time in hospital with extensive medical problems. Has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy spastic quadriplegia, short bowel syndrome and micropcephaly. The proposal was to fund a portable fully supportive chair to hold him securely as he struggles to sit independently, and we agreed to fully fund.
4	331.52	She has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy and a trachea-oesophageal fistula. She requires help with everyday activities, uses a walker for short distances and a wheelchair for anything longer. She required a special car seat with a swivel base to assist in getting her in and out of the seat. We agreed to fully fund the cost.
5.7	3406.50	He has a diagnosis of symptomatic epilepsy with focal seizures as well as other medical problems. He required a new special car seat which could both hold him securely as well as providing the additional support that his condition required. After a full assessment, it was determined that he need a range of additional accessories to ensure that he could be safely transported, which resulted in a substantial cost, even allowing for our discount structure with the supplier. With no other funding available, we agreed to cover the full purchase cost.
	1125.00	The grant funded the purchase of a sensory panel for use by Fort Royal Special School. Initially, this would be loaned to a 5 year old girl with extensive medical problems, who required to isolate due to her vulnerability. The school had loaned some sensory equipment and we were asked to help with funding this item. Later, this would be returned to the school for use by other children. We agreed to fully fund the purchase.
2	1283.00	She has a diagnosis of Spina Bifida with a Chiari 2 Malformation and Hydrocephalus. Unable to walk but has been able to develop some movement and control of her legs. Proposal was to fund a special exercise trike to help to develop her co-ordination and leg strength which we agreed to fully fund.
15	1750.00	He has a diagnosis of Global development delay, and a range of medical and speech and language problems. He has learned to walk short distances but otherwise uses a wheelchair which is heavy and hard to push now he is older. Proposal was to fund an all terrain buggy to enable him to be taken out and moved around more easily. The family managed to raise some funding online, and we

		agreed to provide the balance for the purchase to proceed.
3.75	647.18	She has a diagnosis of Smiths Magenis Syndrome, and presents with delayed speech and language, motor skills, challenging behaviour and a sleep disorder. She escapes from her car seat and presents a hazard when being transported. A new secure and comfortable car seat was required for her, which we agreed to fully fund.
12	3900.00	She was born with multiple congenital abnormalities including scoliosis of the spine (and for which she had a spinal fusion operation in 2019 with only partial success), hearing loss, global development delay, and she has not yet learned to walk requiring constant adult assistance. She required a wheelchair for mobility, but Wheelchair Services were unable to fund the specific requirements needed for her condition. As a result she has been granted the PWB (Personal Wheelchair Budget) to which she is entitled which totals £1,864.10, leaving additional funding required to acquire a chair suitable for her specific postural needs, and we were asked to help. We agreed to fully fund the balance for a wheelchair with the contoured seat required, along with additional supports.
9.75	1403.00	He has a diagnosis of Diplegic Cerebral Palsy, affecting the muscles in his legs. He can walk independently for short distances with the aid of sticks but uses a self propelled wheelchair for most of his mobility needs. He needs constant exercise stretching his leg muscles to maintain the mobility he has, and use of a special exercise trike was proposed. We agreed to fully fund.
12.5	792.75	He has a diagnosis of Kabuki Syndrome and a range of other medical problems. A set of parallel bars was proposed, to help to exercise his legs, as his family are keen to continue to work on trying to develop his limited mobility. We have helped the family previously and have followed his development, and agreed to fully fund this item of equipment.
8.5	328.00	He has a severe learning disability, ASD and severe challenging behaviour. He frequently damages items in the home, which is being modified for his condition. This proposal was for a reinforced TV cabinet to prevent breakage of the TV and potential electrical risks, as he has no awareness of danger.
8	517.00	Diagnosis of cerebral palsy and recently had Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy surgery to help her mobility. She has been working hard to improve her mobility and strengthen her leg muscles, and a special exercise trike was proposed. As another charity had already agreed to fund £800.00 towards the cost of £1,317.00, we were asked to fund the balance, which we approved.
0.75	355.00	She has movement difficulties following a severe hypoxic ischaemic encephalopathy at birth and uses Oxygen at home. She is receiving physiotherapy and the family has funded a second hand activity centre. This has a few items missing which limits her ability to gain the full benefit from it. We were asked to fund the amount required to make the activity centre fully functional, and we approved the grant required.
2.5	368.41	She has an acquired brain injury and is currently in a Children's Hospice awaiting transfer to a new Housing Association property. We were asked if we could fund a special support system to help her when playing on the floor, for use at her new home, similar to the one she is using very successfully while in the Hospice. We agreed to fully fund.
7	637.00	Downs Syndrome and needed a fully supportive car seat with a magnetic restraint harness when being transported. His existing seat is unsuitable and he can present a danger when in the car. Single parent family with his mother acting as a full time carer and we were asked if we could help. We agreed to fully fund the purchase.
6	578.00	Cerebral palsy mainly affecting his legs. He can walk a few steps with a tripod stick but a special exercise trike was proposed to try to help to develop and stretch his leg muscles. With another charity already providing £800.00 towards the total cost of £1,378.00, we agreed to fund the balance required for the purchase to proceed.
11	1920.00	He has a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder, learning difficulties, sensory processing difficulties and chronic lung disease. He can walk very short distances and the request was for a special exercise dual trike to try to get him outside more, and improve his exercise and general condition. We agreed to fully fund.
8.5	950.00	He has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy, asymmetric diplegia, hydrocephalus, and he suffers seizures and learning difficulties. Although he can now walk with the aid of tripod sticks, his balance is poor, and a special exercise trike was proposed to help to build his leg strength and improve his general condition. With the family able to contribute to the £1,423.00 purchase cost (after our discount structure with the supplier), we agreed to provide the balance required for the purchase to proceed.
1	1200.00	He has a diagnosis of nephrocalcinosis with a range of other medical problems and requires breathing assistance in the form of a ventilator, suction machine and Oxygen. He was due to return home and needed a twin buggy to carry both him and his twin sibling, along with all the equipment he may need. A suitable unit was specified, and we agreed to fully fund.
	3700.00	The Victoria School helps 240 disabled children (85% to 90% permanently wheelchair bound). They had a refurbishment project for their Art Room, and were fundraising for three main items of equipment. We were asked if we could help with funding the purchase of a rise/fall table which can accommodate up to 6 wheelchair users at a time and adjust for any age and size. We agreed to fully fund.
18	111.96	Diagnosis of Angelman Syndrome, severe development delay, speech and language delay, and challenging behaviour. Needed replacement parts for his exercise equipment which we agreed to fund.
	1321.58	Has a range of medical problems including global development delay, hearing and sight difficulties and epilepsy. Already provided with a number of items of equipment by the Community Equipment Service, but needs a comfortable seat where she can be held in the correct posture, for which further funding is not available. A Ppod Bean seat was proposed which we agreed to fully fund.

In Conclusion:

If you would like to contact us regarding this report, please email us at chriswestwoodcharity@gmail.com.

We continue to look towards an uncertain and challenging year, and we can only thank our supporters for their help.

Chris Westwood.