

# Our strategic priorities 2025-27



# Strategic Overview

St Raphael's Hospice has been at the heart of Merton and Sutton for over 35 years.

As an independent charity, we have been providing and continue to provide free, specialist palliative and end-of-life care and support to adults and those important to them. As the needs of our community grow, we face increasing challenges. By 2030, one in five people in the UK will be aged 65 or over, many living with multiple and complex health conditions. As the need for hospice care rises, so do the challenges of meeting this demand.

This strategy sets out our plans and priorities for the next two years and will further evolve, ensuring our services remain accessible, resilient, and relevant in a changing health and social care landscape and a new economic reality. We will continue to provide expert, compassionate care while adapting the way we work and exploring sustainable funding solutions.



# About Us

As a local charity, we care for one in four people in Merton and Sutton, living with a life-limiting illness and their families.

This means that St Raphael's supports around 1,000 patients each year — delivering personalised care in our Inpatient Unit, in people's homes, and within the wider community. We believe hospice care is about more than the end of life: it's about improving quality of life, managing symptoms, and helping people live as well as possible, for as long as possible.

We also provide essential emotional and practical support for families, carers, and those close to our patients, including counselling and bereavement services. Our care is delivered by a dedicated team of skilled professionals and volunteers, committed to treating every person with compassion, dignity, and respect.

While our patients are NHS patients, NHS funding covers only around 25% of the cost of delivering our services. The rest — over £4.8 million each year — must be raised through donations, legacies, and fundraising activities. Our care is only made possible through the charitable support and generosity of our local community.

## Our Hospice Care in 2024-25

**1833**

patients, relatives and carers supported



**910**

patient referrals

**207**

patient admissions to our ward

**1999**

Clinical Nurse Specialist or Hospice Doctor community visits



**Over 20,000**

Community Team telephone calls with patients, relatives and carers and healthcare professionals



**1048**

counselling sessions provided

**390**

social work visits

**4140**

attendances at our wellbeing service activities



# Our Mission

We provide patient-centred specialist palliative and end-of-life care, free of charge, to the people of Merton and Sutton. The Hospice embraces the unique value of each individual.

We welcome, respect and support patients and staff of any faith and none. We aim to meet the physical, emotional, spiritual, and social needs of patients and those important to them. We value the contribution of all our staff and volunteers and are committed to supporting training and education both in the Hospice and the wider community.

# Our Values

Our values underpin all that we do. We are currently partnering with our staff and volunteers to refresh our values, making sure they truly reflect what matters most to us and represent the heart of our culture here at St Raphael's. Together we have identified six values that we feel reflect our beliefs and behaviours.

They are:



**Person-centred**



**Compassion**



**Safety**



**Honesty & Integrity**



**Respect**



**Teamwork**

We will now refine them further to ensure that they fit with our language and embody our Hospice life.



# Our Services and our Approach

## Community Palliative Care Team

Our Community Team is made up of experienced Clinical Nurse Specialists and Specialist Practitioners (paramedics), Doctors, Social Workers, Counsellors and Therapists. Our care is delivered in partnership with GPs, District Nurses and other healthcare professionals, to enable patients to remain at home if that is where they prefer to be.

## Psychological Support Services

Our team provides psychological, emotional and spiritual support to patients and those important to them both before and during bereavement. This includes support for children and young people. We also offer housing and financial advice through access to grants and benefits, signposting to relevant agencies.

## Education

We run a number of study days and educational sessions for our external healthcare colleagues including GPs, District Nurses, hospital and care home staff, as well as providing internal training to ensure our workforce maintains its standards and legal obligations. We support medical and nursing placements to share expertise in specialist palliative and end-of-life care.

## Inpatient Services

We have 12 single rooms and one double room all with en-suite facilities and access to the patio and our lovely gardens. Patients will stay with us at the Hospice for several reasons. Some stay with us for a few days or weeks while we help them to manage their symptoms and then they return home or to an alternative care setting. Others may come to us as they are reaching the end-of-life and spend their last few days being cared for by our Inpatient Team. We are also here to support those people important to the patient.

## Wellbeing Services

Our Wellbeing Centre offers a number of activities to support the wellbeing and independence of people living with a life-limiting illness, their carers and those people living with bereavement. These activities include our educational 'Living Well' programme, and complementary therapies as well as a variety of other sessions across the week. We are also part of the award-winning project: Compassionate Neighbours, a befriending service tackling loneliness and isolation within our community.



# Areas we cover

We accept referrals from anyone aged 18 and above with a life-limiting illness who is registered with a GP in Merton or Sutton.



# Our Challenges

The hospice sector in the UK is facing unprecedented financial pressure, with funding levels at their lowest in twenty years. At the same time, demand for hospice care is rising rapidly due to a growing and ageing population. St Raphael's plays a vital role in the local health and social care system, providing compassionate, high-quality support in the community setting, both in people's homes and in the Hospice itself. However, our Inpatient Unit (IPU) beds are limited, and the wider system is under immense strain.

As the ageing population grows, so too does the reliance on unpaid carers, who play a vital role in supporting loved ones with complex needs. It is essential that we provide these carers with the support, resources, and recognition they need to continue in their role without compromising their own wellbeing.

In addition to supporting carers, we understand the profound benefits of counselling and bereavement support in helping individuals cope with loss, grief, and emotional distress.

Ensuring that these services are accessible to as many people as possible is vital to our holistic approach to care. We are increasingly aware of the impact of social isolation and frailty, particularly among older people. To address this, we are committed to providing informal and befriending support, helping individuals stay connected, feel valued, and maintain their independence for as long as possible.

Our financial model is increasingly challenging – especially as costs rise and demand grows, and we recognise the need to be more innovative and forward-thinking.

To continue meeting the needs of our community, we are actively exploring new approaches and sustainable solutions that will help ensure we can provide our expert care for future generations, despite the ongoing funding pressures.

# Our Strategic Priorities and Objectives

Our work is centred around the needs of patients and those important to them. We are committed to building on our achievements and strong reputation for providing exceptional care to those in our community who need our support.

We have outlined four key strategic priorities that together will expand access to support and care for our patients and those important to them, while also ensuring our long-term sustainability. These priorities reflect our commitment to securing essential funding, strengthening community support, and promoting the wellbeing of our dedicated staff and volunteers, whose resilience and compassion are vital to everything that we deliver.

## Our Priorities and Objectives

### Our Care: Maximising Our Impact and Quality

#### To achieve this, we will:

- Share our expertise through collaboration and education
- Optimise our services through innovation and data
- Work flexibly and efficiently
- Deliver high-quality care aligned with Care Quality Commission standards, while continually aiming for excellence.



### Our People: Empowering Our Staff and Volunteers to Excel

#### To achieve this, we will:

- Foster a supportive culture to ensure our staff and volunteers feel valued
- Grow and invest in our staff and volunteers
- Strengthen our IT and data usage.



### Our Community: Championing our Vital Role

#### To achieve this, we will:

- Foster inclusion to support more of our community
- Partner with local groups and businesses in our area
- Communicate compelling news stories, appeals and events.



### Our Funding: Securing a Sustainable Future

#### To achieve this, we will:

- Build strong relationships with our strategic funding partners
- Identify new funding opportunities through businesses and partnerships
- Develop opportunities for monetising some services.



# Example projects and initiatives

## Our Care: Maximising Our Impact and Quality

- Strengthen relationships with NHS funders and local hospices through regular engagement and clear evidence of our value, such as data on avoided NHS costs
- Explore medical workforce opportunities, including collaboration with psychiatry and roles such as clinical fellows or specialist doctors, to enhance patient care
- Investigate opportunities for increasing access to our care such as Outpatient Clinics and the use of GP satellite centres
- Consider the development of community-based care options such as volunteer home-visiting or sitting services to support informal carers
- Explore support for informal carers by developing carer network groups within our Wellbeing offer, including a collaborative offer with Sutton Carers.



## Our People: Empowering Our Staff and Volunteers to Excel

- Refresh our core values and mission to ensure continued alignment with our purpose, reinforcing them across job descriptions and workplace culture
- Grow, empower, and equip our volunteer community to expand our reach through meaningful roles and new opportunities
- Develop a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, and embrace and celebrate the diversity of our staff and volunteers through a variety of mediums
- Create a staff intranet to enhance internal communication, ensuring regular and varied updates that keep staff informed, motivated, and engaged.



## Our Community: Championing our Vital Role

- Take full advantage of media, digital platforms, and community outreach to share our work and help others see that we're about much more than just the end of life
- Host inclusive on-site and multifaith events, update our Chapel and Multifaith space, and expand online faith-related content to ensure that all in our community feel welcome
- Explore creating community-focused spaces within our shops, such as bookshop cafés, wellbeing service hubs, and accessible hospice information points, to better serve and engage with our local community
- Enhance our community's environmental impact by improving waste management, assessing our retail carbon footprint, and promoting the environmental benefits of our charity shops.



## Our Funding: Securing a Sustainable Future

- Boost brand awareness across our Hospice community through an integrated campaign, experimenting with new ways to raise both awareness and funds for our Hospice
- Expand our retail presence in key areas by focusing on specialist stores, such as a superstore, to better understand local buying trends and needs
- Explore paid-for services such as complementary therapies and talking therapies, and the rental of our Hospice grounds and spaces to create additional revenue streams.



# Outcome statement

St Raphael's Hospice will build a resilient and sustainable future, ensuring we can continue to provide expert, compassionate care for an ageing population with increasingly complex needs.

By embracing innovation and evolving the way we work, we will deliver services that are responsive, community-focused, and accessible to all who need them. Our dedicated staff and volunteers will be supported, valued, and equipped to make a meaningful difference every day, while our resources and facilities will be used efficiently to meet both current and future demands.

## Measuring our success

Success at St Raphael's Hospice will be measured through a coordinated, Hospice-wide management plan, with each department actively contributing to the delivery of our strategic goals and objectives. All team and individual plans will be aligned with these overarching priorities to ensure a unified and focused approach.

Progress will be tracked using a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) and measurable targets, enabling us to assess the effectiveness and impact of our work. The Senior Management Team will review performance monthly within their departmental meetings, recognising achievements, identifying challenges, and driving continuous improvement.

The Executive Team and Trustees will meet quarterly to review progress in their respective areas of responsibility, ensuring clear oversight and accountability. Strategic progress and organisational performance will also be reported at quarterly Board of Trustees meetings. This structure ensures that all parts of the organisation are aligned, engaged, and working collaboratively toward our shared mission of providing outstanding care for those who need us.

# Financial Management

Our Trustees have decided to maintain a reserve amount equivalent to between three and six months of expenditure to protect the organisation in the event of a significant loss of income.

This approach ensures we have a sufficient financial buffer while enabling us to use our resources effectively. We will continue to monitor our income and expenditure carefully to ensure we make any necessary adjustments at the right time to remain sustainable.

## Summary

This strategy sets out a clear direction for the next two years, grounded in our commitment to compassionate, high-quality care and shaped by the realities we face as a modern hospice.

We know the challenges are significant—but so too is our determination to meet them with creativity, collaboration, and resilience.

By working together across all departments, staying focused on our strategic goals, and continually adapting to the needs of our community, we will ensure that St Raphael's remains a trusted, essential service for generations to come. With the continued support of our staff, volunteers, partners, and local community, we can build a sustainable future—one where every person receives the care, dignity, and support they deserve.



**For more information about our strategic vision please contact us:**

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**St Raphael's**  
Your Local Hospice 