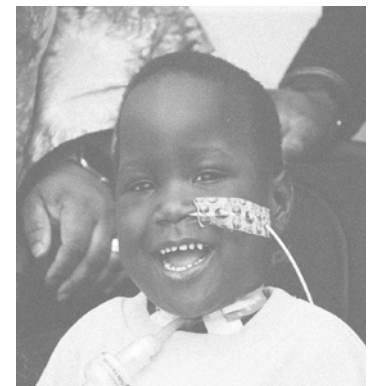
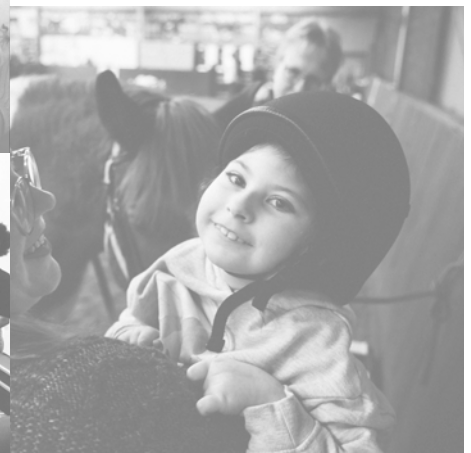


Thriving at Home

Our strategy 2024-2027



How we will help shape a better society
for children and young people with
complex medical needs.

WellChild 
the national charity for sick children

Welcome

A lot has happened since we published our previous strategy, 'Home' in 2017. This new plan marks the opening of a new chapter of WellChild's mission. It is also a reset of our commitment to creating a brighter future for the growing numbers of children and young people with complex medical needs and their families living across the UK today.



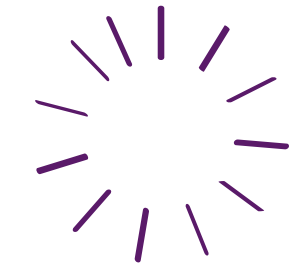
Matt James
Chief Executive



Craig Hatch
WellChild Chair

External pressures

The unpredictable and unprecedented global events of the last five years have created greater pressures on families. The cost-of-living crisis has hit families with a disabled child twice as hard as the average household. Meanwhile, care staff shortages and NHS workforce pressures are leaving already exhausted families without the care, support and respite they need. Too often in the last five years, we have seen families not prioritised in times of crisis and left isolated without support or guidance. This is compounded by a £2.1bn shortfall in Government funding for disabled children's health and social care, which is having a damaging impact on the availability of support services for families.



Isolation and mental health

Delivering round-the-clock care without a break, constantly battling for access to services, combined with anxiety about exorbitant living costs is placing unsustainable physical, emotional and financial strain on parents and carers. Many families report worsening mental health and growing social isolation.



Transition failures

With a growing population of young people living longer with complex medical needs, transitioning from child to adult services can be challenging. Adult services are often not ready or equipped to meet the ongoing needs of these young people and their families. More must be done to create a better transition experience and ensure a brighter future for young people with complex medical needs.

It is against the backdrop of these pressures that we will focus our next three years.



Care at home and in communities

With advances in medicine and medical practice, the numbers of children living with long-term complex medical needs continues to grow, but so too do the complexity of their conditions. Families are delivering increasingly complex, round-the-clock medical care at home for their children, often without respite or adequate support around them. This is compounded by a shortage of people with the right level of medical training within the community, limiting access to services and support such as education, childcare and respite. Despite many barriers to hospital discharge remaining, it is widely acknowledged that these children should be cared for at home wherever possible. This must now be matched with recognition of the overwhelming pressure placed on the shoulders of families caring at home.



Thriving at Home

Over the next three years, we intend to build on the foundations laid over the last strategic period and focus our efforts on addressing the urgent issues that families are facing, whilst helping to shape a society that understands and is better prepared to provide what children, young people and their families need.



Strategic Pillars

1. CONFIDENCE Pages 5-6
Overcoming barriers to hospital discharge and enabling more support at home and in the community by giving parents, carers and those around them the confidence to care.

2. RESILIENCE Pages 7-8
Relieving stress by supporting, connecting and helping families to navigate their journey and access the support they need.

3. ENRICHMENT Pages 9-10
Creating safe and stimulating places, spaces and opportunities for children, young people and families at home and in their communities.

4. RECOGNITION Pages 11-12
Helping to shape a society that recognises, prioritises and celebrates our growing population of children, young people and families.



Our Vision
For every child or young person with complex medical needs to be thriving at home.

Our Mission
We strive to shape a society in which every child, or young person with complex medical needs...

- ✦ Is cared for at home wherever possible.
- ✦ Has the right care and support around them.
- ✦ Has a stimulating, rich and happy family life.
- ✦ Is recognised, empowered and celebrated.

Our Goals
Through WellChild programmes and collaboration with others, we want to help shape a more understanding and inclusive society that recognises, looks after and celebrates our growing population of children and young people with complex medical needs and their families. We will therefore focus our efforts on...

- ✦ Breaking down barriers to hospital discharge and building confidence to care amongst not just parents, but carers, communities and those around the family.
- ✦ Helping families navigate their journey and access services and support more easily and quickly.
- ✦ Creating stimulating spaces, places and opportunities for positive family moments and memories.
- ✦ Connecting families for mutual support, information, friendship and for building resilience.
- ✦ Cultivating greater national recognition and prioritisation of the needs of our growing population.
- ✦ Listening, responding and advocating for the needs of children, young people and families, particularly in times of crisis.
- ✦ Building a scalable, sustainable and representative organisation that can meet the needs of a growing population.

confidence

PILLAR 1

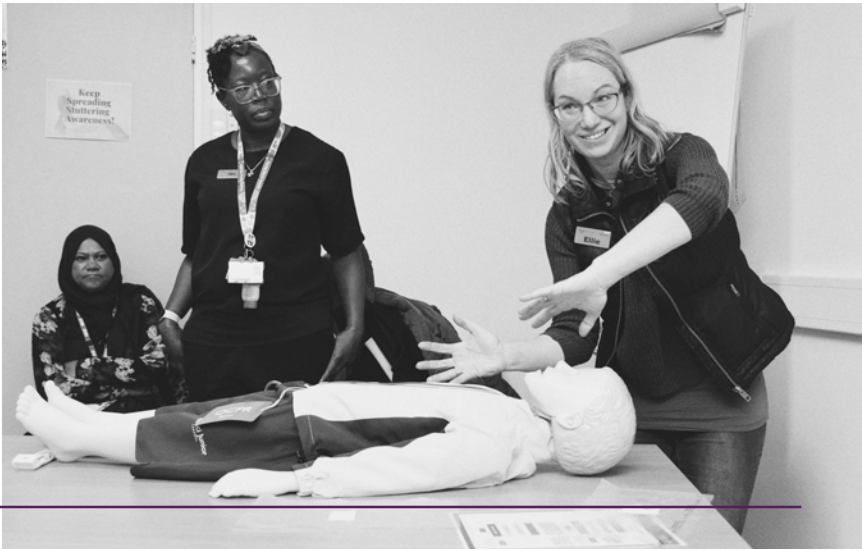


Overcoming barriers to hospital discharge and enabling more support at home and in the community by giving parents, carers and those around them the confidence to care.

WellChild Nurses are the bedrock of WellChild's work. Their unique skills and experience, coupled with our national network of WellChild Better At Home Training resources is critical to ensuring that children and young people with complex medical needs can be cared for at home instead of hospital. We will not only continue to invest in these vital programmes, but harness their collective strength to influence and shape more confident communities and accessible services.

- * Grow our WellChild Nurse network, particularly our Parent & Community Educators to train parents, carers and those around them in the specialist skills needed to care for their children and young people safely at home and in their communities.
- * Continue to invest in our Better At Home programme, providing equipment, technology and dedicated spaces in hospitals and community settings to ensure consistent, accessible, high-quality parent, carer and community clinical skills training across the UK.
- * Explore and identify new opportunities to further build community skills and confidence to improve access to education and other community services.
- * Harness the skills, knowledge and experience of the WellChild Nurse network to improve, inform and promote national standards of care, support and training.

“When you’re a parent of a severely sick baby training for basic life support skills is vital. Knowing that I can get this kind of training takes away a little of the stress”



Relieving stress by supporting, connecting and guiding young people and families as they navigate their journey from birth and diagnosis, to transition to adult services.

Over the last five years our family support network has become a lifeline for so many socially isolated families, particularly during times of national crisis. Meanwhile our growing library of information resources are providing guidance and clarity on all manner of subjects from condition management to legal entitlements. In the next strategic period, we will build on these established programmes and invest in more direct support to help families access the help and support they need quicker.



- * Establish a direct family support service to work alongside WellChild Nurses in helping vulnerable families to access welfare, local services and psychosocial support more quickly.
- * Expand the WellChild Family Tree support network as a lifeline for so many families, especially to those from BAME communities and those who may be digitally excluded, through a multi-faceted programme of in-person and virtual family groups and events.
- * Continue to develop and invest in information and resources including the Information Hub, Medicines for Children and In Your Area platforms to help families manage conditions, signpost them to support services and navigate their journey more easily.

PILLAR 2

Resilience



“Since joining the WellChild Family Tree network we have met some amazing families and get the most incredible support. It truly is like being part of a family where if you need advice, someone to chat to or even have a cry then the Family Tree is always there.”

PILLAR 3



Enrichment

“The garden is life-changing - it has improved our lives one million percent.”



Creating safe and stimulating places, spaces and opportunities for children, young people and families to thrive at home and in their communities.



Creating a happy home life in which our children, young people and families can thrive, is the cornerstone of what WellChild strives to achieve. This starts with ensuring access to safe and stimulating outside spaces at home, but also in identifying and providing rich and accessible opportunities for children and families to enjoy in their communities and beyond.

- * Expand the WellChild Helping Hands programme to create more safe, accessible and sensory outdoor spaces for children, young people and families at home and in their communities.
- * Develop a national portfolio of accessible, fun, WellChild-approved family events, experiences and offers across the UK through local and national partnerships.
- * Explore how the WellChild Awards programme can grow to provide enhanced support and opportunities for winners and their families post-event.

PILLAR 4



Recognition

Helping to shape a society that ‘gets it’ and that recognises, prioritises and celebrates our growing population of children and young people with complex medical needs.

With health and social care services under severe pressure, it is vital that children and young people with complex medical needs are prioritised. This will only happen through greater societal understanding and awareness. We will therefore invest time and resources in the next strategic period in amplifying the needs of this growing population to ensure they are properly considered.

- * Contribute to the development of national data and understanding of the UK's growing population of children and young people with complex medical needs and how their quality of life can be improved.
- * Create campaigns and initiatives to amplify the parent voice and advocate for improvements to care provision, transition and in times of crisis.
- * Alongside our partners in the sector, continue the fight to address the £2.1bn shortfall in funding for disabled children's health and social care.
- * Develop programmes such as the WellChild Awards to celebrate and put the stories of children, young people and families in the public spotlight.



Organisational development

Advances in medicine and medical practice means that the number of children and young people living with long-term, complex medical care needs is growing. However, the support for these children, young people and their families is sorely lacking. The role of WellChild as a lifeline for these families has become more important than ever.

As the demand for help increases, we must lay foundations for the future sustainable growth of our work and review our practices to ensure that we are as efficient, robust and agile as we can be to meet the challenges ahead. We have identified five key organisational priorities that we will focus on to achieve this.

1. Sustainability & Scalability

Review our operational delivery models, identify new income streams and create an engine for predictable and efficient income growth.

2. Digital & Data

The second phase of our digital transformation will focus on increasing organisational capacity, efficiency and organisational resilience.

3. People & Culture

Build on our positive culture and develop an inclusive, driven team of staff, volunteers and ambassadors who are aligned with our work and ambitions.

4. Brand & Profile

Invest in our brand, influencer and ambassador networks to ensure it reflects our strategic direction, ambition and values.



Our Values

Our organisational values will underpin our work, the way we conduct ourselves and the way we interact with our families, supporters, partners, volunteers, ambassadors and each other.

- Caring**
We are kind, inclusive and respectful.
- Ambitious**
We are bold, driven and ambitious.
- Responsive**
We listen, adapt and respond.
- Empowering**
We enable, support and inspire others.





In order to fulfil our ambitions
we need to raise more than
£2m each year.



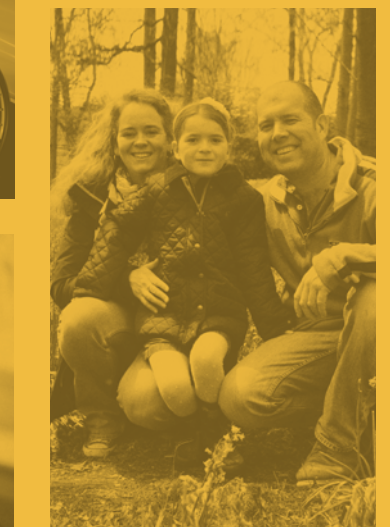
Scan the QR code to learn more
about how you can help children
with complex medical needs across
the UK to thrive at home.

wellchild.org.uk



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Company Number 1815689. Registered address: WellChild, Office 23,
Sunningend Business Centre, 22 Lansdown Industrial Estate,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL51 8PL

Patron: Prince Harry, The Duke of Sussex



2024-2027

OUR STRATEGY

WELLCHILD

