

Dear Camden Planning Team

We are members of the Young People's Forum at Great Ormond Street Hospital. We are a group of patients and siblings aged between 10-21 who meet regularly to work with the hospital to help improve patient experience.

We are writing to let you know that we support GOSH's application (ref: 2022/2255/P) for a new Children's Cancer Centre.

The following are statements from members of the Young People's Forum on why we support the development:

Planning of the design of the Children's Cancer Centre has been done with involvement of the Young People's Forum, ensuring that the voices of young people (including patients and siblings) are being included. As a result, the new building is more inclusive for teenage patients than current wards in GOSH. As a patient who has experienced inpatient care in both modern and older wards, the benefits I experienced from more up to date facilities had a large impact on my care. For example, waiting for tests or procedures in run-down corridors with little natural light increased my anxiety and increased my dread of hospital visits. On the other hand, staying in a ward with a modern teenager room equipped with a games console and access to outside spaces greatly improved my mood, decreased my anxiety and gave me more motivation to work towards recovering from surgeries. The new building will include many more social spaces for younger and older patients, allowing more people to experience the benefits of creative facilities. The Children's Cancer Centre will include many more green spaces so more patients can have access to nature during their long hospital stays. The ability to breath fresh air and be creative outside is essential for everyone's health, and I believe the ability to do this at GOSH is currently very low, as it is common for patients to not go outside for months during long hospital stays. The gardens and green spaces that are planning to be built as part of the new building will not only provide calming spaces for patients, but also benefit Camden overall by reducing air pollution.

Due to my treatment at GOSH, I had to take a year out of school to focus on my health. This impacted my learning, confidence and reduced my social contact. The new hospital school planned to be built as part of the cancer centre will provide long term patients a more welcoming and better-equipped area to continue their learning, as well as a place to meet other people and make friends in hospital. I think all of the patients at GOSH would benefit greatly from the addition of new facilities such as this, not only while at the hospital but also for the future after treatment. (HR)

The redevelopment of the existing Frontage Building on Great Ormond Street to provide a new cancer centre, alongside increased care would be immensely beneficial to GOSH as an organisation. The extension would increase the size of the hospital, meaning more children's lives will be saved, as well as improved. The noise pollution and disruption that may be caused by the building of this centre is no different to that of a civilian loft, or another construction project, which the residents would happily put up with. However, this should apply to GOSH as well, as the gains are huge. Personally, GOSH saved my sister's life, and does this frequently for other children in need of help and care, so building a new centre will only fuel this aid and increase the speed with which the vast amount of children can be saved.

Living with a slight inconvenience for a short period of time in which the centre is being built should not deter from the huge gains for unwell children, and I believe that residents should be willing to live with a little inconvenience for the greater good. (RF)

I was a long term patient at GOSH. When I was having treatment, for long periods of time I had to stay at the hospital, and I couldn't go out. This meant staying in a small room for the whole day with only my tablet and a book. One of the biggest factors that meant I had to stay inside, is that most wards were quite crowded and a virus could pass quickly between the children's low immune system. Also a newer ward could mean more opportunities for patients to have more things to do. I remember how when I was staying at hospital there was only one games console in a ward and every time it was used, it then had to be quarantined and washed down. This took around a week and it was always a race to get to be the person who used it. I don't think this should happen and this new building might be the solution to all these problems. GOSH would definitely benefit from the new building as it would make patients stay at the hospital much more enjoyable. For people growing up in London (especially children) their lungs must deal with the high amount of pollution. This can cause children to develop asthma and in more severe cases lung cancer. To be able to have care and staff specially equipped to deal with these specific cases could help save many children's lives and give them a better future. (EZ)

We hope that you will consider our thoughts on the benefits of the new Children's Cancer Centre, and that our experiences as patients has provided a new perspective on the importance of a new building at GOSH. We strongly believe that the long lasting impact of a new building on patients, families, staff and the environment at GOSH will greatly outweigh any short lasting inconveniences on the community.

Yours sincerely

Young People's Forum

(names can be provided on requested)