



The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

05 September 2022

Dear Prime Minister,

Congratulations on your recent appointment as the Leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. We wish you the very best during your time in office.

We are writing to you as the Chief Executive Officers for Young Lives vs Cancer, the Children's Cancer and Leukaemia Group, and Teenage Cancer Trust regarding your plans as Prime Minister for children and young people with cancer. **Young Lives vs Cancer, Children's Cancer and Leukaemia Group, and Teenage Cancer Trust are leading children and young people's cancer charities**, working tirelessly in partnership with the NHS and other third sector organisations to make sure that young cancer patients and their families get the support they need.

Under your predecessor, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care launched a call for evidence to help shape the ten year cancer plan and also announced his commitment to ensuring that we have world class cancer services and care in England (please see attached our organisations' submissions). Whilst we welcome the initial steps taken by the government, **we fear that this may not go far enough to ensure that the unique needs of children and young people with cancer are met**. It is often the case that young cancer patients are overlooked when it comes to policy decisions and so they fall through the gaps, for example, the variation in access for young cancer patients to psychological support, and lack of data and monitoring of outcomes for children and young people with cancer in comparison to adults.

Whilst there are some commonalities with adult cancer, such as the need for a robust and future-proof workforce of specialist cancer nurses and the need for earlier diagnosis, there are issues that are specific to children and young people with cancer, who are going through key developmental stages of their lives. To truly achieve cancer services and care that is equitable, age appropriate and personalised, the government must have a plan that covers; **age appropriate care and support, financial assistance for cancer costs, and mental health and emotional support**. Young cancer patients and their families have also shared their experiences, which they would like to see the Prime Minister take action on;



“My son spent over 18 months returning to the GP with the red flag bowel cancer symptoms and in recent years this is now not uncommon. Unfortunately the general consensus of GP's is to diagnose IBS without any further investigation. I feel now it is important that GP's offer a FIT test to these young people to ease the risk of a late diagnosis”

Caroline (Bradley's mum), Hampshire



“I would love for ongoing support to be given to young people even after their cancer treatment has ended. There needs to be a real focus on how cancer can also affect young people's mental health, and potentially a specialised therapy to help make the journey easier could be a real benefit to a young person's life while they're going through their cancer journey”.

Enkay, London

We would welcome meeting with you to discuss the unique experiences of children and young people with cancer and how the Health Care System and Third Sector can ensure the needs of young cancer patients and families are supported. To arrange please email helen.gravestock@younglivesvscancer.org.uk.

Best wishes,

Rachel Kirby-Rider

Young Lives vs Cancer
Chief Executive Officer

Ashley Ball-Gamble

Children's Cancer and Leukaemia Group
Chief Executive

Kate Collins

Teenage Cancer Trust
Chief Executive

General enquiries 0300 330 0803

younglivesvscancer.org.uk

Young Lives vs Cancer is an operating name of CLIC Sargent Cancer Care for Children. A registered charity in England and Wales (1107328) and in Scotland (SC039857). Also operating in Northern Ireland. A company limited by member guarantee (No. 05273638). Registered office: No. 1 Farriers Yard, Assembly London, 77-85 Fulham Palace Road, London, W6 8JA. VAT no: 863639196.