

**YOUNG LIVES**  
**vs CANCER**

# RUNNING ON EMPTY

A summary of research exploring the costs young cancer patients and their families face travelling for treatment.

May 2023



Each year, around 4,000 children and young people in the UK are diagnosed with cancer.<sup>1</sup>

To receive the specialist treatment they vitally need, they and their families often have to travel **long distances, several times a week**, and sometimes this will last for years.

**H** **9 hours**  
**350 miles**

Not only can this be physically and emotionally exhausting, but it can also come at a **significant financial cost** for young cancer patients and their families.

**£250**  
**EVERY MONTH**

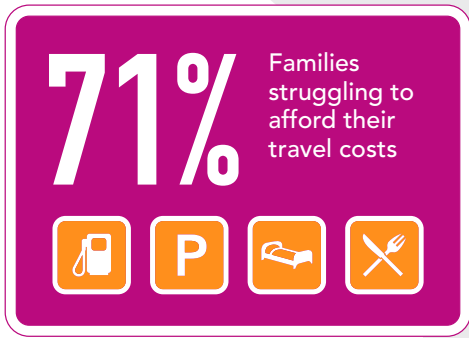
**71%**   
Families experiencing a decrease in their income

For many, frequently having to travel to and from cancer treatment can also result in **lost household income** and earnings.

The current support available is proving **inadequate in covering the travel costs** for many young cancer patients and their families.

**12%** **T**  
Families receiving support covering their costs

<sup>1</sup> Cancer Research UK, <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/>



This means many young cancer patients and their families are **struggling to pay** for the costs of travelling to and from cancer treatment.



For most, these financial struggles commonly result in them having to **make a range of sacrifices**. These often include going without much needed social and recreational activities, cutting back or going into their savings, and taking on debts.



Cutting back on food	27%
Falling behind on bills	20%
Selling possessions	20%
Fundraising or crowdfunding	18%
Delaying or missing treatment	10%

Less commonly, this can also result in families having to **cut back on food**, falling behind on household bills, selling their possessions and assets, fundraising to help meet costs, and delaying or missing cancer treatment and care.



These can have significant negative impacts on young cancer patients and their families' financial security, health and wellbeing, and future prosperity, leaving them running on empty. To address this, Young Lives vs Cancer is calling for a Young Cancer Patient Travel Fund.

# #RunningOnEmpty

## Methodology

Data collection for this research was conducted between February and April 2023. The research comprised of an online survey and follow-up interviews. A total of 259 people took part in the research. This consisted of young people (aged 18 to 26) and parents / caregivers of young people (aged under 27) from across the UK who have experience of cancer treatment and care in the past two years.

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). Registered office: No. 1 Farriers Yard, Assembly London, 77-85 Fulham Palace Road, London, W6 8JA.

