



Life in all its fullness for everyone in Mildmay's Care

"May Mildmay always continue to show Christ-like love to those for whom it cares - unconditional, nonjudgmental, and for the body, mind and spirit."

Canon Roger Royle
Patron

"Mildmay is an innovative, forward-thinking organisation that continues to develop, and one that puts the people it cares for at the heart of all its considerations."

Terry Sykes
Supporter and donor

MILDMAY at 40 1985-2025

Over the past 40 years, Mildmay Hospital has made remarkable progress. Through a focus on innovative, person-centred care and a commitment to continuous improvement, Mildmay has become a recognised leader in long-term and rehabilitative healthcare.

With a dedication to excellence and patient satisfaction, we continue to shape the future of healthcare, advancing new models of care that meet complex needs and transform lives.



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Our President Thank You, Lord Fowler

s we mark 40 years, we bid farewell to our former President, The Rt Hon. the Lord Fowler, whose advocacy for people living with HIV has shaped national and international understanding and policy, challenged stigma and inspired change. We thank him for his many years of support and leadership.



Welcome, Lord Smith

e are honoured to welcome The Rt Hon. the Lord Smith of Finsbury as our new President. A pioneering figure in politics and culture, Lord Smith made history as the UK's first openly gay MP and has long been a champion of equality and inclusion. His appointment symbolises a bold and inclusive future.



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Foreword from Our Chairman



The Very Revd John Richardson

orty years ago, a dedicated group of people came together to save Mildmay Mission Hospital. They saw its value - not just as a building, but as a family built of dignity and care. That vision has carried us through decades of medical, social, and political change.

I am proud to chair an organisation that continues to innovate in partnership with the NHS and champion care for people who are too often forgotten.

Thank you to our staff, volunteers and trustees, and to our donors and supporters, for helping us grow and evolve.

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A Message from our CEO Geoff Coleman



s we mark this milestone, we honour 40 extraordinary years of lives changed, challenges met, and a deep-rooted commitment to compassionate healthcare. Mildmay's journey from re-opening in 1985 to today is one of resilience, innovation, and enduring care.

Our work began in the 19th century and Mildmay was reborn as an independent charity once again in 1985 to meet the needs of people facing chronic illness, soon becoming a vital part of the UK's response to the HIV/AIDS crisis. Today, we continue to adapt, providing neurorehabilitation, step-down care, and holistic services to people often overlooked by the system.

To everyone who has walked with us, patients, colleagues, supporters, and partners, thank you.

Here's to the next 40 years.

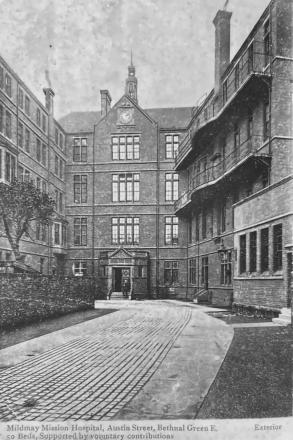
MILDMAY 1985-2025

How it all Started

he story of Mildmay begins in the mid-19th century, when the Revd William Pennefather, vicar of St Jude and St Paul's Church in Mildmay Grove, Islington, and his wife Catherine established the first Mildmay Institutions. At the heart of these were the Deaconesses, a devoted group of Christian women trained in practical ministry and nursing, whose pioneering work helped shape Mildmay's enduring legacy of compassionate care.

In 1866, as cholera swept through London, the Mildmay Deaconesses were sent into the squalor of the Old Nichol slums of the East End of London, where they delivered courageous, hands-on care and spiritual comfort to the sick and dying, often entering places others feared to tread.

By 1877, Catherine Pennefather had established the Mildmay Medical Mission in Bacon Street, off Brick Lane. Founded in memory of her late husband William, who had died in 1873, the mission housed 27 beds across three wards and was staffed by one doctor, three nurses and five deaconesses-in-training.

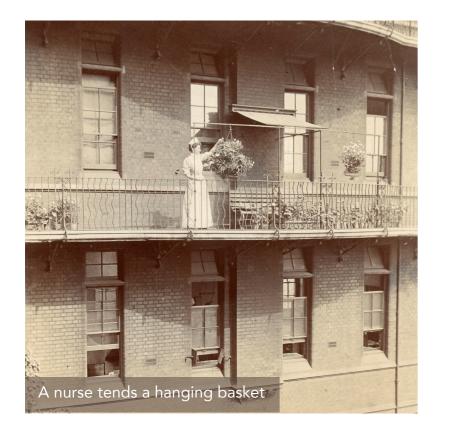


Mens ward

The London County Council began clearing the Old Nichol to make way for Britain's first council housing, an ambitious plan that posed a threat to the site of the Mildmay Medical Mission, but also presented a pivotal moment of challenge and opportunity.

In 1892, the first purpose-built Mildmay Mission Hospital opened its doors nearby in Austin Street.





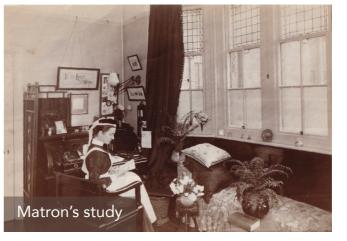






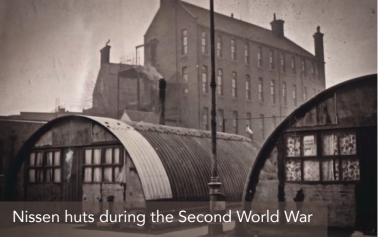




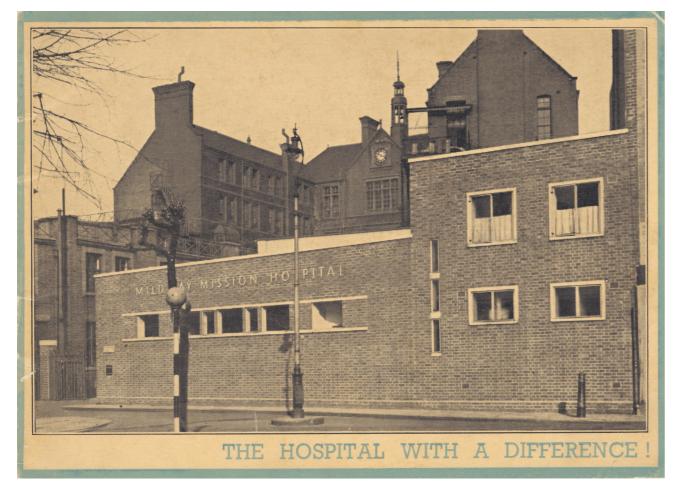








Mildmay's importance to the local community continued to grow.





In 1948, Mildmay joined the newly-formed NHS.

The hospital continued its legacy of service and training within the broader healthcare system for more than 30 years.



THE NEW

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

Your new National Health Service begins on 5th July. What is it? How do you get it?

It will provide you with all medical, dental, and nursing care. Everyone—rich or poor, man, woman or child—can use it or any part of it. There are no charges, except for a few special items. There are no insurance qualifications. But it is not a "charity". You are all paying for it, mainly as taxpayers, and it will relieve your money worries in time of illness.

However, by 1982, Mildmay, like many other small 'cottage hospitals' with fewer than 200 beds, was considered uneconomical and faced the threat of closure.





Against all odds: Mildmay Reopens

When the threat of closure emerged, Mildmay's Trustee Board, led by Chair, Helen Taylor Thompson (*left*), and with many loyal supporters, rallied to fight for Mildmay's survival.

Despite numerous setbacks, the Government and the NHS eventually approved its reopening in 1985 as a charitable hospital and nursing home, with an attached GP surgery, caring for young, chronically ill patients.

- 1980-1982: Initial plans were developed to adapt Mildmay to meet local community needs.
- 1982-1984: Despite these plans, Tower Hamlets Health Authority moved to close the hospital for financial reasons, leading to a phased shutdown of services.
- 1983: Supporters launched a vigorous campaign against closure, including a protest march to Trafalgar Square, which won temporary reprieves.
- Mid-1983 to early-1984: Despite appeals to Secretary of State Norman Fowler and a meeting with Health Minister Kenneth Clarke, the hospital was closed.
- Undeterred, the Board and supporters proposed continuing Mildmay as a wholly voluntary hospital outside the NHS, and eventually received a positive response from the Minister for Health.
- 20 November, 1985: A thanksgiving service was held in St Paul's Cathedral to mark Mildmay's relaunch.



Mildmay nurse Carol Anne Slater, pictured in 1987. Carol was part of the pioneering team that helped establish Europe's first AIDS hospice.

An overview of Mildmay from around 1985

THE MILDMAY MISSION HOSPITAL: GENERAL INFORMATION

This 50-60 bed hospital was re-opened in 1985 to serve the local community as an Independent Christian charity. It is currently exploring local needs and seeking to develop appropriate health care projects to integrate with or complement existing services in Tower Hamlets, City & Hackney and Newham Boroughs.

The Mildmay Mission Hospital was first opened in 1877 as a result of the work done by deaconesses from the Mildmay Mission who cared for cholera victims in Bethnal Green. It was set up as a Christian witness to God's care for the whole person.

The hospital was taken over by the NHS in the '40s, but was allowed to retain its Christian character and employ committed Christians.

A hospital extension was opened by Princes Alexandra in 1965. Royalty have been interested in and supported the work of Mildmay throughout its history.

In 1982 the NHS closed the hospital as being uneconomic to run as a small district general hospital. Through the loyal support and hard work of many members of the community around Mildmay Mission Hospital and of Christians committed to continuing the work of the hospital in some form, it was allowed to re-open as a registered charity in October 1985. Its brief is to serve the local community. The building is leased from the DHA on a peppercorn rent. It lies on the borders of City & Hackney and Newham but gives priority to Tower Hamlets in which it is actually situated.

During 1985 much renovation and refurbishment work has taken place: the kitchens have been gutted and replaced, the fire-escapes have been upgraded and Mathieson Ward has been refurbished. Much more work is in progress and is being planned.

We aim to have two wards, Mathieson and Tankerville, fully refurbished with 44 beds available by October 1987. We are offering beds to the following categories of patients:-

Young Chronic Sick long stay	(6)
Young Chronic Sick short stay	(6/12)
Respite Care (or holiday admissions)	(8)
GP beds	(10)
Nursing Home beds	(8)
Convalescent beds	(6)

The hospital depends mostly on donations to cover its running costs. It is open to anyone regardless of colour or creed and no one is charged for food, accommodation or medical/nursing services.

Future possibilities

There are many ideas about the best use of our facilities and these are being much discussed. We are currently exploring the possibilities of setting up a hospice service on one ward for patients in the terminal stages of AIDS, working closely with the London Hospital. There are also 2 operating theatres that may be opened and plans for involvement in primary health care.

In the early 1980s, the emergence of HIV and AIDS marked a seismic shift in global public health. In the UK, fear, misinformation and stigma surrounded the virus. People living with HIV faced not only a devastating and untreatable illness, but also widespread social rejection and discrimination. Many hospitals refused to admit HIV/AIDS patients, leaving them to suffer alone without appropriate care.

In 1988, Mildmay became Europe's first hospice dedicated to caring for people living with HIV/AIDS. At a time when few institutions were willing to engage with the crisis, Mildmay took a bold and compassionate stand.

"Mildmay was not only the first hospice in Europe for people with AIDS; it was the first and only residential family care centre in the world available to care for the whole family."

Baroness Masham of Ilton



"Mildmay was closed because the NHS said there was no place for a unit the size of Mildmay. Within ten years, it was cited in Hansard as the model of care for people with AIDS in the UK." **Peter Frymann** Trustee

A Royal Visit, a Global Spotlight

Diana, Princess of Wales, visited Mildmay for the first time on 24 February 1989. Between 1989 and 1997 she made three official and 14 unofficial visits to our Shoreditch hospital, sometimes arriving as late as 11pm and staying into the early hours. During these visits, she would sit with patients who were dying, holding their hands and offering comfort.

Her willingness to be in such close proximity without hesitation did much to **challenge the stigma** that surrounded HIV/AIDS and brought much-needed global attention to Mildmay's work.







Mildmay became a centre of excellence for neurorehabilitation, providing care for people with HIVrelated complex cognitive and neurological needs. For 40 years, we have provided a holistic model of care, combining medical treatment with psychological, social, and emotional support.

Alongside clinical treatment, our patients have benefitted from a wide range of therapies, including occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, as well as art, music, and gardening. These interventions support recovery, promote independence, and enhance emotional wellbeing, particularly for those living with HIV-associated neurocognitive disorders or recovering from complex trauma.

Until the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated the closure of our day services, former patients were able to return to Mildmay for ongoing therapeutic support, helping to sustain their recovery and maintain their connection to a supportive community.

This integrated, person-centred approach embodies Mildmay's compassionate ethos, caring for the whole person, in body, mind, and spirit.

Some Notable Visitors



Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon



Clare Raynor and Gaby Roslin



Gillian Taylforth, actor, Eastenders



Sarah, Duchess of York



The Rt Hon. the Lord Clarke (with Princess Alexandra, in 2005)



Diane-Louise Jordan, TV presenter



Elizabeth Taylor, actor



Todd Carty, actor, Eastenders



Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister



Queen Elizabeth II visited Mildmay Uganda in 2007



Kim Wilde, singer



Fiona Phillips, TV presenter



Sir Cliff Richard OBE, singer



Tom Robinson, singer, songwriter, broadcaster



Dame Esther Rantzen DBE, journalist and TV presenter



Tommy Walsh, TV presenter and celebrity builder



Vanessa Redgrave CBE, actor



Dr Chris van Tulleken, physician, TV presenter

The seeds of Mildmay's international work were planted in 1993, following an invitation from the Government of Uganda

"I was attending a conference on paediatric AIDS in Edinburgh, Scotland, in September 1993 when I met the Hon Manuel Pinto, MP for Rakai District, and he said to me, 'We must talk – I want Mildmay to come to Uganda.'"

Dr Veronica MossMedical Director of Mildmay

Ruth Sims, CEO, Princess Anne, Lord McColl, Chairman of Mildmay, Dr Veronica Moss and Hon Manuel Pinto, Director General of the Ugandan AIDS Commission, at the opening of Mildmay Uganda in 1998. (*right*)



In 1998, Mildmay Uganda was established in Kampala as Mildmay's first international project. Officially opened by Anne, The Princess Royal, it rapidly became a Centre of Excellence for comprehensive HIV & AIDS prevention, care, treatment, and training services.

Over time, Mildmay's international work expanded into Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and Eastern Europe. To manage these programmes, Mildmay International was established, overseeing projects which have since been handed over to local government and NGO partners. This sustainable approach has left a legacy of pioneering and effective care, shaped by local collaboration.

In recent years, our international work has evolved significantly, prompting us to reflect on past achievements and develop new plans for the future. As health needs change across the Global South, we are focusing on palliative care, maternal health, and early childhood development, alongside HIV.

We remain committed to advancing global health equity through initiatives such as our Education Exchange Programme, continuing to share expertise, promote mutual learning, and strengthen healthcare systems through meaningful partnerships.

Looking ahead, we are building new partnerships based this approach, beginning with promising initiatives in Uganda.

None of this would have been possible without the extraordinary generosity of our supporters.

From individual donors and community fundraisers to institutional partners, public support has been the cornerstone of our work, enabling life-changing care and lasting partnerships in some of the world's most under-resourced settings.

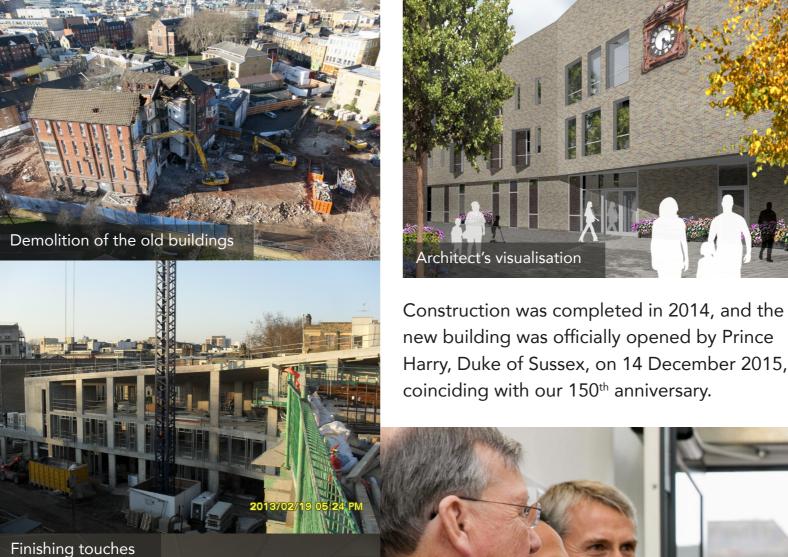
A New Home For Mildmay

A Thoughtfully Designed Modern Hospital

By the early 2000s, it was clear that the original Victorian hospital building, with its many later additions, which had served Mildmay since 1892, had reached the limits of adaptation.

Plans for a new, purpose-built hospital, supported by voluntary contributions, began to take shape, aiming to create a therapeutic environment that would reflect Mildmay's integrated approach to care.

In 2011, the venerable old buildings were demolished to make way for a new era in HIV care.

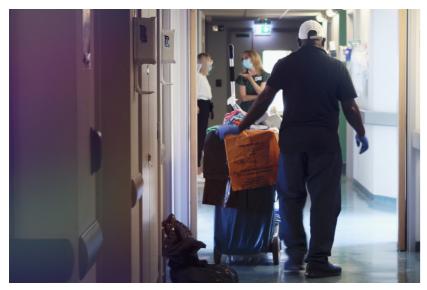


Built to meet the complex needs of people living with HIV and related conditions, the facility offers 28 ensuite inpatient bedrooms across two wards. It includes a fully equipped physical rehabilitation centre, day rooms, a chapel, a garden, IT and education suites, and an occupational therapy assessment centre to support independent living.

Our People









At the heart of Mildmay's 40 year journey are our incredible, compassionate, and dedicated staff and volunteers. From nurses, healthcare support workers, doctors and therapists, to our estates, facilities and leadership teams, alongside volunteer chaplains, former patients and members of the public who support us in countless ways - every individual plays a vital role in delivering our specialist, person-centred care. Day in and day out, they go the extra mile to ensure every patient receives the dignity, expertise and support they deserve.

Their commitment and humanity are the embodiment of Mildmay's life-changing care.



Mildmay Hospital has a tradition of training healthcare professionals dating back to the 1800s, when young women were equipped for dedicated nursing ministries.

Over the decades, we have continually adapted our educational offer to meet the evolving needs of healthcare. This commitment endures today through a comprehensive programme of student placements and electives, providing, hands-on, practical experience to the next generation of practitioners - from doctors and nurses to social workers.



"I chose Mildmay for my
elective because of its unique
patient group and
commitment to holistic care.
It has exceeded my
expectations, providing a
challenging yet rewarding
experience that will
undoubtedly shape my future
practice."

Placements and electives at Mildmay enable students, often during their final year of training, to explore areas of interest beyond their core curriculum. These experiences offer invaluable exposure to complex care environments, helping build clinical confidence, competence, and a deeper understanding of multidisciplinary practice.

Dietetics and Nutrition students from NOVA Medical School, Lisbon. (facing page)

We welcome students from across the UK and internationally, from institutions such as King's College London, City St George's, University of London, London South Bank University, and the University of East London. Our unique clinical setting gives students direct experience with a wide range of care needs - including HIV, neurorehabilitation, palliative care, and the health challenges faced by people experiencing homelessness.

Working alongside doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, dietitians, speech and language therapists, drug and alcohol specialists and social workers, students gain insight into compassionate, collaborative and holistic care in action.

Caring for People Experiencing Homelessness During the Pandemic

In 2020, during the COVID-19 emergency, Mildmay was called upon by the NHS to provide stepdown, rehabilitative care for Londoners experiencing homelessness.

Our team of doctors, nurses and therapists worked together to develop a new model of stabilisation care, designed to break the cycle of hospital readmission and support longterm recovery. This innovative approach helped to free up vital beds in acute hospitals at a time of national crisis, while offering vulnerable patients respite, dignity and a far greater chance of achieving a safe and sustained recovery.

Importantly, this vital service continues to operate to this day.

Camilla Hawkins, Mildmay's occupational therapist for almost three decades, pictured in 2021. (above)



Our NHS Partnership

Mildmay is proud to be a key partner of the NHS, providing essential healthcare services under contract, filling vital care gaps such as:

- Intermediate rehabilitation and care for homeless patients stepped-down from NHS Acute hospitals across London
- Rehabilitation and stabilisation treatment for homeless patients from across London who are undergoing detoxification from drugs and alcohol

 Neuropsychiatric rehabilitation care for patients referred by the North East London Foundation Trust.

This is in addition to our HIV rehabilitation services, which support people living with HIV who are also coping with neurological conditions or injuries, helping them regain strength, independence, and quality of life.

We are honoured to support the wider health system through our specialist services.

The Mildmay line



In 2024, the London
Overground line from
Stratford to Clapham
Junction / Richmond was
named the Mildmay line,
recognising our historic
role during the HIV/AIDS
crisis of the 1980s and
'90s.

Chosen by the Mayor of London and Transport for London (TfL), the naming of the Mildmay line recognises our longstanding service to some of the most marginalised and stigmatised people in the capital.

The new line names, Liberty, Lioness, Mildmay, Suffragette, Weaver and Windrush aim to reflect London's rich and diverse history while making the network easier to navigate. The Mildmay line pays tribute to the legacy of small healthcare centres like ours and their lasting impact on public health and human dignity.

Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, Mildmay CEO Geoff Coleman and Matron Teri Milewska at the official launch of the new lines at Dalston Junction Station on 28 November, 2024 (facing page) The Mildmay line commemorative roundel (below) is a profound honour for Mildmay, signifying the naming of one of the six London Overground lines after our hospital, its dedicated staff, and the patients we have served throughout our history. This recognition pays tribute to Mildmay's legacy since 1866, and in particular, our pioneering and transformative work during the HIV/ AIDS crisis, which established the hospital as a valued and respected institution for LGBTQIA+ communities.



We were especially pleased that our Lead Clinical Nurse, Comfort Sagoe, who retired in 2024 after nearly 20 years at Mildmay, was chosen by TfL as the central figure in the roundel. She appears alongside archival images of Mildmay nurses from earlier eras, framed by the red HIV ribbon - symbolising generations of care.

Our Continuing Story in 2024-25

Innovative Care Pathways & Expansion of Services:

- We launched a fourth inpatient pathway for neuropsychiatric rehabilitation, in partnership with North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT), in addition to:
- HIV Neurocognitive Impairment & Complex Physical Care
- Homeless Step-down clinical care
- Post-Detox Stabilisation for Homeless Patients

Commitment to Quality and Governance:

Rated 'Good' across all five key areas by the Care Quality Commission (2021):

"Mildmay is a unique and impressive hospital. Staff provided additional support for patients, beyond clinical care. They had a detailed, holistic understanding about their patients' lives and needs."

Professor Sir Mike Richards
The Chief Inspector of Hospitals

Strengthening patient care and improving data management:

- Since moving to the EMIS Web electronic patient record system in 2023, we have continued to improve efficiency and security, reducing costs, and streamlining hospital operations
- This system supports our clinicians in making informed decisions and delivering personalised care for better patient outcomes
- By sharing patient data with the UK Rehabilitation Outcomes Collaborative (UKROC), we demonstrate that our specialist rehabilitation supports strong patient recovery and significant NHS cost savings.

Positive Patient Feedback:

- 100% of patients would recommend Mildmay
- 95.8% of patients gave 'good' or 'excellent' feedback.

Patient Safety:

A significant **42.6%** reduction of reported incidents over the previous year.

Award-Winning Research:

- Won "Best Abstract" at the British
 Dietetic Association Research
 Symposium for our work on the low carbon emission menu for the NHS
- Presented at the International Congress of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Financial Stability and Sustainability:

- We maintained financial stability despite sector challenges, avoiding a deficit for the year.
- We made significant progress in reducing waste and energy use
- We developed and piloted a lowcarbon emission menu in collaboration with the NHS, which is now set to be rolled out more widely across the NHS.

Mildmay line Named:

One of the six new London Overground lines was named the "Mildmay line" in recognition of the hospital's pioneering work during the HIV/AIDS crisis and its ongoing service to the LGBTQ+ community.

Strong Staff Training Record:

- Low staff turnover
- Reduced sickness absence
- Improved morale following the introduction of enhanced support structures
- An outstanding 98% of our staff completed their mandatory training -100% in many key areas, reflecting our commitment to excellence, safety, and continuous professional development.

Mildmay at 40:

June 2025 marked 40 years since Mildmay's reopening as a charity and the start of our pioneering work caring for people living with HIV.

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A Patient's Story:

"My AIDS-dementia was treated and I learned to read, write and walk fully again."

In 2025, Jason Reid marks twenty years since his hospitalisation with an AIDS-defining illness and his rehabilitation at Mildmay. He generously allowed us to share his story, originally published in 2014, which powerfully captures his experience and the lasting impact of Mildmay's care.

" 2005 was quite the year for me. I was managing and living above a central London gay bar, partying most nights and barely sleeping. That summer, I began feeling constantly unwell - coughing, aching, losing weight - but life was too fast to stop and deal with it.

On 1st September, I woke unable to move and saw my GP. She sent me straight to the Royal London Hospital. I was admitted immediately, and that night they tested for HIV.

The next day, a doctor sat by my bed and told me I was HIV positive, with a CD4 count of 9, a viral load in the millions, and a diagnosis of Pneumocystis pneumonia. In plain terms, I had AIDS. I'd also developed cryptococcal meningitis. I weighed just over seven stone.

My parents were incredible. They visited twice a week for three months - through seizures, transfusions, and confusion caused by HIV dementia. They saw it all. My mother later told me, "Most of the times, we just couldn't speak on the train home."

Eventually, I was transferred to Mildmay.
Thankfully, I was in the rehabilitation group, not end-of-life care. The team at Mildmay helped rebuild my immune system and restore my ability to speak and write.

I returned to Mildmay last week, for the first time since being discharged in December 2005. The hospital has changed buildings and focus, but the passion and dedication of the team remains exactly the same.

HIV changed everything for me and my family. I still live with the trauma and depression, but nearly a decade on*, I'm healthy and on treatment. I'm proud of myself and my journey. My advice? Listen to your body, respond quickly, and get tested. I was lucky to survive.

When my father passed away, my mother asked me to arrange his funeral. I made sure to include this line in the sermon: "My father was there for his children, constantly, without judgement, just love." That's the key – less judgement, more love."

Jason Reid

*November 2014

Jason at Mildmay in 2024 (right)



Help Us Shape the Next Chapter

For four decades, Mildmay has been at the forefront of specialist care, thanks to the generosity of people like you.

Each year, it costs over £4 million to keep our doors open and deliver life-changing services. While NHS contracts cover much of our essential care, we rely on charitable donations to go further:

- Providing additional therapies
- Enhancing our facilities
- Supporting international projects
- Innovating for future generations

Your support makes a difference

With your help, we can continue to transform lives for the next 40 years and beyond.

Ways you can support Mildmay:

- Make a one-off or regular donation
- Leave a legacy gift in your will
- Fundraise or volunteer

Find out more and support us today: mildmay.org





Chanty number. 292036

Thank You for Being Part of Our Story

We would like to express our immense gratitude to everyone who has contributed to making **MILDMAY** such a remarkable community.

So many individuals, past and present, have played a significant role in shaping our story. This book stands as a testament to their commitment, dedication and support.

Acknowledgements

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"Mildmay has such a proud history of wonderful care and compassion for people with debilitating disease. I am humbled by all that is achieved."

Sandy R Dobie
Supporter and donor

"Mildmay will always have a special place in my heart because my 35-year-old son, Paul, spent six very happy weeks here in 2013 before he sadly passed away a few weeks later."

Pauline Chambers Volunteer chaplain



Mildmay has been caring for some of society's most vulnerable people since the 1860s. The first purpose-built Mildmay Mission Hospital opened its doors in 1892 and served the community for 90 years before its closure in 1982.

In 1985, **MILDMAY** was re-established as a charity, and our hospital reopened to confront the emerging HIV crisis with renewed purpose and determination.

Now, forty years later, this book celebrates our work, our people and the spirit of care that defines Mildmay.