



The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP  
 Prime Minister  
 10 Downing Street  
 London  
 SW1A 2AA

1 September 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to you as a group of life sciences organisations to urge you to take urgent action to preserve the vital contribution medical research charities make to life sciences in this country.

The UK is one of the strongest life sciences hubs in the world, generating over £74 billion in turnover and supporting nearly a quarter of a million jobs across the sector. As demonstrated by the recently published [Life Sciences Recovery Roadmap](#), the COVID-19 crisis has powerfully demonstrated the strategic importance of the life science sector to the UK's health and security, as well as its economy.

Medical research charities are crucial partners in this thriving life science sector. Not only have charities invested £14 billion in research in the UK since 2008, with £1.9 billion in 2019 alone, but their contribution to our industry is unique:

- Representing patients, charities have access to powerful, independent insights from their patient communities, meaning they have a unique understanding of their needs and experiences.
- Charities enrich the diversity of the UK's science base. They invest in early stage research, de-risking research to encourage future investment by industry. Charities often fund research in rare disease or other under-funded conditions.
- Medical research charities invest in research infrastructure including world-leading centres of excellence across the UK, they support the careers of thousands of highly skilled early-career researchers and enhance the UK's data and digital assets.
- Charities foster collaboration between industry, academia and others. They often act as independent brokers bringing life science innovators together.

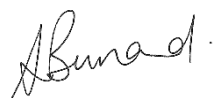
- Partnerships between charities and industry deliver innovation and significant benefits for patients by speeding up the development of new diagnostics and treatments.

COVID-19 has had an immediate and devastating impact on medical research charities. With dramatic falls in their fundraising income, medical research charities are projecting a [£310 million shortfall](#) in research spend over the next year and estimate that it will take over 4 years to recover.

We urge you to act to support this critical sector by committing to a [Life Sciences Charity Partnership Fund](#), a co-investment scheme that would provide a level of match-funding from government for future charity research. The AMRC (Association of Medical Research Charities) are calling for £310 million from Government in the financial year of 2020/21 to bridge the sector's projected research spend gap.

We recognise the Government's clear drive to put R&D at the heart of the UK's economic and social recovery but we have yet to see clarity in this around what this means for the future of charity funded research. By preserving charity-funded research in the short-term, Government can help create high-quality research, innovation infrastructure and skills benefitting the UK economy in the longer term.

Signed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Burnand'.

Aisling Burnand MBE  
Chief Executive  
Association of Medical Research Charities