

## The French Hospital

Supporting people in need since 1718

Registered Charity No. 219318

[www.frenchhospital.org.uk](http://www.frenchhospital.org.uk)



41 La Providence  
Rochester  
Kent  
ME1 1NB

Tel: 01634 843107

[fundraising@frenchhospital.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@frenchhospital.org.uk)

16<sup>th</sup> December 2020

*Dear Friend,*

It has been a difficult year here at The French Hospital, as it has been for many people across the Country. Events and activities have been cancelled and Residents here have been restricted in going about their daily life, in so many ways. However, we move forward with much hope into 2021; and with some Residents already starting to be vaccinated we anticipate a return to some semblance of normality during the year.

The words of our Deputy Governor, Leslie Du Cane, highlight the importance of support during these times:

*The French Hospital was founded more than 300 years ago for "Poor French Protestants and their Descendants". Its first Directors had all been refugees; as such, they, I like to think, had had to face circumstances somewhat similar to those that we face today. They found themselves in a strange land, unfamiliar with its customs and practices, and often having had to leave close family members on the Continent with no certainty of when they might see them again. They were isolated by language; they faced poverty, prejudice and uncertainty regarding their future; and they lived in at a time when sickness was an ever-present hazard. But they were members of another close-knit community that of the French Protestant Church, and through mutual support they not only survived but thrived. The French Hospital was their legacy to us, and their opportunity to give back something of what they had received when they had been in need.*

*There have been dark days, and there may yet be some to come, but they will not last and, as was the experience of its first Directors, the French Hospital and the La Providence community of today will survive and thrive in the years to come.*

Thanks to your continued support, we have been able to provide a delivered Christmas lunch to all our Residents this year – a change to the normal celebration and gathering, but very well received by all.

Next year we hope that at the very least we will be able to gather to celebrate the Hospital's Anniversary, in June, and to sit down with our Residents for lunch, in December. We will update you, as things develop. But if we are able to do that, we very much look forward to seeing our Friends again.

In addition, in early 2021 we will be launching The French Hospital Community Tree. A fundraising initiative which offers supporters the opportunity to purchase a leaf, pear or dove that would be engraved to celebrate a family name, or in memory of a loved one. Again, more to follow on this in the New Year.

Finally, as we sadly had to cancel our Anniversary Service this year, The French Hospital has produced a virtual festive service for you to enjoy. It can be viewed on our website: [www.frenchhospital.org.uk](http://www.frenchhospital.org.uk) or on YouTube on the link:

<https://youtu.be/8xJypGg3eH4>

On behalf of all the Directors, Staff and Residents at The French Hospital, we would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year. Thank you, once again. We look forward to the possibility of welcoming you at La Providence, in 2021.

With very best wishes,

*All at The French Hospital.*

