the migraine trust

A Year of Impact

Listening, supporting and driving change

In 2025 over 5,121 people reached out to our support services.

> *"This is the first time I've spoken to someone who truly gets it."*

Over a quarter of people came to us because of low wellbeing and 12% told us they felt isolated or alone because of migraine.

Calls are becoming longer and more complex, reflecting the impact migraine has on people's mental health, work and daily life.

18 minutes average call length (up from 12 minutes last year)

> *"I first called feeling judged, anxious and hopeless. Half an hour later I felt calm and optimistic. I finally felt understood."*

Our support makes a difference:

96% of people say they can turn to us for help

96% trust our information

88% felt less isolated after contacting us

91% felt more confident accessing healthcare

For many, our support is ongoing. Over 30% of callers were coming back to use our services again, showing how valued and trusted our support is.

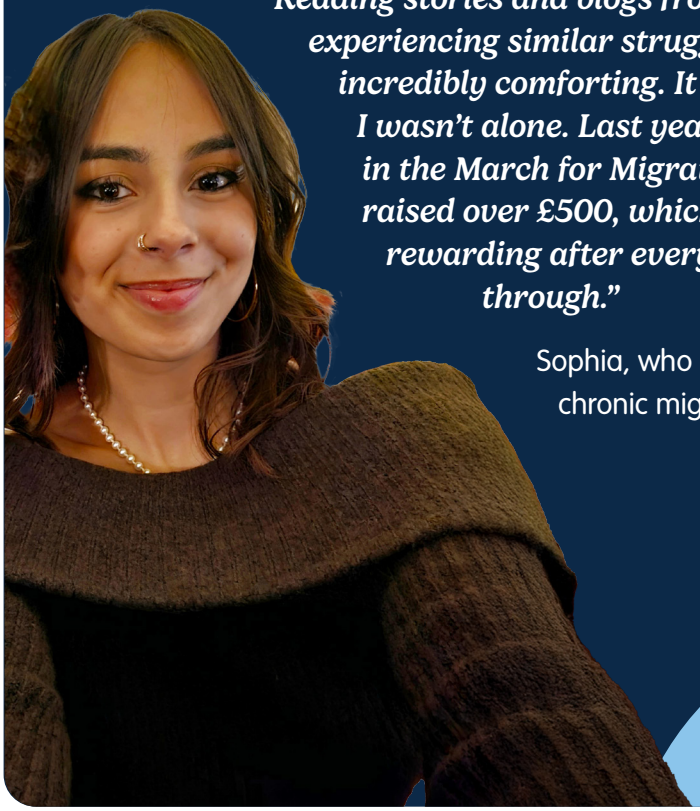
While we were able to increase the size of our team with a new Support Service Advisor, demand still outweighs capacity and we missed almost 1,000 calls during the year. Further investment to continue to grow is something we will focus on in 2026, in additional to looking for new ways to develop our services.

Extending access through digital support

In August we launched a new ChatBot service, expanding access to our trusted support outside service hours and in multiple languages. Since launch over 200 people used this service with evaluations showing many people using it late at night, when other services are unavailable, helping reduce barriers to much needed answers and comfort. Positive feedback includes: "Very good response. Excellent information."

"The constant pain from migraine took a serious toll on my mental health. Suicidal thoughts were frequently on my mind, and I began self-harming as a way to distract myself from the physical pain. I remember lying in bed wondering whether I would ever get better, or if this would be my life forever: bed-bound and unable to live normally. That uncertainty was terrifying.

During that time, I came across The Migraine Trust while searching online for support. I was lying in bed most days and hoping to find some kind of community. Reading stories and blogs from other people experiencing similar struggles was incredibly comforting. It reminded me that I wasn't alone. Last year I even took part in the March for Migraine challenge and raised over £500, which felt incredibly rewarding after everything I had been through."



Sophia, who lives with chronic migraine.

When people search for answers, they find us

Our health information reached millions helping people understand their condition and feel more in control of their options.

> *Even after years of migraine, your information helped me finally understand what my body is going through."*

> *Your website made me feel empowered instead of blamed."*

Our resources were downloaded **109,000+** times, up from **91,000** the year before

Our information pages on our website received **1.6 million** views. This is down by 11%, reflecting a change in how people access information, including relying on AI overviews instead of more trustworthy and reliable sources.

96%
found our information useful

99%
found it easy to understand

92%
felt better able to manage their migraine

> *Even after years of migraine, your information helped me finally understand what my body is going through."*

Building confidence and understanding

Our health information reached millions helping people understand their condition and feel more in control of their options.

We hosted seven Managing Your Migraine events, covering topics such as hormones, complex migraine presentations and support in the workplace. We also held a face-to-face event in Hull. A total of 1,473 people attended these events, and the recordings have been watched over 2,500 times on YouTube

Putting migraine on the agenda

In 2025, we strengthened our voice as a national advocate for people with migraine.

We worked with MPs, government departments and health system leaders across the UK to push for better care, more effective services and fairer workplace support. We contributed to major policy consultations, including the NHS 10-Year Health Plan and the Scottish Government's Long Term Conditions Strategy Consultation, and built on learning from a previous successful and well received project with NHS Grampian to explore the role of migraine as part of Pharmacy First in England. This included representing the migraine patient voice at roundtables run by the Company Chemists Association, Community Pharmacy London and Royal Pharmaceutical Society where we advocated for expansion of pharmacy services to support migraine care in line with Government's focus on strengthening community-based care.

> *"Thank you to The Migraine Trust for your tireless efforts to advocate and drive positive change."*

Our collaboration with the Neurological Alliance continues to grow and we have developed a practical tool for commissioners to support service improvement, that complements the guidance being produced by NHS England, informed by expert advisors and patient perspectives. This is due to launch in early 2026.

I always thought migraine was just head pain and I realised I didn't fully understand the condition myself. It's been one of the hardest parts dealing with that lack of understanding from others, whether it's being forced to work while in pain, to having my condition minimised or dismissed. Migraine means so much more than "just a headache." This condition has reshaped my life in profound ways, but I'm still here, adapting, advocating, and hoping for better days."

Simone, who lives with migraine and Functional Neurological Disorder

Migraine in the workplace

For Migraine Awareness Week we launched a new campaign around migraine in the workplace. It was timely as it overlapped with publication of a Government Green Paper on Pathways to Work and the subsequent Keep Britain Working review in later 2025. Our submission focused on how common yet overlooked migraine is and the simple adjustments that can enable more people to stay in and return to work.

Our research found:

- Only 32% of people without migraine recognise it as a neurological condition with 60% thinking it was merely 'a bad headache'
- One in four of those with migraine had either left or considered leaving a role because their employer was unsupportive about migraine
- Less than two in five of those without migraine would be very likely to believe someone who called in sick due to migraine

Our campaign 'Migraine Means' challenged misconceptions and highlighting the real impact of migraine at work. During the week:

- Website views increased by 16% (21% after a BBC Breakfast appearance alone)
- We had widespread media coverage including across BBC online, TV and radio
- Support services handled nearly double the calls compared to the previous year
- Supporters sent 90 emails to MPs
- Five politicians signed our workplace pledge

We launched our new toolkits for employers and employees and they have been downloaded by organisations of all sizes with feedback showing it has been used to inform internal policy and practices.

> *"The information in the tool kit has been used alongside recommendations from occupational health"*

We continue to deliver workplace training and delivered 10 sessions, reaching 700 people across sectors including the NHS, government and industry. These sessions helped people feel prepared to talk to GPs, employers and colleagues about migraine.

> *"Migraines can be so life debilitating, it was great to have the opportunity to learn about the Migraine Trust. The support they offer, raising awareness and giving a better understanding of this condition."*

Making sure every voice is heard

While research has supported the development of more effective treatments in particular, there is little about how different groups experience migraine. As a result, we do not know where inequities are greatest and it is impossible to build and create targeted strategies to improve care and support.

We commissioned research that revealed that gender, ethnicity and social background shape how migraine is experienced, and whether people feel safe seeking support.

Those facing or fearing discrimination were less likely to disclose migraine at work or in healthcare settings. We launched the research with a webinar in December bringing together stakeholders from across the NHS, public health and the charity sector. These findings will shape our future services, campaigns and communications over the coming years.

> *Your work made me feel seen and believed for the first time."*

Looking ahead

Moving into 2026, our key focuses include:

- Championing better migraine support in workplaces
- Advocating for better support for migraine in primary care, with a focus on community pharmacy
- Publishing new research to highlight the barriers to migraine treatment and recommend improved care pathways
- Launching online support groups for people living with migraine as part of our focus on wellbeing services
- Continue to investigate and address inequities in the migraine experience for underrepresented groups
- Hosting the 21st Migraine Trust International Symposium, taking place in Glasgow in 3-5 September

Our people

Our people are our greatest strength and while we are a remote organisation, we bring everyone together several times a year to inspire each other to go further in our support of people with migraine. This year, we continued to strengthen our EDI commitments with new research undertaken by a specialist behaviour change agency, Claremont, to guide our work in 2026.

Fundraising achievements

Despite a challenging fundraising climate, we increased our fundraising income year on year to over:

£1 million* including:

Over **£375,000** in legacy gifts

Almost **£13,000** generated by the steadily growing Migraine Trust Lottery

Over **£84,000** from supporter events and challenges including our annual fundraising challenge March for Migraine

Total Income:

Our total income for the year was **£1 million+**.

In addition to fundraising activity this included investments and gifts in kind.

Expenditure:

From every **£1** that we raise, **85p** is spent on charitable activities.

In 2025, we increased our expenditure on charitable activities using unrestricted funds by **44%**. This has helped us drive greater impact.

*All figures based on audited accounts.

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About The Migraine Trust

The Migraine Trust is dedicated to helping people affected by migraine. We are the only UK migraine charity providing information and support, campaigning for awareness and change, and funding and promoting research.

Visit our website to find out more: migrainetrust.org
You can also call our Helpline for support on 0808 802 0066

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