



## DEBATE PACK

Number CDP 2020/0147, 20 November 2020

# Recognising and preserving the value of charity-funded medical research in the 2020 Spending Review

This pack has been prepared ahead of the debate to be held in Westminster Hall on Tuesday 24 November 2020 at 9.30am on recognising and preserving the value of charity-funded medical research in the 2020 Spending Review. The subject for the debate has been nominated by the Backbench Business Committee and the debate will be opened by Dr James Davies MP and Chris Green MP.

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## Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Medical research funding</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1	Charitable medical research funding	2
1.2	Effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on charitable medical research funding	2
1.3	Life sciences charity partnership fund	3
1.4	Government position	4
1.5	Spending review, November 2020	4
<b>2.</b>	<b>Commons Library publications</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>News items</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Parliamentary Questions</b>	<b>8</b>

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

# 1. Medical research funding

Funding for medical research in the UK is provided by both the public and private sectors, as well as charities and non-governmental organisations. The latest data from the UK Clinical Research Collaboration (UKCRC - a partnership of the main stakeholders who influence clinical research across the business, public and charitable sectors in the UK) indicated that almost £4 billion was spent in 2018 on health relevant research in the UK by public and charity funders (£2.5bn spent directly on research projects and £1.4bn on infrastructure), an increase of 18.7% since 2014.<sup>1</sup>

The UKCRC also estimated that a further £850m of health-relevant funding came from “other sources not directly captured” by its analysis, thereby giving a total public/charitable expenditure in 2018 of £4.8bn. The term “charity” in the UKCRC report refers “mainly to funding provided by organisations that are members of the [Association of Medical Research Charities](#)” although it notes that there “are other UK non-profit private organisations supporting health relevant research”.<sup>2</sup>

Statistics produced by the Office for National Statistics showed that, in 2018, the pharmaceutical industry spent £4.5 billion on research and development (R&D) – the greatest expenditure by any sector on R&D in the UK.<sup>3</sup>

## 1.1 Charitable medical research funding

The Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) has published more recent figures on charitable medical research expenditure, based on data from its 150 AMRC member charities. It reported that, in 2019, AMRC medical research charities accounted for 51% of publicly funded medical research in the UK, investing £1.9 billion in UK research.<sup>4</sup>

## 1.2 Effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on charitable medical research funding

Since June 2020, the AMRC and its members have been campaigning for the Government to support charities’ investment in UK research through a co-investment scheme; an approach the sector argues is required due to a loss of fundraising income. The AMRC reported that, since the start of the pandemic, its members have seen a “38% loss in fundraising income” – in part due to the “suspension of many fundraising activities and shop closures”<sup>5</sup> – and that they are projecting an “average 41% decrease in their research spend over the next year”.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> UK CRC, [UK Health Research Analysis 2018](#), published 2020, p10

<sup>2</sup> UK CRC, [UK Health Research Analysis 2018](#), published 2020, p22

<sup>3</sup> Office for National Statistics, [Business enterprise research and development, UK: 2018](#), November 2019

<sup>4</sup> AMRC, [Medical Research Charities: Investing in Research 2019. Research Expenditure](#), June 2020

<sup>5</sup> AMRC, [50 MPs urge Chancellor to protect vital charity research](#), 20 July 2020

<sup>6</sup> AMRC, [Government must act now to save charity-funded research](#), 17 June 2020

Modelling undertaken by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) predicted, under a worst-case scenario, that lost charity income could mean “medical research charities invest £4.1 billion less in health R&D between now and 2027”. The IPPR’s best-case scenario suggests “£1.4 billion less investment over the same period”.<sup>7</sup>

Charities have predicted that the shortfall could have a range of potential impacts, from being “unable to fund clinical trials and studies” to “deferring upcoming grant rounds and withdrawing future funding”.<sup>8</sup> *The Guardian*, for example, reported that the British Heart Foundation had “halved its research investment this year from £100m to £50m”.<sup>9</sup> Cancer Research UK has also reported cuts of £44 million to its research funding over the same period.<sup>10</sup>

According to the sector, such reductions in funding may impact the advancement of medical science and the development of new treatments, as well as for the careers of UK scientists. An AMRC survey of early career scientists, published in October 2020, found that “funding uncertainties mean many could be forced to leave the [medical research] profession, with two thirds of those surveyed relying entirely on charity funding for their salary”.<sup>11</sup> The AMRC estimates that medical research charities fund the salaries of around 17,000 UK scientists.

The Medical Director of the British Heart Foundation, Professor Sir Nilesh Samani, also commented on the variety of research funded by medical research charities. He noted that, in addition to funding research into high-profile diseases, charities “invest in disease-specific areas of unmet need, including in heart and circulatory diseases, paving the way for the development of desperately needed medicines for the patients who need them”.<sup>12</sup>

### 1.3 Life sciences charity partnership fund

In July 2020, more than 50 MPs [wrote an open letter](#) to the Chancellor, urging him to commit 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 letter stated that the charitable medical research sector was requesting “£310 million from Government in the financial year of 2020/21 to bridge the sector’s projected research spend gap”. Under the scheme, this would “be matched by funding from charities as a means to maintain consistent

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<sup>7</sup> Institute for Public Policy Research, [RESEARCH AT RISK: Mitigating the Impact of Covid-19 on Health R&D Investment](#), October 2020

<sup>8</sup> AMRC, [Government must act now to save charity-funded research](#), 17 June 2020

<sup>9</sup> [Covid slump in medical charity donations 'puts research at risk'](#), *The Guardian*, 23 October 2020.

<sup>10</sup> [COVID-19: Why we're making cuts to our research funding](#), Cancer Research UK, 16 April 2020

<sup>11</sup> AMRC, [Pandemic threatens future of research as early career scientists look to leave](#), 28 October 2020

<sup>12</sup> British Heart Foundation, [Life sciences industry urge Prime Minister to protect charity research](#), 1 September 2020

research investment".<sup>13</sup> Though the Government has introduced a [£750m support package for charities](#), the letter states that medical research charities have "been unable to benefit from this support".

## 1.4 Government position

In her response to a Parliamentary Question on the Government's assessment of the proposal for a Life Sciences-Charity Partnership Fund, the Minister for Science, Research and Innovation, Amanda Solloway, highlighted a package of measures the Government would be implementing aimed at universities who had lost income during the pandemic:

*From the Autumn, Government will provide a package consisting of low-interest loans with long pay-back periods, supplemented by a small amount of government grants, to cover up to 80% of a university's income losses from international students for the academic year 20/21, up to the value of their non-publicly funded research activity, including from charities.*

*Universities will be asked to demonstrate how these funds are being utilised to sustain research in areas typically funded by charities and business, for example to protect areas of medical research that have been developed in part with support of charities. We continue to engage with medical research charities as the details of the package are developed.<sup>14</sup>*

## 1.5 Spending review, November 2020

On 25 November, the Chancellor of the Exchequer will set out the Government's spending plans for 2021/22 in a Spending Review. These Reviews typically take place every two to four years, and set spending limits for each Government department. Allocating funding between departments is an opportunity for the Government to set out its long-term spending priorities. The new budgets for each department also often include details of new funds or programmes. Departments agree their funding settlements through negotiations with the Treasury, and MPs and members of the public [have been able to submit representations to the Treasury](#) to help to influence the decisions that are made.

An article written by AMRC members and published in the medical journal [The Lancet](#) describes the upcoming spending review as both a "turning point" and an opportunity to "improve patient outcomes and ensure the economic health of the UK life sciences sector" by creating the life sciences charity partnership fund. Dr Charmaine Griffiths, Chief Executive of the British Heart Foundation, said that "without Government commitment to a Life Sciences-Charity Partnership Fund in the upcoming Spending Review, charities will be forced to make

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<sup>13</sup> [Letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Life Sciences-Charity Partnership Fund](#), 17 July 2020

<sup>14</sup> [PO 75292](#) [on Life Sciences: Research], 21 July 2020

devastating cuts to their research which will be hugely damaging for patients and UK science".<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> AMRC, [Charity CEOs warn of irreparable damage to UK research](#), 13 November 2020

## 2. Commons Library publications

[Background to the 2020 Spending Review](#), 20 November 2020

[NHS Expenditure](#), 17 January 2020

[Research and development spending](#), 17 June 2020

### 3. News items

National Health Executive

16 November 2020

[Charity research funding crisis could irreparably damage UK research](#)

The Lancet

12 November 2020

Charmaine Griffiths, Michelle Mitchel, Aisling Burnand

[More support needed for UK charity-funded medical research](#)

European Pharmaceutical Review

30 October 2020

[COVID-19 is threatening the UK's medical research prowess, say charities](#)

Guardian

23 October 2020

[Covid slump in medical charity donations 'puts research at risk'](#)

British Heart Foundation

23 October 2020

[Coronavirus could cause £7.8 billion shortfall in medical research](#)

[see IPPR report [Research at Risk: Mitigating the impact of Covid-19 on health R&D investment](#)]

Guardian

24 June 2020

[A generation of UK researchers could be lost in funding crisis](#)

## 4. Parliamentary Questions

[House Of Commons Tabled Parliamentary Question 2019-21 116655](#)

**Tabled by: Anderson, Stuart**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what financial support from the public purse is available for UK medical research charities.

**Department: Department of Health and Social Care**

[Medicine: Research](#)

**Asked by: Anderson, Lee**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on sectoral support for charity-funded medical research during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Answering member: Kemi Badenoch | Department: Treasury**

Medical research charities are an integral part of the United Kingdom's world-leading life sciences sector and we welcome the interest of honourable members in this area. The government is monitoring the impact of Covid-19 on the work of medical research charities. To this effect, the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy and the Department of Health and Social Care is closely liaising with the Association of Medical Research Charities, as well as individual charities, to understand the impact of the pandemic on this sector and identify how best the Government and charities can work together to ensure that patients continue benefiting from charity funded research.

**HC Deb 27 October 2020 | PQ 107108**

[Universities: Coronavirus](#)

**Asked by: Baroness Randerson**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reduction in research funding available to universities as a result of reduced charitable giving during the COVID-19 pandemic; and what plans they have to increase funding to compensate for any such reduction.

**Answering member: Lord Callanan | Department: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

The UK's world-class universities will continue to play a critical role in delivering local and national economic prosperity, but of course they have been hard hit by COVID-19. That is why we have announced a range of measures to support universities at this difficult time.



From the autumn, the Government will provide a package consisting of low-interest loans with long pay-back periods, supplemented by a small amount of government grants through the Sustaining University Research Expertise Fund ('SURE') to cover up to 80% of a university's income losses from international students for the academic year 2020-21, up to the value of their non-publicly funded research activity.

The SURE fund aims to help sustain the research capacity of the university research base as a whole. Universities will be asked to demonstrate how they will use that funding to sustain research in areas typically funded by charities and business. Ultimately, we want critical university research capability, including charity-funded medical research, to be sustained and able to contribute to our future R&D ambitions.

**HL Deb 17 September 2020 | PQ HL7991**

[Charities: Finance](#)

**Asked by: Maskell, Rachael**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on the continued allocation of funding to medical research charities.

**Answering member: Mr John Whittingdale | Department: Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport**

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, the Government has committed a £750m targeted funding package to ensure the Voluntary, Community and social Enterprise sector can continue its vital work.

Ministers and officials in DCMS have maintained regular contact with other departments throughout the pandemic, including DHSC and BEIS, as we develop our response. BEIS and DHSC have been closely liaising with the Association of Medical Research Charities, as well as individual charities, to understand the impact of the pandemic on this sector and identify how best Government and charities can work together to ensure that patients continue benefiting from charity funded research.

**HC Deb 14 September 2020 | PQ 84303**

[Charity Research Support Fund: Coronavirus](#)

**Asked by: Onwurah, Chi**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the level of funding for the Charity Research Support Fund in 2021.

**Answering member: Amanda Solloway | Department: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

We are aware of the impact of Covid-19 on the university research sector and charity research organisations. On 27 June we announced a

support package that will help protect science jobs and enable universities to continue research and innovation activities including those funded by charities.

From the Autumn, the Government will provide a package consisting of low-interest loans with long pay-back periods, supplemented by a small amount of government grants, to cover up to 80% of a university's income losses from international students for the academic year 2020/21, up to the value of their non-publicly funded research activity, including from charities. Universities will be asked to demonstrate how these funds are being utilised to sustain research in areas typically funded by charities and business, for example to protect areas of medical research that have been developed in part with support of charities.

We continue to engage with the sector on ensuring the long-term sustainability of charity funded research in universities. As part of this BEIS and DHSC officials are also meeting regularly with the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) and with individual medical research charities.

**HC Deb 07 September 2020 | PQ 84240**

[Charity Research Support Fund](#)

**Asked by: Onwurah, Chi**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 21 July 2020 to Question 75291 on Charities: Research, what recent assessment the Government has made of the (a) effectiveness of the contributions of the Charity Research Support Fund and (b) effect of the covid-19 outbreak on its level of funding.

**Answering member: Amanda Solloway | Department: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

Charity research funding is a vital component of the research funding landscape for universities, providing some 12% of total research income in 2018-19, and the charity research support element is a vital component in ensuring that universities are able to accept that funding. The charity research support element recognises that charities sponsor high-value research in universities, bringing benefits to scientific discovery and society, but that charities do not always meet the full costs of that research. According to data collected by the Office for Students using the Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) methodology research charities funded 59% of the full economic cost of the research they supported in UK universities. The charity research support element of block grant funding (£204 million in England, with equivalent sums in the rest of the UK) provides a further contribution of around 10% of the full economic cost.

A significant proportion of charity funding supports health research. The UK Health Research Analysis[1] concludes that charities provided £1.11

billion in funding for health research in 2018, 44% of the total. The impact and benefits of the medical research funded by charities and supported by UKRI's charity research support are set out in the 2019 Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) report [Making a Difference](#)<sup>[2]</sup>, while the 2018 Wellcome Trust report [Empowering UK Universities](#)<sup>[3]</sup> uses case studies to show the importance of QR funding, which includes charity research support.

Charities are anticipating a sizeable reduction in their income as a result of the pandemic, which will impact significantly on charity-funded research. The [AMRC reports](#) that its members project an average 41% decrease in their medical research spend over the next year, while 40 per cent of charities responding to its survey of members stated that half their clinical trials might be unable to restart. In April Cancer Research UK, one of the largest funders of charity research, announced a cut in research funding and stated that no new research projects will be funded for at least the first six months of this financial year.

The size of the charity research support element does not depend upon the level of charity funding. Therefore, as the level of charity research funding falls, the charity research support element of block grant funding will cover a greater proportion of the full economic cost of charity-funded research at universities.

[1] <https://hrcsonline.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/UK-Health-Research-Analysis-2018-for-web-v1-28Jan2020.pdf>

[2] <https://www.amrc.org.uk/making-a-difference-impact-report-2019>

[3] <https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/empowering-uk-universities-how-strategic-institutional-support-helps-research-thrive.pdf>

**HC Deb 07 September 2020 | PQ 78660**

[Research: Government Assistance](#)

**Asked by: Cameron, Dr Lisa**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for (a) Health and Social Care and (b) Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on the suitability of existing Government support packages for medical research charities in light of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Answering member: Amanda Solloway | Department: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

Ministers and officials in BEIS have maintained regular contact with other departments throughout the pandemic, including DHSC and DCMS, as we develop our response. BEIS and the Department of Health and Social Care have been closely liaising with the Association of Medical Research Charities, as well as individual charities, to understand the impact of the pandemic on this sector and identify how best Government and charities can work together to ensure that patients continue benefiting from charity funded research.

This is in addition to the £750 million package announced by DCMS to ensure Voluntary, Community and social Enterprises can continue their vital work supporting the country during the coronavirus outbreak.

**HC Deb 07 September 2020 | PQ 77678**

[Research: Government Assistance](#)

**Asked by: Cameron, Dr Lisa**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to consult medical research charities during the development of the Government's comprehensive R&D plan.

**Answering member: Amanda Solloway | Department: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

Ministers in BEIS and officials have met regularly with the Association of Medical Research Charities and their members over the last months to discuss how charity-funded research can best be supported and we have sought their input on the Government's R&D Roadmap.

**HC Deb 07 September 2020 | PQ 77677**

[Life Sciences: Research](#)

**Asked by: Onwurah, Chi**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has been made of the implications for his policies of the Association of Medical Research Charities' proposal for a Life Sciences-Charity Partnership Fund.

**Answering member: Amanda Solloway | Department: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

Ministers in BEIS and officials have met regularly with the Association of Medical Research Charities and their members over the last months and we are aware of their proposal for a Life Sciences-Charity Partnership.

On 27<sup>th</sup> June, we announced a major package of support for universities to help them continue research and innovation activities being impacted by Covid-19. This will aim to address the broader set of issues facing the university research sector. From the Autumn, Government will provide a package consisting of low-interest loans with long pay-back periods, supplemented by a small amount of government grants, to cover up to 80% of a university's income losses from international students for the academic year 20/21, up to the value of their non-publicly funded research activity, including from charities.

Universities will be asked to demonstrate how these funds are being utilised to sustain research in areas typically funded by charities and business, for example to protect areas of medical research that have been developed in part with support of charities. We continue to engage with medical research charities as the details of the package are developed.

**HC Deb 21 July 2020 | PQ 75292**[Charities: Research](#)**Asked by: Onwurah, Chi**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to provide financial support to the charity-funded research sector during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Answering member: Amanda Solloway | Department:  
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

On 27th June, we announced a major package of support for universities to help them continue research and innovation activities being impacted by Covid-19. This will aim to support the University research base as a whole. From the Autumn, Government will provide a package consisting of low-interest loans with long pay-back periods, supplemented by a small amount of government grants, to cover up to 80% of a university's income losses from international students for the academic year 20/21, up to the value of their non-publicly funded research activity, including from charities.

Universities will be asked to demonstrate how these funds are being utilised to sustain research in areas typically funded by charities and business, for example to protect areas of medical research that have been developed in part with support of charities. We continue to engage with the sector as the details of the package are developed.

Charities will also benefit from the £750 million package announced in April to ensure Voluntary, Community and social Enterprises, including medical research charities, can continue their vital work supporting the country during the coronavirus outbreak. Charities also had access to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, will pay no business rates for their shops next year and can get a Business Interruption Loan.

**HC Deb 21 July 2020 | PQ 75291**[Topical Questions](#)**Asked by: Chris Bryant**

Further to the question by the hon. Member for Bolton West (Chris Green), may I push the Government on clinical trials and medical research? Medical research has saved hundreds of thousands of lives in this country in recent years. I have known people this year who started on a clinical trial that was their only hope of life. It was suspended because of coronavirus and now they have died. We need to make sure that the money is getting into the medical research charities. Last week, Cancer Research UK said that it would lose 500 members of staff and cut its research to £150 million. We need the Government to act fast to get these clinical trials up and going again—and the medical research, too.

**Answered by: Kwasi Kwarteng | Department: Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

The hon. Gentleman is absolutely right to highlight this issue and I share a lot of his concerns, but it is wrong to suggest that we are not doing anything. From autumn this year, we are providing a package of low-interest loans with long payback periods, supplemented by a small element of grant, to cover up to 80% of the universities' income losses from international students. The money that is being pumped into our further education deals precisely with the point that he raised, and we are continuing to do that.

**HC Deb 21 July 2020 | Vol 678 cc1995-6**

[Topical Questions](#)

**Asked by: Chris Green**

I thank my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for championing the life sciences sector and my hon. Friend the Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth for championing the cause of universities and researchers, but we also have a superb charitable medical research sector in the United Kingdom. With the loss of funding due to covid-19, will my right Friend commit to working with the medical research charities to ensure that they can continue to work on creating the next generation of medical treatments for patients?

**Answered by: Kwasi Kwarteng | Department: Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

As my hon. Friend will know, in June 2020 we announced a support package to enable universities to continue their vital research. Universities will be required to use some of that funding for research normally funded by medical research charities. We are continuing to look at this situation and we hope to engage closely with charities to develop an even more robust package.

**HC Deb 21 July 2020 | Vol 678 cc1994-5**

[Charities: Finance](#)

**Asked by: Davey, Sir Edward**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on medical research charities; and if he will make a statement.

**Answering member: Amanda Solloway | Department: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

Ministers in BEIS and officials have met regularly with the Association of Medical Research Charities and their members over the last months. The AMRC have shared information on the potential challenges as a result of Covid-19, in particular on the extent of cancer related research which they support in universities. We are aware of range of risks to the

sustainability of universities research from potential loss of income from international students from other research funders, such as charities.

On 27th June, we announced a major package of support for universities to enable them to continue their research and innovation activities that are being impacted by Covid-19. From the Autumn, Government will provide a package consisting of low-interest loans with long pay-back periods, supplemented by a small amount of government grants, to cover up to 80% of a university's income losses from international students for the academic year 20/21, up to the value of their non-publicly funded research activity. Universities will need to demonstrate how these funds are being utilised to sustain research in areas typically funded by charities and business.

**HC Deb 30 June 2020 | PQ 64838**

[Medicine: Research](#)

**Asked by: Thomas, Derek**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department has taken to support medical research charities during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Answering member: Kemi Badenoch | Department: Treasury**

Medical research charities are an important part of the UK's world-class R&D ecosystem and are contributing directly to combating Covid-19. We know that many charities are struggling and the government is closely monitoring the impacts of Covid-19 on the sector.

Medical research charities can access the comprehensive support the government has made available for employers and businesses. Under these measures, charities can defer their VAT bills and pay no business rates for their shops next year. All charities are eligible for the job retention scheme and the right answer for many charities will be to furlough their employees with the Government paying 80% of wages. Charities are eligible for the Coronavirus Business Interruptions Loan Scheme, the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme, and the Bounce Back Loans Scheme. Registered charities are now exempt from the requirement that 50% of the applicant's income must be derived from its Trading Activity.

**HC Deb 09 June 2020 | PQ 52309**

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