

# UK to donate fleet of ambulances to Ukraine

A fleet of NHS ambulances will provide urgent care for those injured by Russian attacks in Ukraine following a donation from the UK.

- UK NHS trusts donating around 20 ambulances to the Government of Ukraine
- donations will help replace Ukrainian ambulances lost to Russian bombardments and provide urgent care to injured
- Ukraine's health services stretched as Russian attacks hit civilian shelters and hospitals

The donation of around 20 NHS ambulances will help bring vital lifesaving care to Ukrainians remaining in towns and cities under attack from Russian bombardments.

This donation will help replace those Ukrainian ambulances lost to Russian attacks, bolstering the existing fleet's resilience as the barbaric war goes on.

It is estimated more than 12 million people are currently in need of humanitarian assistance across Ukraine.

The conflict has stretched Ukraine's health services, with Russia's indiscriminate attacks targeting civilian shelters and even hospitals.

South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SCAS) is leading the way, donating four of its ambulances, with further donations from NHS trusts across the country soon to follow.

The first ambulances will arrive in Ukraine this week, destined for Lviv in the west of the country, where they will be transported on to those areas most in need.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

We have sadly seen day after day the horrific impacts of Putin's cruel war on the people of Ukraine, including evidence of appalling acts by Russian troops in towns such as Irpin and Bucha.

The UK has been among the biggest aid donors, providing food, medicines and generators to help those affected. These world class NHS ambulances will now help bring lifesaving care directly to those injured in the conflict.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Sajid Javid, said:

The UK government has stood shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine and provided them with the lifesaving medical equipment they need.

The invasion has damaged key medical infrastructure and the generous donation of four ambulances by South Central Ambulance Service will ensure people in Ukraine can receive urgent care. It marks the first of many ambulances the UK government and the NHS is donating to Ukraine in the coming days

Paul Kempster, SCAS Chief Operating Officer said:

Ambulance Trusts around the country have been rallying to provide ambulances and we in SCAS are immensely humbled to also be able to support those in need in Ukraine.

We hope that this small gesture goes some way to helping provide immediate frontline healthcare support to the many people who desperately need it.

This latest funding and donation comes in addition to the nearly £400 million (£394 million) already pledged by the UK for the conflict in Ukraine, including [£220 million of humanitarian aid](#).

To date, the UK has [donated more than 5 million items of medical supplies](#) to Ukraine to help the country cope with the medical emergency caused by the Russian invasion. Last month the UK government also [brought 21 Ukrainian children with cancer to receive care](#) through the NHS in England.

1. UK NHS trusts have donated ambulances to the Government of Ukraine, following a request from HM Government. The NHS's national ambulance service fleet strategy requires the replacement of ambulance vehicles every 5 years. After this time, vehicles are decommissioned and either kept back for resilience, given to approved charities or sent to auction. All vehicles and medical supplies are checked before being sent to ensure they meet the standards required.
2. To date the UK has donated 5.29 million items of medical supplies to Ukraine, including:
  - nearly 3,000 adult resuscitators
  - around 220,000 wound care packs
  - over 550,000 sterile needles
  - over 50,000 packs of bandages
  - 1,600 pieces of equipment for ventilators
  - over 75,000 cannulas
  - around 380,000 packs of medicines – around 2.8million doses – including antibiotics and painkillers
  - 72,000 packs of gloves

## “Blame game” ends as no-fault divorce comes into force

- Changes remove unnecessary conflict to ease stress on couples and children
- New minimum wait of 20 weeks between application and conditional order of divorce
- Part of wider action to improve the family justice system

The Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act (2020), represents the biggest shake up in divorce law for more than half a century. It ends completely the need for separating couples to apportion blame for the breakdown of their marriage, helping them to instead focus on key practical decisions involving children or their finances and look to the future.

Previously, one spouse was forced to make accusations about the other’s conduct, such as ‘unreasonable behaviour’ or adultery, or face years of separation before a divorce could be granted. This was regardless of whether a couple had made a mutual decision to separate.

The changes mean that a spouse, or a couple jointly, can now apply for divorce by stating their marriage has broken down irretrievably. It removes unnecessary finger-pointing and acrimony at a time where emotions are already running high, and spares children from witnessing their parents mudslinging.

Importantly, it stops one partner from vindictively contesting a divorce and locking their spouse into an unhappy marriage. In some cases, domestic abusers can use their ability to challenge the process to further harm their victims or to trap them in the relationship. The reforms will put an end to this behaviour.

The Act also introduces a new minimum timeframe of 20 weeks between the start of proceedings and when individuals may apply for a conditional order of divorce. This will offer time to reflect, and potentially turn back, or where reconciliation is not possible to agree important arrangements for the future – such as those involving children, finance and property.

**Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Dominic Raab said:**

The breakdown of a marriage can be agonising for all involved, especially children. We want to reduce the acrimony couples endure and end the anguish that children suffer.

That's why we are allowing couples to apply for divorce without having to prove fault, ending the blame game, where a marriage has broken down irretrievably, and enabling couples to move on with their lives without the bitter wrangling of an adversarial divorce process.

Specifically, the measures from the Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act that come into force today include:

- Replacing the current requirement to evidence either a conduct or separation 'fact' with the provision of a statement of irretrievable breakdown of the marriage (for the first time, couples can opt to make this a joint statement).
- Removing the possibility of disputing the decision to divorce, as a statement will be conclusive evidence that the marriage has irretrievably broken down, except on limited technical grounds.
- Introducing a new minimum period of 20 weeks from the start of proceedings to a conditional order of divorce being made, allowing greater opportunity for couples to agree practical arrangements for the future where reconciliation is not possible and divorce is inevitable.
- Simplifying the language of divorce to make it more understandable. This includes replacing the terms 'decree nisi', 'decree absolute' and 'petitioner', with 'conditional order', 'final order' and 'applicant'.

Following the implementation of the Act the government has also committed to look into further the law around financial settlements after a divorce, such as the dividing of assets or maintenance payments.

### **Juliet Harvey, National Chair of Resolution said:**

This historic change will mean the end of the blame game for divorcing couples, removing the outdated and unnecessary need for them to find fault with their ex on the divorce petition.

Our members help couples facing separation and divorce to minimise conflict and find constructive, lasting solutions, putting the best interests of any children first. For years, the previous divorce law made this more difficult, with the need to apportion blame often introducing or exacerbating conflict unnecessarily – this ends today.

After more than 30 years of campaigning by our members, we are delighted to see this reform finally come to pass, which will

result in a kinder, less adversarial divorce process in England and Wales.

**Aidan Jones, Chief Executive at Relate, said:**

The new legislation represents the biggest shake-up in divorce law for 50 years. It is an important step in moving away from animosity and blame being the norm, to a place where the welfare of those involved – particularly children – is at the forefront of the process. Introducing a minimum time from petition stage to ‘Decree Absolute’ is also welcome, allowing both partners to reflect on the decision and to access support such as counselling and mediation if appropriate.

This is far from the end of the journey, though. As a society we must encourage healthy relationships, reduce parental conflict (whether parents are together or not) and in turn improve children’s wellbeing and life chances. Relationship support services are vital to this.

The reforms are part of wider government efforts to reduce conflict in the family courts, to protect children from harm and divert suitable cases away from the courtrooms.

This includes a landmark mediation voucher scheme helping thousands of families resolve disputes without the need for often lengthy and costly courtroom battles.

The government also launched a new investigative approach pilot in North Wales and Dorset which aims to improve information sharing between partner agencies to better deal with cases involving domestic abuse. It is also reviewing the presumption of parental contact in cases where abuse is alleged to ensure children are kept safe.

**Notes to editors:**

- The new online system for divorce goes live at 10am on Wednesday, 6 April.
- In January 2022, the government announced £1.3 million in funding for a [Family Mediation voucher scheme](#), bringing the total amount to nearly £3.1 million with thousands of families benefiting from free out of court mediation.
- In August 2021, the government announced a [call for evidence on dispute resolution](#), seeking views on the best ways to settle family, business and other civil disputes away from the court room. A response will be

published in due course.

- In November 2020, a [review of the Presumption of Parental Contact](#) was launched. It examined how courts balance child safety with the right to family life. This work is ongoing.

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## **As Russia is forced into retreat, its brutality is laid bare: UK statement at UN Security Council**

I will now make a statement in my capacity as the Representative of the United Kingdom.

President Zelenskyy, by video, Secretary-General, Colleagues,

The United Nations was created in the wake of a European war of aggression that laid waste to Europe and engulfed the world.

All of us who signed the UN Charter committed to ending the scourge of war, to fundamental human rights, the dignity and worth of the human person, the equal rights of nations large and small, to justice, and respect for international law.

Yet now, we are facing another war of aggression in Europe.

We have heard today, again, the devastating impact of Russia's unilateral and illegal military action in Ukraine. Its impact on surrounding countries and the region, and on the security and prosperity of the wider world, as it seeks to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

- thousands killed
- millions displaced
- cities razed to the ground
- hospitals bombed
- citizens cut off from food, water and medicine

- blockaded sea ports and the rapid increase in wheat prices
- pressure on already stretched humanitarian resources

And now, as Russia is forced into retreat from areas around Kyiv, the brutality of the invasion is laid bare. We have all seen the horrific images from the towns of Bucha and Irpin of civilians deliberately killed in areas from which Russian forces have recently withdrawn – and the video we saw earlier underlined that horror.

These acts, and other credible incidents, must be investigated as war crimes, and the UK fully supports the work of the International Criminal Court and the work of the Ukrainian Prosecutor General and other national prosecutors.

Colleagues, as we, and so many others, have said so many times, all of this could be stopped if the Russian Federation ended this war now.

I resume my function as President of the Council.

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## **PM meeting with Ghanaian President Nana Akufo-Addo: 5 April 2022**

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson met the President of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo.



The Prime Minister met the President of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo, at Downing Street today.

He welcomed the strength and depth of the partnership between the UK and Ghana, stretching across defence, trade and cultural ties.

Recognising the growing security threats in West Africa, the Prime Minister

and President Akufo-Addo committed to strengthen our defence and security partnership, including in intelligence sharing and naval capabilities.

The leaders were united in condemnation of Russia's hostile invasion and attempted subjugation of Ukraine, agreeing on the importance of continued support to the Ukrainian people and diplomatic and economic pressure on the Kremlin.

They looked forward to further strengthening the cooperation between our two countries, and to meeting again in person at the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting.

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## [Half a million pounds of research funding set to boost understanding of veteran needs](#)

Press release

The government has allocated £500,000 in grants to charities and research institutions for specialist support research and digital training for veterans.



More than £500,000 in grants for research projects into the experiences of veterans has been distributed to charities today, supporting specialist studies and digital training for ex-armed forces personnel.

The research projects will look at the experiences of female veterans, veterans from ethnic minorities and non UK ex-service personnel, and provide vital insight to ensure the UK Government is able to tailor support for these groups.



A grant has also been made to TechVets, a charity that supports service leavers and veterans into digital, technology and cybersecurity roles. The money will allow more veterans to benefit from specialist training and secure roles in the digital industry. This will place significantly more veterans across the UK into careers in cyber and technology.

Minister for the Cabinet Office The Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP said:

In the latest Veterans' Strategy Action Plan, we committed to ensuring that our veterans can continue to enhance their careers throughout their working lives.

Our latest grant package to TechVets will provide bespoke training to former members of the armed forces interested in cyber roles, which builds on the training they receive while serving.

The grants form part of wider work within the Office for Veterans' Affairs, to ensure that all veterans receive equal access to dedicated support services. Undertaking new qualitative research to understand where female veterans seek support and identifying potential barriers to accessing that support was committed to in the latest Veterans' Strategy Action Plan.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Leo Docherty said:

In order to provide dedicated services to all who have bravely served the United Kingdom, we first must understand their experiences.

These grants will provide the government with vital information to shape bespoke services for veterans, and ensure that all our veterans receive equal access to high quality support services.

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