



## DONOR MEMO

# Help us alleviate the worst pain known to medicine

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## 01 The Problem

About **3 million adults** worldwide get cluster headaches every year.

Many neurologists [consider](#) it to be **the most painful condition known to medicine**. One patient described it this way:

I was in labour with my son for nearly 3 days, then the midwife had to break my cervix with her hands, but I'd still rather do that again than have another cluster headache.

Despite this, the disease is largely underfunded, and standard health metrics fail to capture the extreme burden imposed on each patient.

While there is no known cure, there are effective treatments like high-flow oxygen and some psychedelics at very low doses. But most patients either don't know about these treatments or struggle to access them. Many doctors don't know about cluster headache.

## 02 The Solution

ClusterFree is working to minimize [Days Lived in Extreme Suffering](#) (DLES) from cluster headaches across the globe (time spent in pain rated at 9/10 or above).

Our [theory of change](#) outlines various possible paths to impact, and which ones we've chosen to focus on.

Currently, our top priority is to help patients worldwide get diagnosed and find treatments as quickly and easily as possible. To this end, we've created [ClusterInfo.org](#), which hosts multilingual treatment (and soon diagnostic) guides. We think these are currently the best guides on how to treat cluster headaches, both in terms of depth (synthesizing academic literature and patient advice) and clarity. We are disseminating them massively among patient communities. Bob Wold, founder of the leading patient advocacy organization [Clusterbusters](#), has stated that the guides we're creating are "exactly what the patient community needs and has needed for many years." We believe this is a highly scalable intervention, and we're already helping patients since launching in late May 2026.

Other avenues we have explored and will continue to work on include: publishing [open letters](#) signed by prominent figures in various fields; helping researchers raise funding for a Phase 2a trial of [BOL-148](#), a highly effective non-hallucinogenic LSD analog; and having conversations with relevant actors in various countries to influence Compassionate Use / Right to Try laws for cluster headache.

For more updates on our activities, visit our [updates page](#).

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## 03 Why us?

As a project incubated within Qualia Research Institute, we were among the first to make a rigorous case ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#)) for the urgency and tractability of treating cluster headaches, before it was on most people's radar. We've partnered with the most prominent organizations in this space, such as [Clusterbusters](#) and [OPIS](#). We bring a lean approach, an entrepreneurial mindset, and a drive to move fast, given the urgency of the problem.

Since then we've proven that we can execute. [Our research](#) has been published in a Nature Portfolio journal. Our [open letter](#) calling for government action was signed by leading figures including philosopher Peter Singer, psychopharmacologist Robin Carhart-Harris (UCSF), neurologist Christopher Gottschalk (Yale), and writer Scott Alexander. We're rapidly scaling [ClusterInfo.org](#). We presented an academic poster at the [68th Annual Scientific Meeting](#) of the American Headache Society.

**We've achieved this and more in less than a year, with about 1.2 FTE, and a budget of £89k.**

Additionally, we have the unique ability to attract top talent to our advisory board and team of volunteers from places like Harvard Medical School, Oxford, Stanford, and Google.

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## 04 We need your support

Almost no one is speaking up about the importance of ending the suffering caused by cluster headache. In addition, it receives less NIH funding than other conditions of comparable prevalence (4). This neglectedness means the marginal dollar goes much further here than in better-funded areas. We can eliminate an outsized share of the world's most extreme suffering at a fraction of the cost of better funded conditions.

Through [ClusterInfo](#) alone, we may be able to avert a severe cluster headache attack for under \$20. Learn more on our [impact page](#).

As of August 2026, we're looking to raise **£168k** to fund a two-person team for the next 18 months (Alfredo plus a new full-time hire) primarily to scale ClusterInfo and avert thousands of attacks. But we can easily absorb more funding than that.

Donate [here](#), or [schedule a call](#) to discuss a larger gift.