



National Cancer Research Institute NEWSLETTER

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A Happy New Year to all our Friends and Colleagues!



The recent big freeze may have caused some problems but one event to gladden all our hearts was the award of a knighthood to Professor Mike Richards, National Cancer Director

for England, in the New Year's Honours List.

Sir Mike was instrumental in setting up NCRI and NCRN and has been a member of the NCRI Board since our inception; he also chaired NCRI for 2 years from 2006-2008. He has been particularly influential in the work we have done in supportive and palliative care, and more recently early diagnosis, survivorship and end of life care. His continuing commitment to evidence-based health-care is an important aid to links between the wider research community and the NHS.

Talking of our inception, NCRI and NCRN will be 9 years old in April and we are starting to consider how to mark our 10th anniversary in 2011. Any suggestions will be gratefully received.

Send us your thoughts on this, and how NCRI and NCRN have changed cancer research to info@ncri.org.uk

NCRI PET Research Network website set up



A new website to support PET research in oncology has been set up (www.ncri-pet.org.uk). The site is designed to address specific issues valuable for the PET community and to provide general information about PET for the public.

The site includes a directory of currently available oncology PET radiotracers, PET research funding options as well as a database of ongoing UK trials using PET. For PET/CT centres involved in multicentre trials, there is information on the advice and support that the NCRI PET Clinical Trials Network can provide and on the standards and quality control procedures that centres need to follow in order to join the network. Over recent years, mobile scanners have become an integral part of PET scanning in the UK and there is scope for further utilising this resource for research. The website contains a position statement on the use of mobile scanners for research, developed with expert input and with reference to the latest international standards and recommendations.

Please contact Sabine Regel (sabine.regel@kcl.ac.uk) for further information

New identity for Radiotherapy Group



The NCRI Clinical and Translational Radiotherapy Research Working Group is pleased to introduce a logo for the group, with the design showing a stylised linear accelerator and treatment couch to illustrate the main components involved in radiotherapy. Along with the new logo, the acronym CTRAd will represent the group - much quicker and easier to say than CTRRWG! Watch out for updates from CTRAd in future newsletters.

Paul Carbury joins NCRI Board



One position on the NCRI Board, recruited via open competition, is occupied by someone from an organisation outside the NCRI partnership to provide a perspective from the wider stakeholder community. We are delighted that Mr Paul Carbury, Chief Executive of the Samantha Dickson Brain Tumour Trust, has joined the NCRI Board with effect from January 2010 for a period of 3 years.

The Samantha Dickson Brain Tumour Trust funds the largest single programme of research

dedicated to the study of brain tumours in the UK, with investment totalling around £1m pa. The Trust also offers support to patients diagnosed with a brain tumour as well as their families and carers. For more information on the Trust go to www.braintumourtrust.co.uk

Paul succeeds Mr John Neate, Chief Executive of The Prostate Cancer Charity, who has stepped down following completion of his term of office. We would like to record our thanks to John who continues to work with NCRI, in particular in his role as chair of the research workstream of the National Cancer Survivorship Initiative (NCSI) www.ncsi.org.uk

National Awareness and Early Diagnosis Initiative (NAEDI)

A new NCRI initiative was launched last month with a call for expressions of interest for research in awareness and early diagnosis of cancer.

Up to £7.5m will be made available by a consortium of funders for research to improve our understanding of how best to increase public awareness of signs and symptoms of cancer and how to encourage people with symptoms to seek help. The scope of the initiative also includes the development and testing of interventions in the NHS which will help doctors to identify patients with cancer as early as possible.

The funders participating in this initiative are Cancer Research UK, Department of Health, Economic and Social Research Council, the Public Health Agency of Northern Ireland, the Scottish Executive and the Wales Office of Research and Development (WORD).

The deadline for this call is 29 January and further information about NAEDI can be found at www.ncri.org.uk/default.asp?s=1&p=5&ss=11

Call for pilot studies using linked cancer datasets



The National Cancer Intelligence Network (NCIN) is seeking pilot research studies to make use of the linked national datasets now available through its National Cancer Data Repository (NCDR).

The pilots will provide an opportunity for researchers to make use of this unique resource whilst allowing NCIN to test the access mechanisms now in place and to gather feedback on these processes and on the usefulness of the data.

The NCDR has been prepared by the Thames Cancer Registry and Northern and Yorkshire Cancer Registry and Information Service on behalf of the NCIN. The combined dataset covers the whole of England and contains:

- Office for National Statistics (ONS) Minimum Cancer Dataset (1971-2006 / 9.2 million tumours)
- Merged Cancer Registry Dataset (1990-2006 / 5.3 million tumours) containing additional tumour and treatment information
- Inpatient Hospital Episode Statistics Data (1997-2007 / 33 million episodes / 4.9 million patients)

A linkage between the NCDR and the General Practice Research Database (GPRD) also exists and applications for

linked data may be made to GPRD. GPRD collects data on over 3.6 million active patients (approximately 13 million total) from around 488 primary care practices throughout the UK. This linkage provides vital information on primary care that is not included in the other available datasets.

The NCDR will be updated on a regular basis to extend the time period and range of information available. In the near future data from the national cancer audits managed by the National Clinical Audit Support Programme will be added and discussions are underway to include further data sources. NCIN has worked with the UK Association of Cancer Registries (UKACR) and other data owners to agree access mechanisms for these data; to ensure that patient confidentiality is protected all releases of data will be made in line with existing UKACR policies.

The purpose of the proposed pilots is to test the arrangements for access and gain a better understanding of both the benefits and problems of using this new resource. While research funding is not available through NCIN, it is expected that undertaking pilot studies will assist investigators in obtaining peer-reviewed funding for full-scale studies from NCRI partners. Researchers interested in taking part in the pilots should contact Michael Chapman in the NCIN co-ordinating team (michael.chapman@ncin.org.uk) to discuss their ideas.

Further information about NCIN can be found at www.ncin.org.uk

Associate Director for Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) in Cancer Research

The NCRI and NCRN believe that by working with consumers¹ the quality of research can be enhanced for the benefit of patients and the public. In support of this, the NCRN Coordinating Centre has recently appointed Dr Sheila Fisher as Associate Director for Patient & Public Involvement (PPI).

This newly created part-time position, which is funded by NCRI partners, aims to provide stronger links between consumers and the professional research community, and to facilitate a consistent PPI strategy across NCRI and NCRN.

Sheila comes from a NHS background, working as a Consultant Maxillofacial Surgeon at the University Hospital/Queen's Medical Centre, Nottingham and having a primary interest in head and neck oncology and reconstruction before moving to Leeds, to an academic post in 2000. Her research interests are very much focussed on patient interactions and communication with clinical cancer teams but she has an interest in advanced diagnostics and reconstructive biomaterials.

She has been a member of the NCRI Head & Neck Clinical Studies Group since 2003 and became Chair of a new 'Survivorship' sub-group in 2006. In these roles she has been active in the development of the trials portfolio and in consumer involvement in trials development and management. She is also a member of the MHRA Committee on Safety of Devices, a role which relates to her surgical practice, and of a Research Ethics Committee at her main base in Leeds.



Further information on NCRI and NCRN's patient and public involvement programme is available at: www.ncrdev.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=42&Itemid=73

¹NCRI and NCRN define consumers as patients, relatives, carers and other members of the public affected by cancer

Britain Against Cancer 2009



The 11th annual Britain Against Cancer conference took place in London in December, bringing together patients, health professionals and policy makers to look at the impact of public policy on cancer services and research.

The theme of the conference was inequalities and how to overcome them, with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Cancer launching the report of its inquiry into cancer inequalities. Key priorities for action included the introduction of a one-year survival rate indicator, more research into causes of inequalities, and a ban on sunbed use for under-18s.

The NCRI hosted a successful breakout session on the nature of inequalities in cancer research, which opened with presentations by Sir Kenneth Calman (NCRI Chair) and Professor David Forman of Leeds University. A lively debate led by Dr Ian Gibson covered issues including the distribution of funding for different cancer types, and minority groups in clinical trials. The session highlighted the importance of collaboration between cancer research and wider health research, particularly in areas like prevention and supportive care.

Further information on the Britain Against Cancer conference is available on the following webpage: www.appg-cancer.org.uk

Survivorship and End of Life Care

During the last few months, NCRI has been working on a rapid review of research into survivorship after cancer and end of life care.

The review, which included a meeting of researchers, consumers and research funders in July 2009, as well as discussions with individual funders, considered how best to build and sustain research in these areas. The review was triggered by a need to build on earlier NCRI initiatives in supportive and palliative care, and to integrate a variety of new strategies announced by government and charity organisations.

NCRI is currently consulting on a draft report and action plan. The proposed actions include the development of a catalogue of grant schemes to help signpost funding opportunities, and the possibility of further dedicated funding streams.

For further details of the report and the proposed action plan please go to www.ncri.org.uk/default.asp?s=1&p=5&ss=12. Any comments should be sent to Karen Groot at karen.groot@ncri.org.uk by 28 February 2010.

NCRI Cancer Conference

The fifth NCRI Cancer Conference, which took place in October 2009 in Birmingham, was again successful with a very high rate of satisfaction recorded by delegates who completed feedback forms. We would like to thank the staff of the International Convention Centre in Birmingham for helping us present our conference so successfully over the last 5 years, during which time it has become an established event in the calendar.

This year we are changing the date to avoid a variety of clashes that occur in October, and we are also moving to a new venue. This year's Conference will be taking place from 7 – 10 November 2010 at the BT Convention Centre in Liverpool where we will have more space for posters and exhibition stands as well as having all the advantages of a brand new venue with the most up-to-date facilities.

For further information please see details below, or visit our website where abstracts and videos from previous Conferences can be accessed, and this year's programme will soon be available: www.ncri.org.uk/ncriconference.

7–10 November 2010, BT Convention Centre, Liverpool, UK



2010 NCRI Cancer Conference Save the date 7-10 November 2010

Plenary Speakers:

Doug Hanahan (Switzerland)

Robert Weinberg (USA)

Patricia Ganz (USA)

Stan Kaye (UK)

Ted Lawrence (USA)

Edison Liu (Singapore)

Peter Selby (UK)

Derek Stewart (UK)

Thea Tlsty (USA)

Zena Werb (USA)

Chris Wild (France)

This year's keynote speakers are **Doug Hanahan** and **Robert Weinberg**. Ten years on from their prominent publication "**The Hallmarks of Cancer**", these world-class researchers will provide the NCRI Cancer Conference with an unrivalled opportunity to hear exciting new updates to the framework and principles within which to understand the complexities of cancer biology.

Also featuring symposia on:

Biomarkers and imaging

Hosted by **Caroline Dive** (UK)

Early diagnosis of cancer

Hosted by **Nick Coleman** (UK)

Novel approaches to cancer therapy and meeting unmet needs

Hosted by **Herbie Newell** (UK)

Pathway specific therapeutics

Hosted by **Richard Marais** (UK)

Stem cells and cancer

Hosted by **Tariq Enver** (UK)

Teenagers and young adults

Hosted by **Jeremy Whelan** (UK)

Tumour microenvironment and inflammation

Hosted by **Frances Balkwill** (UK)



Other newsletters available:

• National Awareness & Early Diagnosis Initiative (NAEDI)

NAEDI website: www.ncin.org.uk/outcomes/naedi.shtml

The next newsletter will be issued at the beginning of February 2010

• NCRI Informatics Initiative

www.cancerinformatics.org.uk/documents/NewsLetterWinter09_final_WEB.pdf

• National Cancer Intelligence Network (NCIN)

NCIN website: www.ncin.org.uk

• National Cancer Survivorship Initiative

NCSI website: www.ncsi.org.uk

The next newsletter will be issued by the end of January 2010

www.ncri.org.uk

If you have any comments or news stories for inclusion in future editions of the NCRI newsletter, please contact:

info@ncri.org.uk