



**Brain Tumour  
Research**

Funding the fight

**4<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

**New hope for 16,000 people diagnosed with brain tumours each year as three new research partnerships are announced at Speaker's House today**

Patients, carers, scientists, clinicians and charities from across the UK are heading to Westminster today for the launch of ground-breaking new collaborative partnerships between the charity [Brain Tumour Research](#) and Research Centres of Excellence. The announcement will open a new chapter in long-term sustainable and continuous research into the biggest cancer killer of children and adults under 40.

Brain Tumour Research's mission is to establish seven Research Centres of Excellence across the UK, building a 'critical mass' of research teams, aiming to bring Britain to the forefront of brain tumour research. After a robust selection process including the formation of a Scientific and Medical Advisory Board and completing a series of stringent international peer reviews, the charity is set to announce a partnership with three new research centres, paving the way for a **£20 million** investment in brain tumour research over the next five years.

- **Queen Mary University of London in collaboration with UCL Institute of Neurology.** Research led by Professor Silvia Marino, a leading brain tumour scientist and neuropathologist based within Queen Mary's Blizard Institute, will specialise in identifying how glioblastoma multiforme (GBM) forms and grows within the brain to identify more efficient drug treatments.

- **Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust (London).** The partnership with Imperial College Healthcare will contribute to trials led by Mr Kevin O'Neill, a consultant neurosurgeon at the Trust, and a team of world-class researchers to investigate the biology of tumour metabolisms to further understand the behaviour of this disease. The team will also be able to extend their use of innovative 3D real time surgical imaging.
- **Plymouth University Peninsula Schools of Medicine and Dentistry.** The Peninsula team led by Professor Oliver Hanemann has a world-leading track record in low-grade brain tumours occurring in teenagers and adults. By identifying and understanding the mechanism that makes a cell become cancerous, the team explores ways in which to halt or reverse that mechanism. A key innovation is *fast track*: testing new drugs in human primary cell cultures leading to innovative phase 0 trials leading to adaptive phase II/III trials with the potential for making drug therapies available to patients both safely and faster.

The collaboration, which is announced today to MPs at a reception at Speaker's House, will create a network of successful brain tumour research centres throughout the UK. With secure long-term funding covering the key salaried positions within these centres, the researchers will be freed from the limitations and frustrations of applying for one specific project grant after another and instead will be able to pursue the sustainable and continuous research so desperately needed by the scientists and clinicians working in this underfunded field.

Promising scientists will be trained up through the ranks to fulfil their potential, rather than being tempted into other cancer research which currently attracts greater funding, and with it greater job security. As specialist brain tumour expertise and knowledge builds, those experienced researchers can then move between Centres to encourage cross-pollination of the very best thinking at the cutting-edge of brain tumour research.

The charity is no stranger to innovation where funding research is concerned, having already established the UK's first Centre of Excellence dedicated solely to scientific

research into all types of brain tumour within the University of Portsmouth. Ongoing funding supplied by Brain Tumour Research and its member charities and fundraising groups sustains a long-term £1 million-a-year programme of research at this Centre. Indeed, since the launch in 2010, Brain Tumour Research has successfully built the UK's largest dedicated team of laboratory-based research scientists at the Centre, and it is this model team structure that will be used as 'proof of concept' in assembling the right expertise within the new Centres.

These institutions will now each become an active fundraising partner with Brain Tumour Research and the charity will supply dedicated members of staff with proficiency in fundraising, marketing and PR to work at both local and national levels alongside existing teams, creating a dynamic fundraising atmosphere.

Sue Farrington Smith, Chief Executive of Brain Tumour Research, said: *"Along with our centre at the University of Portsmouth, the Centres will form a new and powerful network, collaborating with each other and other institutes, both within the UK and internationally, in order to accelerate progress in brain tumour research and make a clinical difference. All involved share a vision of a sustainable and secure research environment for brain tumours in the UK, ultimately creating better futures for all those diagnosed and living with a brain tumour. Only 18.8% of those diagnosed with a brain tumour survive beyond five years, compared with an average of 50% across other cancers. This statistic is better than it used to be, but brain tumours are still responsible for more years of life lost than any other form of cancer making it the most lethal form of cancer by this measure. But we are determined to do all we can to change this, and to one day find a cure for this devastating disease."*

As the network of Centres grows, the charity will continually review the research landscape and activities of these institutes to ensure that the right teams and research priorities are in place, ensuring all 120+ types of brain tumours are being researched. They will seek to identify all causes of brain tumours, to understand every aspect of brain tumour behaviour and discover treatments that will improve outcomes for any and every brain tumour patient.

The Brain Tumour Research charity will continue to identify gaps in research and invite applications from other groups and centres with the specialist knowledge to fulfil the needs in what some Neuro-oncologists are calling *"the last battleground against cancer"*.

For further information please contact Katie Abbotts at Brain Tumour Research on 07810 504380 or email [media@braintumourresearch.org](mailto:media@braintumourresearch.org). Case studies are available.

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### **Notes to Editors**

Brain Tumour Research was launched in April 2009 to raise the awareness of and funding for scientific research into brain tumours and improve outcomes for brain tumour patients. Supported by its family of [22 Umbrella Groups](#) as well as fundraisers across the UK, Brain Tumour Research in collaboration with its [22 Member Charities](#) has raised over £3.5 million in 2013 to provide support and fund research.

Brain Tumours – the facts (please quote source: Brain Tumour Research when using these statistics):

- More children and adults under 40 die of a brain tumour than from any other cancer
- Brain tumours receive less than 1% of the national spend on cancer research
- 16,000 people each year are diagnosed with a brain tumour
- Only 18.8% of those diagnosed with a brain tumour survive beyond five years, compared with an average of 50% across all cancers
- Unlike most other cancers, incidences of deaths from brain tumours are becoming more prevalent (and are much more common now than in 1970)

Additional information is available on our [website](#).