

Reporting back from 2008/09

Carrying out world-class research

We carry out world-class research to improve our understanding of cancer and find out how to prevent, diagnose and treat different kinds of cancer.

1. Continue planning for the UK Centre for Medical Research and Innovation (UKCMRI)

— Establishing the UKCMRI is one of the most important developments in UK biomedical research for a generation. During 2008/09, Cancer Research UK, the Medical Research Council (MRC), University College London and the Wellcome Trust began developing a detailed vision and worked with the research community to shape a scientific strategy. We also appointed architects to design the Centre.

— In March 2009 we met with many of the world's most eminent biomedical researchers to discuss the future direction of biomedical research and the implications for the research that should be carried out in the UKCMRI.

2. Implement our Science Management and Research Tracking (SMART) programme which enables

Cancer Research UK to fund the best research and attract the best researchers — SMART will help us to improve the way we manage our research portfolio. We have continued the programme through the year and we now aim to complete this programme during 2010.

3. Maintain our global leadership in genome-wide association studies

— A genome-wide association study involves rapidly scanning markers across the complete sets of DNA, or genomes, of many people to find genetic variations associated with a particular disease.

— We funded the next phase of genome-wide association studies in breast and prostate cancer, which built on earlier studies.

— Our researchers found two further regions of the genome that influence a woman's risk of developing breast cancer. This study brings the total number of known genetic regions with common genetic changes that alter breast cancer risk to 13, eight of which were found by Cancer Research UK-funded studies.

— Our researchers have also started to look at how information on common gene variants can be used to inform prevention and treatment strategies, such as screening those women found to be at highest risk of breast cancer.

4. Complete the establishment of our Cancer Research UK-MRC Gray Institute for Radiation Oncology & Biology

— In partnership with the MRC and the University of Oxford, we have now established the Institute in Oxford.

— This state-of-the-art institute is dedicated to improving radiotherapy for cancer patients. By cleverly combining radiotherapy with novel drugs and targeting radiation more precisely to tumours, more cancer patients will in future be treated successfully with fewer side effects.

'My research into the way that cells repair DNA damage could provide leads for new ways to prevent or treat cancer'

—
Simon Boulton
London Research Institute



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Improving the lives of all people with cancer

We ensure that our findings are used to improve the lives of all cancer patients.

1. Launch Cancer Research UK Centres

— During the year, we launched three Centres of research excellence in Belfast, Birmingham and Liverpool and have since approved a further four Centres in Southampton, Cardiff, Newcastle and University College London.

— We have received draft Centre strategies from a number of other locations.

2. Support the development of a new chemotherapeutics centre between the Paterson Institute for Cancer Research and the Christie Hospital in Manchester

— Building work for the centre started in December 2008. When complete, it will house one of the largest early phase clinical trials units in the world.

3. Drive major improvements in the early detection of cancer

— Our Chief Executive Officer, Harpal Kumar, was appointed Co-Chair of NAEDI earlier this year. NAEDI brings together a wide range of experts and organisations to understand what causes delay in diagnosis of cancer. It also looks for the best ways of helping the public to recognise symptoms and get them checked by a doctor, and of enabling the NHS to detect cancer earlier.

— 'Screening Matters' is an ongoing campaign to improve the uptake of cancer screening. Over 10,000 people wrote to their MP or MSP asking about cancer screening services in their area. From the responses, we created a set of unique reports for NHS healthcare professionals, making recommendations on how to improve screening locally.

4. Fund 11 research nurses in Wales in partnership with the Wales Office for Research and Development

— We have jointly funded ten research nurses and one senior nurse this year. These nurses will continue to increase the number of patients recruited to cancer clinical trials across Wales.

