

PRESS RELEASE

Sunday 1 November, 2015

NEW FUNDING FOR PATHOLOGY IS KEEPING CANCER RESEARCH AT THE CUTTING EDGE

MORE THAN half a million pounds has been committed to a new initiative called Cellular Molecular Pathology (CM-Path) which aims to boost UK pathology research, it was announced at the annual National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) Cancer Conference in Liverpool today, (Sunday).

A collaboration of NCRI Partners has committed £635,000 to the initiative over five years to boost the UK's research activity in cellular molecular pathology – the science of understanding disease at the level of tissue and cells, including their DNA.

The CM-Path programme, launching in early 2016, will bring together experts from pathology and other fields to build a stronger base of people and resources for the UK to undertake pathology research. The new funding will also help to boost activity in the centres of excellence where pathologists investigate cancer biology and treatment.

The development of the initiative was carried out by a dedicated working group of pathology experts in the Experimental Cancer Medicine Centres (ECMC) network. It will be funded as a collaborative venture between 10 of the NCRI partner organisations: Bloodwise, Breast Cancer Now, Cancer Research UK, the Chief Scientist Office (Scotland), the Department of Health (England), Health and Care Research Wales (Welsh Government), Health and Social Care (N Ireland), the Medical Research Council, Prostate Cancer UK and Tenovus Cancer Care.

Dr Bridget Wilkins, NCRI Lead for Pathology Engagement, said: "This is a hugely exciting opportunity for researchers and pathologists throughout the UK.

"This funding will allow us to advance cancer research and inspire the next generation of pathologists to develop as researchers. It will help us find better ways to diagnose patients and direct them to the right treatment. This is critical to cancer and will also benefit other diseases.

"The ECMC network and NCRI have provided invaluable support for me and my colleagues to develop the CM-Path proposal."

Dr Suzy Lishman, President of the Royal College of Pathologists, said: "This initiative recognises the vital role that pathologists play in cancer research. It also provides an exceptional opportunity to ensure that the best value for patients is achieved from investment in pathology research in the UK.

"The announcement is especially welcome today as it coincides with National Pathology Week, an annual celebration of the contribution that pathology makes to everyone's health."*

Dr Karen Kennedy, NCRI Director, said: "CM-Path is a great example of how NCRI adds value to what individual funders can achieve on their own. As a collaborative venture, research funders from government and charity sectors can unite to support the UK pathology community to enhance its vital research."

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Notes to editors:

*This year's theme is 'Pathology: the key to your health', focussing on how molecular pathology is transforming diagnosis and treatment, not just of cancer but of a wide range of conditions. Events are being held around the country for schools and the public to learn more about these exciting advances.

About CM-Path

The NCRI Cellular Molecular Pathology (CM-Path) initiative aims to improve diagnosis and treatment of cancer patients by breathing new life into academic cell and tissue-based pathology. It will provide strategic co-ordination of research training, basic and translational research opportunities and implementation of new approaches in pathology for faster innovation in cancer care.

About the NCRI

The National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) was established in 2001. It is a UK-wide partnership between cancer research funders which promotes collaboration in the field. Its member organisations work together to maximise the value and benefits of cancer research for patients and the public.

NCRI members are: Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council; Bloodwise (formerly Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research); Breast Cancer Now; Cancer Research UK; Children with Cancer UK, Department of Health; Economic and Social Research Council; Macmillan Cancer Support; Marie Curie; Medical Research Council; Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Public Health Agency (Research & Development Department); Prostate Cancer UK; Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation; Scottish Government Health Directorates (Chief Scientist Office); Tenovus Cancer Care; The Wellcome Trust; Welsh Assembly Government (Health and Care Research Wales); and Worldwide Cancer Research (formerly AICR).

For more information visit www.ncri.org.uk

About the NCRI Cancer Conference

The NCRI Cancer Conference is the UK's major forum for showcasing the best British and international cancer research.

- The Conference offers unique opportunities for networking and sharing knowledge by bringing together world-leading experts from all cancer research disciplines.
- The NCRI Cancer Conference is taking place from 1–4 November 2015 at the BT Convention Centre in Liverpool.
- For more information visit conference.ncri.org.uk



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