

## PRESS RELEASE

Monday 2 November, 2015

### BRITISH CANCER SCIENTIST WINS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

CANCER BIOLOGIST Professor Mel Greaves has been awarded the Cancer Research UK Lifetime Achievement Award\* for his work investigating the causes of childhood leukaemia; it was announced at the National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) Cancer Conference in Liverpool today, (Monday).

Professor Greaves has worked at The Institute of Cancer Research, London, for the last 30 years. He began his training in zoology and immunology gaining his PhD from University College London, and became interested in cancer research after a tour of Great Ormond Street Hospital in London in the mid-1970s. He met children with leukaemia there at a time when very little was known about the disease.

He then began his lifelong work studying leukaemia. He wanted to improve diagnosis and treatment options for patients and find a way to prevent the disease. He worked at what became the Cancer Research UK London Research Institute\*\* before moving to The Institute of Cancer Research (ICR) in 1984.

He continues his research today as founding director of the Centre for Evolution and Cancer at the ICR.

Dr David Scott, director of research funding at Cancer Research UK, said: "We're delighted to announce Professor Greaves as winner of the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award. His research into children's leukaemia has immeasurably advanced the amount we now know about the disease.

"Professor Greaves and his research team changed how children with leukaemia are diagnosed and treated, allowing doctors to tailor treatment to the individual needs of a patient.

"He is a deserving winner and it's very important to honour his lifetime commitment and dedication to the fight against leukaemia."

Professor Greaves, Director of the Centre for Evolution and Cancer at The Institute of Cancer Research, London, said: "I am delighted and honoured to receive this prestigious award from Cancer Research UK. Unpicking the complexities of biology, and cancer in particular, requires an interesting mix of creativity, persistence and teamwork. I am particularly pleased that the evolutionary principles I and my colleagues have applied to leukaemia have shed considerable light on its natural history and likely cause and have proved broadly applicable to cancer in general. Childhood leukaemia was once a universally fatal disease but is now curable in most patients. Our research highlights that it is potentially preventable."

Cancer Research UK is also awarding the Future Leader Award\*\*\* to Dr Chris Bakal from the ICR, Dr John Brognard from the Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute and Dr Peter Van Loo from the Francis Crick Institute. This award recognises them as researchers who have demonstrated the potential to achieve world-leading status by producing international quality research.

The award for Translational Cancer Research\*\*\*\* is going to the Birmingham Epstein-Barr Virus Vaccine Team which is led by Professor Alan Rickinson. This prize recognises teams which make outstanding contributions to research that impacts the continuing efforts of doctors and nurses to prevent, diagnose and cure cancers.



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### Notes to Editors:

\* <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/funding-for-researchers/our-funding-schemes/lifetime-achievement-in-cancer-research-prize>

\*\*Now the Francis Crick Institute.

\*\*\* <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/funding-for-researchers/our-funding-schemes/future-leaders-in-cancer-research-prize>

\*\*\*\* <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/funding-for-researchers/our-funding-schemes/translational-cancer-research-prize>

### About Cancer Research UK

Cancer Research UK is the world's leading cancer charity dedicated to saving lives through research.

Cancer Research UK's pioneering work into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer has helped save millions of lives.

Cancer Research UK receives no government funding for its life-saving research. Every step it makes towards beating cancer relies on every pound donated.

Cancer Research UK has been at the heart of the progress that has already seen survival in the UK double in the last forty years.

Today, 2 in 4 people survive their cancer for at least 10 years. Cancer Research UK's ambition is to accelerate progress so that 3 in 4 people will survive their cancer for at least 10 years within the next 20 years.

Cancer Research UK supports research into all aspects of cancer through the work of over 4,000 scientists, doctors and nurses.

Together with its partners and supporters, Cancer Research UK's vision is to bring forward the day when all cancers are cured.

For further information about Cancer Research UK's work or to find out how to support the charity, please call 0300 123 1022 or visit [www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org). Follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

### 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](http://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](http://conference.ncri.org.uk)