

NUMBER OF CANCER PATIENTS TAKING PART IN CLINICAL STUDIES QUADRUPLES IN A DECADE

The number of cancer patients in the UK participating in clinical studies has soared in the last decade from one in 26, to around one in six patients diagnosed, according to new figures presented at the National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) Cancer Conference in Liverpool this week (Tuesday).

The figures, presented by the National Cancer Research Network (NCRN) represent a fourfold increase - reinforcing the UK's position as world-leader in the proportion of cancer patients recruited to clinical trials and research studies.

This exceeds that of any other European country or the USA. In America, fewer than 1 in 20 cancer patients participate in clinical trials.

The increase has been made possible by the establishment of the National Cancer Research Network.

The NCRN is one of eight Clinical Research Networks funded by the National Institute of Health Research in England. The Networks were set up to ensure that patients and healthcare professionals from all parts of the country can take part in research, by reducing the administrative red-tape associated with setting up clinical studies. They also provide researchers with expert support to make the study "work" in the NHS environment, and for patients.

The original aim of the NCRN was to double the number of cancer patients taking part in clinical studies in England within five years - a target that was actually reached in just three years*.

The NCRN has now supported over 800 cancer research studies, involving more than 250,000 volunteers. Every NHS hospital and cancer centre across the country is now actively participating in cancer research, which means that patients now have unprecedented access to clinical trials at their local hospitals.

Professor David Cameron, lead author on the study defining the figures** on cancer research participation, and former Director of the NCRN, said: "With more patients in clinical trials than ever before, we can now look forward to reaping the benefits of new and exciting developments in diagnosing, preventing and treating cancer.

"Importantly, these figures demonstrate the huge enthusiasm and willingness of British people to participate in research that could potentially lead to life-saving new treatments in the future."

Dr Jonathan Sheffield, Chief Executive of the overall National Institute for Health Research Clinical Research Network said: "With average life expectancy increasing, the pressure on healthcare budgets will continue to grow. This means that clinical research is more important than ever as a means of understanding the most effective way of treating patients, and focusing our resources on the best possible care. The success of the National Cancer Research Network shows that we now have a highly effective model for involving patients in research that could benefit them now, and other NHS patients in the future."

ENDS

For media enquiries please contact the NCRI press office on 020 3469 8300 or, out-of-hours, the duty press officer on

07050 264 059

Notes to editors:

Additional quotes from Cancer Research UK and a patient who has benefitted from a clinical trial are available from the press office.

* The NCRN was based on the model established by the Wales Cancer Trials Network (WCTN) in 1998. The WCTN is supported by the National Institute for Social Care and Health Research Clinical Research Centre. It was quickly extended to the rest of the UK where the networks are supported by the Chief Scientist Office of the Scottish Government and by the Health and Social Care Research and Development Division of the Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland.

** Four-fold increase in recruitment of cancer patients to NCRN portfolio studies between 2001 and 2010: a tale of investment bringing returns, Cameron et al.

About the National Institute for Health Research

The National Cancer Research Network is part of the National Institute for Health Research Clinical Research Network, which is funded by the Department of Health. Its role is to support the development and delivery of clinical research in cancer.

The National Institute for Health Research provides the framework through which the research staff and research infrastructure of the NHS in England is positioned, maintained and managed as a national research facility. The NIHR provides the NHS with the support and infrastructure it needs to conduct firstclass research funded by the Government and its partners alongside high-quality patient care, education and training. Its aim is to support outstanding individuals (both leaders and collaborators), working in world-class facilities (both NHS and university), conducting leading-edge research focused on the needs of patients. www.nihr.ac.uk

About the NCRI Cancer Conference

The National Cancer Research Institute (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 seventh annual NCRI Cancer Conference is taking place from the 6-9 November 2011 at the BT Convention Centre in Liverpool. For more information visit www.ncri.org.uk/ncriconference

About the NCRI

The National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) was established in April 2001. It is a UK-wide partnership between the government, charity and industry which promotes co-operation in cancer research among the 21 member organisations for the benefit of patients, the public and the scientific community. For more information visit www.ncri.org.uk

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NCRI Cancer Conference Press Office

Angel Building, 407 St John Street, London EC1V 4AD

t: +44 (0)20 3469 8300 | +44 (0)7050 264 059 (out of hours) e: press@ncri.org.uk



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NCRI members are: the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI); Association for International Cancer Research; Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council; Breakthrough Breast Cancer; Breast Cancer Campaign; Cancer Research UK; CHILDREN with LEUKAEMIA, Department of Health; Economic and Social Research Council; Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research; Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research; Macmillan Cancer Support; Marie Curie Cancer Care; Medical Research Council; Northern Ireland Health and Social Care (Research & Development Office); Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation; Scottish Government Health Directorates (Chief Scientist Office); Tenovus; Welsh Assembly Government (Wales Office of Research and Development for Health & Social Care); The Wellcome Trust; and Yorkshire Cancer Research.

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