

# PRESS RELEASE

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## RESEARCH SPEND ON CANCER DOUBLES WITHIN A DECADE AND THE MOST FATAL CANCERS SEE INVESTMENT

**PARTNERS** of the National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) spent more than £500m on cancer research last year, nearly double the amount spent almost ten years ago, according to new figures\* published today (Wednesday).

And the amount invested in the three cancers with the poorest survival\*\* has increased even more over the past decade. More than four times as much money is now being spent on oesophageal cancer and more than three times as much on cancers of the lung and pancreas.

The report has been published to mark the 10 year anniversary of the NCRI, which is an organisation made up of 21 government and charity partners as well as the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry. Its role is to promote joint planning and coordination for cancer research in the UK.

Professor Dame Janet Husband, chair of the NCRI, said: "The amount spent on cancer research has risen year on year since the NCRI was formed a decade ago. This is thanks to the British public who make generous donations to cancer charities, and the commitment of government."

In 2002, when the NCRI first calculated the total spend on cancer research, the figure was £257m. The most recent data from 2010 shows NCRI partners spent £504m.

Around 40 per cent of the money goes towards basic research, which aims to understand the biology of cancer, which can then lead to the development of new treatments. And a quarter is spent directly on treatment-related research.

During the last decade, research by NCRI partners have contributed to the global fight against cancer and brought many advances to cancer patients in the UK. These include new tools to detect cancer such as PET imaging\*\*\*, new

treatments like herceptin for breast cancer and a new national screening programme for bowel cancer.

Around 60 per cent of the research is relevant to all types of cancer. Common cancers such as breast, bowel and prostate cancer, as well as leukaemia, still get a relatively high level of funding compared to other cancer types. Of the 40 per cent of research which is specific to a particular type of cancer, breast cancer receives 20 per cent, leukaemia 15 per cent, bowel cancer 10 per cent and prostate cancer eight per cent.

But there have been improvements for cancers with the lowest survival rates – pancreatic, oesophageal and lung cancer. Although these cancers receive a smaller share of the funding, the amount spent on research into them has increased more than threefold.

Dr Jane Cope, director of the NCRI, said: "Because the portfolio has grown overall, it has been possible for research in some cancers to be boosted without having to cut back in other successful areas of research.

"It's the NCRI's job to ask where there are gaps in funding and to ensure the big questions in cancer research are being addressed. The most funded cancers have remained at the top of the table but this report is evidence that our partners and the researchers they support are spotting those research needs and starting to plug the gaps.

"Given the current financial climate, it's unlikely research spend will continue to grow at the same rate. But whatever the income, NCRI partners will continue to give priority to areas with the greatest research need."

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For media enquiries please contact Rachel Gonzaga in the NCRI press office on 020 3469 8300 or, out-of-hours, the duty press officer on 07050 264 059

### Notes to editors:

Watch a video of Dr Jane Cope, director of the NCRI, explaining the figures here: [http://streamservice.sc-streaming.com/backend/previewCam.aspx?camID=272\\_29410&width=421&height=275](http://streamservice.sc-streaming.com/backend/previewCam.aspx?camID=272_29410&width=421&height=275)

A full breakdown of the figures is available on request.

All figures relate to the government and charity partners, which excludes research funding from the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry.

\* "Celebrating a decade of progress through partnership – the 10 year anniversary of NCRI and NCRN."

\*\* Cancers of the pancreas, lung and oesophagus have the lowest 5-yr relative survival rates for both men and women of

21 cancer sites routinely reported by the Office for National Statistics. See [www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/can0410.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/can0410.pdf)

\*\*\* Positron Emission Tomography (PET)

Thanks to decades of research, survival from cancer has doubled in the last 40 years.

The NCRI has set up several important national initiatives over the past 10 years to boost certain areas of research, including cancer prevention, radiotherapy, survivorship and end of life care.

### 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 22 member organisations for the benefit of patients, the public and the scientific community. For more information visit [www.ncri.org.uk](http://www.ncri.org.uk)

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 CANCER UK, 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; The Prostate Cancer Charity; Welsh Assembly Government (National Institute for Social Care and Health Research); The Wellcome Trust; and Yorkshire Cancer Research.



# NCRI

National  
Cancer  
Research  
Institute

Angel Building  
407 St John Street  
London EC1V 4AD

phone: +44 (0)20 3469 8460  
fax: +44 (0)20 3014 7658

[info@ncri.org.uk](mailto:info@ncri.org.uk)  
[www.ncri.org.uk](http://www.ncri.org.uk)

NCRI PRESS OFFICE  
[press@ncri.org.uk](mailto:press@ncri.org.uk)  
Tel: +44 (0)20 3469 8300  
Out-of-hours: 07050 264 059



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[www.ncri.org.uk](http://www.ncri.org.uk)

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