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## **New hope for brain cancer patients as Imperial College Healthcare selected for million pound research partnership**

**Trust's neuro-oncology unit will join network of Brain Tumour Research Centres of Excellence to lead research into new treatments**

The brain cancer service at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust has been chosen to join a network of Brain Tumour Research Centres of Excellence to help drive forward ground-breaking research into the disease which is the biggest cancer killer of adults under 40 and children.

The research and fundraising partnership with the charity Brain Tumour Research aims to raise £1 million a year towards new studies involving clinicians at the Trust's neuro-oncology unit at Charing Cross Hospital and scientists from Imperial College London.

This collaboration is one of three ground-breaking partnerships which the charity announced today (4 March) at Westminster. Patients, carers, clinicians, scientists and representatives from charities across the country attended the launch at Speaker's House where the initiative was formally announced to MPs.

The aim is to achieve a £20 million investment in brain tumour research over the next five years building on the successful partnership model already established at the University of Portsmouth Research Centre of Excellence. The charity plans to establish seven research centres across the UK, building a 'critical mass' of research teams to bring the country to the forefront of international brain tumour research. The other two partnerships announced today involve the Blizard Institute at Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, and Plymouth University Schools of Medicine and Dentistry.

The partnership with Imperial College Healthcare will contribute to trials led by Mr Kevin O'Neill, a consultant neurosurgeon and head of neurosurgery at the Trust, and a team of world-class researchers to investigate the biology of tumour metabolisms to further understand the behaviour of this disease. The team will also be able to extend their use of innovative 3D real time surgical imaging.

The new partnerships were launched following a novel and robust selection process including consideration of the viability of research programmes by the charity's Scientific and Medical Advisory Board and the completion of a series of stringent international peer reviews.

Mr O'Neill said: "I am delighted that our brain cancer service at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust has received such a fantastic endorsement of our work and that we will be partnering with Brain Tumour Research to take forward research into new and better treatments for this disease which results in 16,000 new cases in the UK each year.

"Our plan is for our Centre of Excellence to focus on every aspect of the patient pathway from early diagnosis of brain cancer to developing revolutionary new treatment options. Our expertise in the laboratory is in investigating tumour metabolism to find ways to make tumours more vulnerable to attack from new treatments.

"Our clinical expertise revolves around surgical imaging and visualising tumours in 3D during surgery. We are developing technology that can give the surgeon a molecular fingerprint of the tissue they are working on to identify tumour instantly. This promises to be the most sensitive way of differentiating tumour from normal brain. We can then map this information onto the 3D images leading to much more accurate tumour removal without harming the patient's brain. This new partnership will enable us to research and advance these developments to improve survival rates."

Sue Farrington-Smith, chief executive of Brain Tumour Research, said: "Today we are forming a powerful new network of researchers in order to accelerate progress in brain tumour research and make a clinical difference. All involved share a vision of a sustainable and secure research environment for brain tumours in the UK, ultimately creating better

futures for all those diagnosed and living with a brain tumour. We are determined to do all we can to achieve this, and to one day finding a cure for this devastating disease.”

## **ENDS –**

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## **Notes to editors:**

### **About Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust and its neuro-oncology service**

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust comprises Charing Cross, Hammersmith, Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea, St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals. With more than one million patient contacts each year, it is one of the largest acute Trusts in the country and, in partnership with Imperial College London, is the UK's first Academic Health Science Centre (AHSC).

The neuro-oncology unit at Charing Cross Hospital serves patients with brain and spinal tumours from across north-west London, extending west to Windsor and further north to Luton and Watford. We also attract referrals from around the country, especially for specialised services. The unit sees over 600 patients each year, of whom, over 300 are diagnosed with a tumour. According to results from the National Cancer Intelligence Network (NCIN), we have the best one and five year brain tumour survival rates in the country. For more information please visit [here](#)

### **About Brain Tumour Research**

Brain Tumour Research was launched in 2009 to raise awareness of and funding for scientific research into brain tumours and improve outcomes for brain tumour patients. Supported by its family of [22 Member Charities](#) and [22 Umbrella Groups](#) as well as fundraisers across the UK, Brain Tumour Research has raised over £3.5 million in 2013 to provide support and fund research.

Brain Tumours – the facts:

- More children and adults under 40 die of a brain tumour than from any other cancer
- Brain tumours receive less than 1% of the national spend on cancer research
- 16,000 people each year are diagnosed with a brain tumour
- Only 18.8% of those diagnosed with a brain tumour survive beyond five years, compared with an average of 50% across all cancers
- Unlike most other cancers, incidences of deaths from brain tumours are becoming more prevalent (and are much more common now than in 1970)

Additional information is available on our [website](#).

### **About Imperial Academic Health Science Centre**

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust and Imperial College London formed a unique partnership in becoming the UK's first AHSC, a partnership between a healthcare provider and a university. The vision of the AHSC is to vastly improve the quality of life our patients and populations by taking scientific discoveries and translating them into new therapies and techniques and bringing them into an NHS setting in as quick a timeframe as possible.

### **About Imperial College London**

Consistently rated amongst the world's best universities, Imperial College London is a science-based institution with a reputation for excellence in teaching and research that attracts 14,000 students and 6,000 staff of the highest international quality. Innovative research at the College explores the interface between science, medicine, engineering and business, delivering practical solutions that improve quality of life and the environment - underpinned by a dynamic enterprise culture.