



WARWICK
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Cancer Research Centre Newsletter

Spring 2017

Welcome



Warwick Cancer Research Centre (WCRC) is at the forefront of some innovative and exciting studies that will directly impact patients with cancer. We bring together experts from medicine, life sciences, chemistry, mathematics, engineering and economics with the belief that transformational research happens when disciplines meet.

- ▶ Colleagues in Chemistry and Warwick Medical School are developing nanotechnology to deliver chemotherapy drugs directly to tumours, alleviating the harmful toxicity of intravenous drug delivery.
- ▶ We're finding new ways to detect cancer biomarkers. This will lead to blood and urine tests which will let us diagnose cancer faster and apply personalised cancer therapy.
- ▶ Our work on the body's internal clock is allowing us to target chemotherapy to individual patients at the best time of day so they can avoid unwanted side effects.

I have been involved in cancer research for over 30 years with specific interests in the molecular mechanisms responsible for cancer development and in the development of novel anti-cancer therapies. There has never been a more exciting time to be involved in cancer research and the WCRC is actively contributing to this cancer revolution. We're inspired to make a difference to cancer patients, and to ensure that anything we do is rapidly developed to benefit our local community as well as patients across the world.

Professor Lawrence Young
Director, Warwick Cancer
Research Centre

Charity of the Year

The Lord Mayor of Coventry made us one of his nominated charities of 2016-17 - could your organisation follow in his footsteps? If you could help to raise our profile and vital funds for our work, please contact us on benefactors@warwick.ac.uk

All thanks to your donations:

Meet Bindy Heer...

When we receive 'unrestricted' donations, we put them to the area of greatest need. This year, your gifts have helped the Chemistry team recruit an incredible new lab assistant, Bindy Heer. She's working with the team who create new anti-cancer drugs. Professor Peter Sadler said:

"Bindy's experiences with cell culture and methods of evaluating the effects of anti-cancer compounds on cancer cells are making a very valuable contribution to our efforts to discover new drugs and translate them to the clinic.

"With her help, our rate of screening new compounds has increased significantly and the data she is producing has become highly valued by the medicinal chemists in our lab who are carrying out the synthesis and mechanism of action studies. She's an excellent, vital member of our team and we're phenomenally grateful for the support which brought her to us."



Preventing clots caused by cancer

Professor Annie Young's team at Warwick has a track record in thrombosis research in cancer patients. A thrombus is a blood clot in a vein, most dangerously in deep veins in the legs or the pelvis. If it breaks away and reaches the lungs, it can become a potentially life-threatening pulmonary embolism.

Cancer and anti-cancer treatments are known risk factors for thrombosis, and sadly some patients have a higher risk of thrombosis and early death by pulmonary embolism following surgery. High-risk patients include those with bladder cancer; those with a high number of tumours; and those undergoing platinum-based chemotherapy treatments.

Until now, thrombosis has been managed and treated by daily injections. Our team is developing new anti-clotting tablets, which will be safer, more efficient, and less expensive than existing ones. These treatments will be oral rather than through daily injections, which will help improve the quality of life for patients. We look forward to reporting back on our progress.

Inspired by your strength

Charlotte Ridley, cancer survivor and Warwick staff member, shares her story.

"I was diagnosed with lymphoma on 28th August, one year to the day that my mother had died from ovarian cancer. It is burnt into my brain. It was a massive shock, and I remember sitting at my 18 month old's bedside at night, crying into her pillow and wondering if she was ever going to remember me, suspecting that she wouldn't. Panic set in, followed by a determination to survive. I had six months of chemotherapy during which I took part in a fertility trial with Warwick.



The chemo was hard; it isn't natural and I used to cry and scream because I didn't want to go in. I lost my hair, but I didn't want pity. I wanted to be treated normally and even had a photoshoot because I was proud of the strength I had to fight it - emotionally and physically. I still look at the shots and feel proud now.

I was a different person after cancer - I no longer felt 'safe' in the way I did before, and I know that life is short and precious. I feel stronger as a person and I've done things I never would have before - completed a triathlon, climbed mountains and taken risks. We also had another child very quickly after chemo ended, which was a surprise.

I am over five years clear now, I have two beautiful and wonderful girls and I am living my life as much as I can. I support cancer research at Warwick because patients deserve better treatments, and any efforts which reduce the side-effects and make it that little bit easier to fight are worthwhile."



Keep reading:

www.warwick.ac.uk/storiesofstrength

FUNDRAISING UPDATES

Amazing volunteers

Thank you to all our brilliant fundraisers for raising £70,000 for cancer research at Warwick over the last year. 100% of every gift, including Gift Aid, goes straight to our work.



Maria Maccallum (IT Services, Warwick), set herself some impressive challenges over the past year including a 10k run, half marathon, and her first ever triathlon. She's raised over £300 for cancer research so far, and money for our research into premature birth too.

"I really wanted to help with raising money into good causes at the University because I feel that no money is wasted; it all goes to the right places, helping some of the best research possible right here on campus."

"It excites me that we can help to better the future for all of us. I love giving myself challenges and I felt it would only be fair that I do something that I'd not done before if I was asking for sponsors. I enjoyed every minute of each challenge I set myself and I will definitely be doing more half marathons and triathlons!"

If you'd like to set yourself a challenge for 2017, or join one of our planned events, please get in touch or search #TeamWarwickUni on Facebook



A roar of support

We're very grateful to the Coventry Godiva Lions for their gift of £1,001 to our cancer research.

Pictured: members of the Lion's committee visiting our Chemistry labs to see how their money will help develop new anti-cancer drugs.

Save the Date:

Lord Mayor's Charity Ball

Friday 24 March 2017,
Coventry Transport Museum

Tickets cost £40 each to include a drinks reception, meal and musical entertainment. Buy yours today by contacting Jane on: jane.barlow@coventry.gov.uk or 024 7683 3047.

Could you give a unique prize for the evening's auction and raffle? If you can help, let us know.

Warwick Cancer Research Centre Open Evening

Join us on **Wednesday 26 April** from 6-8pm to learn about improving accuracy in grading and treating cancers. Professor Nasir Rajpoot and his team will be talking about the automated scanning process they have developed to give patients instant results and therefore no delay to treatment beginning. There will also be a chance to tour some of our cancer research labs.

Please book online at www.warwick.ac.uk/CancerOpenEvening or by contacting us below.

Keep in touch

✉ benefactors@warwick.ac.uk

🐦 @WarwickCRC

📘 Warwick Cancer Research Centre

🌐 warwick.ac.uk/cancerappeal

Donate today

Every penny plus Gift Aid goes straight to cancer research.

warwick.ac.uk/donate