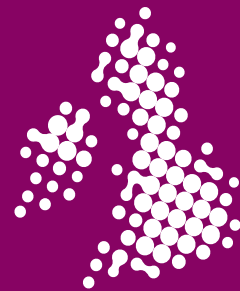


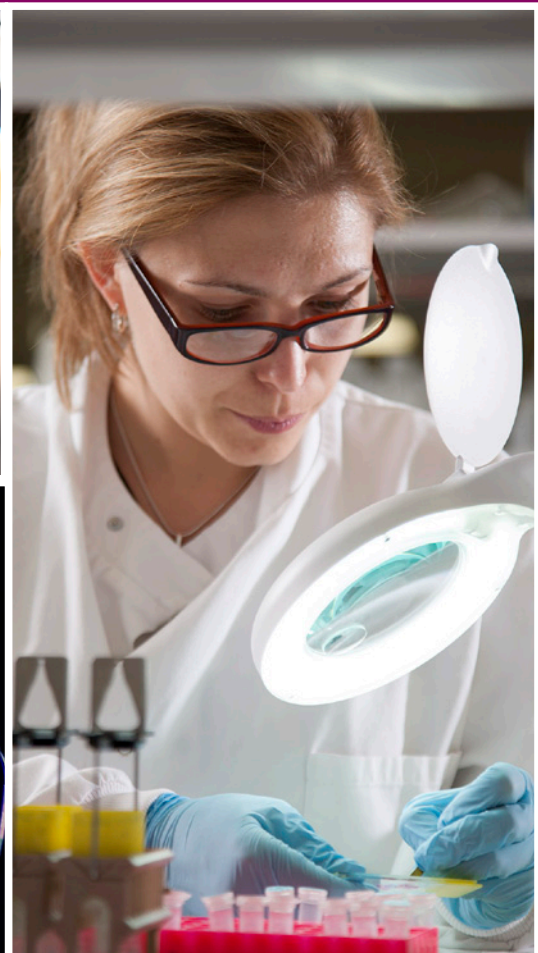
Accelerating cancer research

A strategy for collaboration between
cancer research funders in the UK (2017-22)



NCRI

National
Cancer
Research
Institute



Foreword

Cancer presents vast challenges that will not be overcome by a single organisation working in isolation. In the UK alone, 360,000 people are diagnosed with cancer each year. Research is driving progress in early diagnosis and treatments, and now more than half of those diagnosed with cancer live for more than ten years. But we need to do more, and collaboration and partnership working within the cancer research community are now more important than ever.

We are delighted to be launching the new NCRI strategy for 2017-2022. This is truly a partnership strategy that has been developed following wide-ranging consultation, and ratified by all our Partners.

The NCRI was established in 2001 to drive collaboration between organisations that fund cancer research, and we remain dedicated to our purpose which is to improve health and quality of life by accelerating progress in cancer-related research, through collaboration.

Together, NCRI Partners have since 2002, spent over six billion pounds on cancer-related research. The NCRI exists to ensure that these funds are invested effectively, by avoiding duplication of effort, building research capacity where required, and ensuring cancer research is high quality and relevant.

The NCRI prides itself on being agile and responsive to change and works effectively across charity, government and public sectors to identify areas where it can add value. To address the challenges that cancer presents, we facilitate over 250 meetings a year, and host the UK's largest cancer conference with over 1,500 delegates. These forums bring together expert groups of researchers, clinicians, health care professionals, patients and funders to share ideas and information, to identify new research opportunities, and to forge the vital partnerships that will accelerate research progress.

Our new strategy states four clear goals that are underpinned by four enabling factors. We will use our intelligence gathering to identify gaps in the research portfolio and develop solutions, do more to bring about improvements in treatments and care for cancer patients and the wider public, and promote innovations in the technologies that support them, and we will ensure that research relating to cancer is translated into benefits as soon as possible.

We are confident that by working together we can realise this bold strategy and we look forward to collaborating with you.



DR KAREN KENNEDY
NCRI Director



BARONESS DELYTH MORGAN
Chair of NCRI Board of Trustees

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Introduction

Over the last 40 years cancer survival rates have more than doubled. Today, one in two people diagnosed with cancer will live for more than 10 years.¹ Lives are being transformed. This is thanks to improvements in early diagnosis and treatment, coupled with advances in our understanding of cancer prevention and improving quality of life for people affected by cancer. Without research, these life-changing advances could not happen.

Research has been, and will continue to be, the driving force for improving outcomes for people who have, or may one day develop, cancer. We are at a point in time where research is opening up unprecedented opportunities to improve lives but, as a cancer research community, we face considerable challenges.

Today, in the UK, around 2.5 million people are living with cancer and this number is expected to rise to 4 million by 2030 as the population ages and treatments help more people live with and beyond cancer.² Many of these individuals will return to good health, but many others will have complex needs as a result of their cancer. As the incidence of cancer increases with age, the likelihood is that more patients will already have or go onto develop co-morbidities or other long term conditions which can be complex and challenging to manage.

The research 'ecosystem' is also complex and depends on many different elements coming together to drive research forward. To successfully design, conduct and implement research studies we must ensure the right people, infrastructure and funding are in place. This is essential across both the research pathway (basic, translational, clinical and implementation research) and the patient pathway (prevention, early diagnosis, treatment, living with and beyond cancer and end of life care).

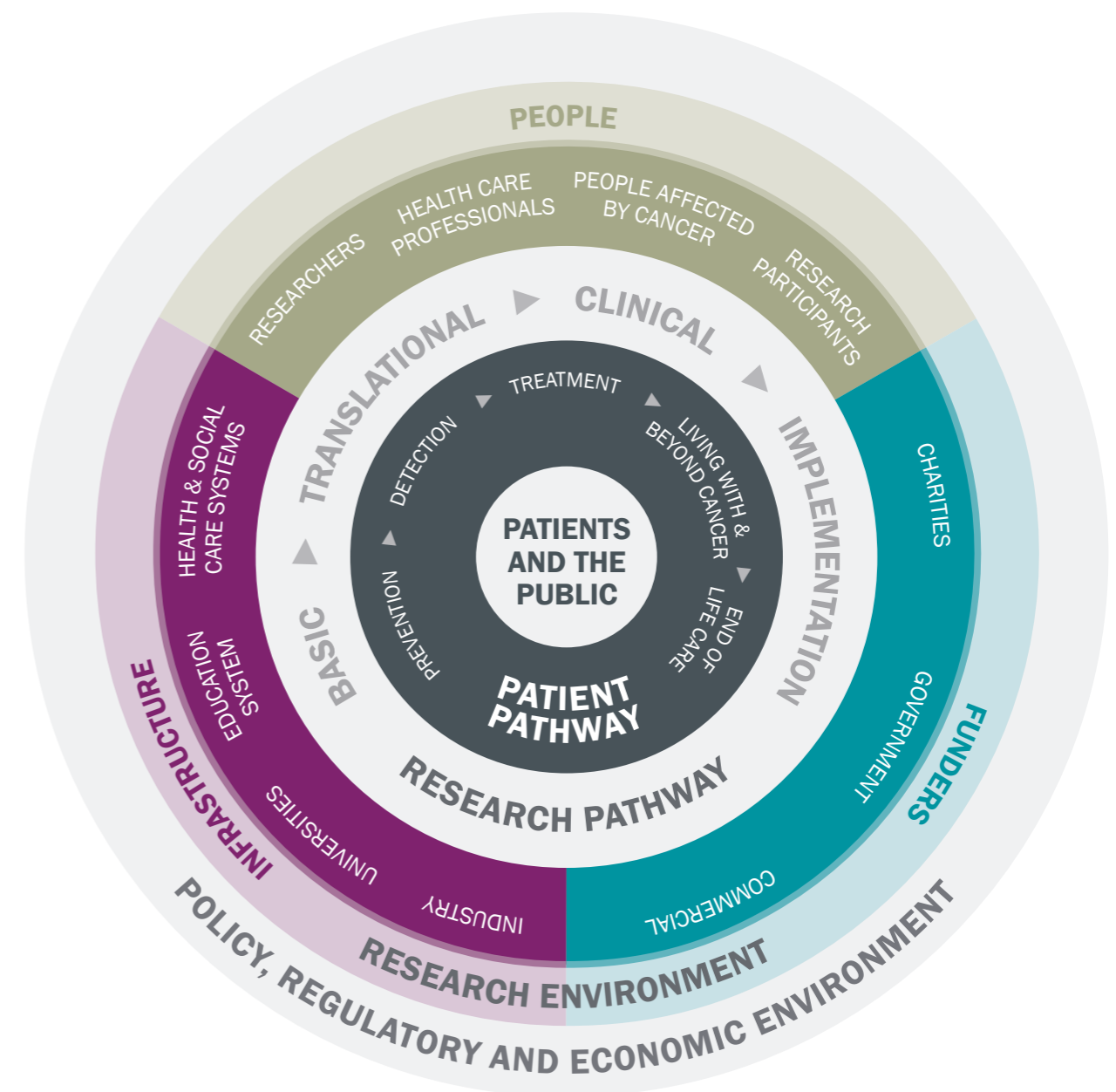
The UK has a world-leading research base and the NHS provides an ideal environment for clinical research and for the adoption of innovation. However, the NHS faces many challenges caused by financial pressures and changing demographics and there can be challenges in prioritising research and realising the benefits for patients.³

In addition, changes in the economic and political landscape also influence priorities and funding available for research related to cancer and there is increasing pressure on research funders to achieve more with less. This trend is likely to continue in the future, with uncertainty around research funding, following the UK's decision to leave the European Union.

The NCRI Partnership strategy (2017-2022) will enable us, as a cancer research funding community, to rise to these challenges and drive research towards better outcomes for people affected by cancer and the wider public. There is a pressing need to increase partnership working and increase our collective impact as a research funding community for the benefit of people affected by cancer and the wider public.

The research 'ecosystem'

The research 'ecosystem' is complex and depends on many different elements coming together to drive research forward. To successfully design, conduct and implement research studies that will benefit patients and the wider public, we must ensure the right people, infrastructure and funding are in place. This is essential across both the research pathway and the patient pathway.



1 Cancer Research UK, www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/survival Accessed August 2016
 2 Maddams J, Utley M, Møller H. Projections of cancer prevalence in the United Kingdom, 2010-2040. Br J Cancer 2012; 107: 1195-1202.
 3 Accelerated Access Review, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/565072/AAR_final.pdf October 2016

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to improve health and quality of life by accelerating progress in cancer-related research through collaboration

We are a Partnership of research funders who believe that research is at the heart of driving improvements in prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care for people affected by cancer and the wider public.

The NCRI Partnership was established in 2001 to ensure collaboration and coordination amongst cancer research funders in order to maximize the value and benefits of cancer research for patients and the public.



Our success to date comes from our ability to identify where collaborative working adds value. We capitalise on opportunities, address challenges and strengthen the excellent work that our Partners and others do to improve the lives of people affected by cancer. The NCRI Partners know that underpinning our past and future success is a culture of collaboration, information sharing and trust.

A key strength of the NCRI is our broad membership with representation across both charity and government funders as well as across all four nations in the United Kingdom.

We involve many stakeholders in our work including people affected by cancer, industry, researchers, professional bodies, non-Partner research funders, government organisations and representatives from research initiatives. This ability to bring different perspectives to the table accelerates progress in research related to cancer, fosters innovation and enables us to tackle some of the biggest challenges that the cancer research community is facing.

Our five year strategy (2017-2022) outlines four goals that will accelerate progress in research related to cancer. There are also four key enablers that will help us achieve our goals.

Our Goals

We will achieve more by working together. Our goals are only achievable with the support, expertise and commitment of all our Partners working closely with the NCRI Executive, and will depend on our four key enabling factors (see page 18).

Together we will:

- **Ensure a coordinated portfolio of research related to cancer**
- **Seize opportunities and address challenges in research relevant to cancer**
- **Improve the quality and relevance of research related to cancer**
- **Accelerate translation of cancer-related research into practice**

Ensure a coordinated portfolio of research related to cancer

With coordination provided by the NCRI Executive, the cancer research funding community will be better informed and equipped to analyse and build consensus around research priorities. This will prevent gaps from forming in the cancer research portfolio as well as unwanted duplication of resources. Funders will be able to target their own funding with the knowledge of what else is being done and the Partnership as a whole will be able to make collective decisions about what areas to prioritise and deprioritise.

Research is an international endeavour and therefore we will remain cognisant of the international research environment when considering what areas to progress and how to approach this.

To address the opportunities and challenges we face in reaching this goal, we have set out a number of objectives that will enable us to identify areas for further investment and pinpoint where partnership working will drive research forward.



“The data from the Cancer Research Database (CaRD) will continue to be an invaluable tool to help us develop and implement our own strategy. We have been able to show that some important research areas, such as breast cancer prevention, need more investment. The CaRD data have highlighted where our support might be needed most.”



DR SIMON VINCENT
Director of Research, Breast Cancer Now

Opportunities and Challenges:

- NCRI Partners want to ensure their own research investments complement broader investments within the cancer research portfolio.
It is essential that NCRI Partners have access to information and data about research needs and existing or planned initiatives and activities to enable them to target their investment more effectively.
- There are specific opportunities and challenges within the cancer research environment that are best tackled with collective investment and collaborative working.
Strategic oversight of the research landscape is crucial if NCRI Partners are to identify areas where collaborative working adds value.
- Since 2001, we have collected and analysed funding data from Partners to give an overview of cancer-related research activity.
This information is currently under-utilised and there are opportunities to improve its use.

Together we will:

- Develop a framework for investment in cancer-related research by mapping where activities and opportunities exist and identifying shared priorities for future investment.
- Develop mechanisms to identify and prioritise new opportunities for collaborative working by monitoring the cancer research landscape and seeking input from the wider research community.
- Modernise our capture, analysis and visualisation of research funding data to meet the needs of NCRI Partners.

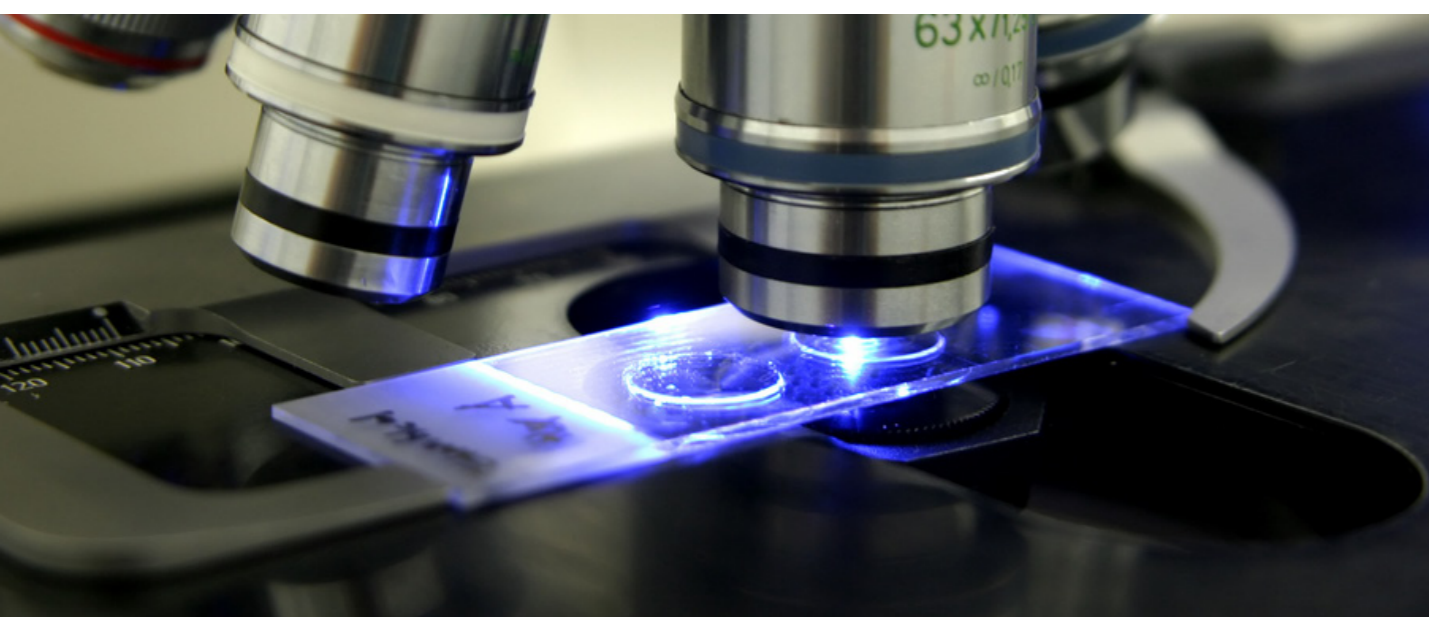
Seize opportunities and address challenges in research relevant to cancer

We are agile and responsive to emerging needs in research related to cancer, but by their nature, it is difficult to predict the focus and scope of our work over the next five years. Our experience shows that by working as a Partnership, we are well placed to seize opportunities and address challenges as they arise and therefore the areas of work we undertake within this goal are likely to change and evolve over time.

Improving our strategic oversight, as highlighted above, will enable us to be more proactive and systematic in identifying new opportunities and challenges within the research portfolio and thereby develop effective and timely solutions to address them.

Several areas of work, outlined below, are already underway or planned for the coming years. However, this list is not exhaustive. We will remain responsive to the external environment and will be agile in our approach to achieve this goal.

We will continue to address opportunities and challenges related to critical components of the research 'ecosystem', for example, the development of the next generation of researchers, throughout our work.



“The Cellular and Molecular Pathology Initiative (CM-Path) is reinvigorating UK academic pathology by building back capacity and expertise to drive and support innovation – and that will benefit patients.”



DR KARIN OIEN
Chair of NCRI's CM-Path initiative
Clinical Senior Lecturer in Pathology at the Institute of Cancer Sciences, University of Glasgow

Opportunities and Challenges: Together we will:

- Radiotherapy is a proven and cost-effective cancer treatment with > 50% of patients requiring it. There is scope to improve cure rates and reduce toxicity of treatment. Radiotherapy and radiobiology research are essential to drive these improvements. This research, however, continues to encounter clinical and translational challenges that are best addressed through a coordinated approach.
- Research continues to develop new technologies and techniques for cancer diagnosis, for driving improvements in monitoring prognosis and for enabling stratified medicine approaches. However, the number of research-active pathologists is declining and has reached a critical level. It is vital that this decline is reversed through a coordinated effort.
- Ensure that clinical and translational issues relating to radiotherapy and radiobiology research are addressed by continuing our work in this area through our flagship initiative, the *Clinical and Translational Radiotherapy Research Working Group (CTRad)*. This includes supporting development of clinical trials for robust assessment of new radiotherapy technologies and combination treatments, providing help with delivering quality assurance, and developing the academic environment by strengthening and connecting the multidisciplinary research workforce from bench to bedside.
- Bring together and build research capability within the cellular and molecular pathology community and the biobanking community to reverse the decline in pathology research, by completing our Cellular and Molecular Pathology Initiative (CM-Path).

Opportunities and Challenges:

- Advances in treatment have led to an increase in the number of people living with and beyond cancer. These individuals can face complex needs related to their health and wellbeing as a result of their cancer or its treatment.
Until now there has been limited research activity to address these needs. Past initiatives have not yet had a significant or lasting impact on the level of research activity.
- The UK has unique sets of health and related data which have been collected primarily to support the provision of care and services. These also provide a valuable resource for the cancer research community, however, they are currently under-utilised.
- Cancer remains high on governmental and other agendas. Large programmes of work initiated by other bodies often require a coordinated response from the research community. The NCRI provides an effective route for this.
- Advances in research related to cancer bring unprecedented opportunities and challenges. We currently do not have a structured and focussed forum for bringing the cancer research community and other stakeholders together to develop proactive approaches to address these challenges and opportunities. A mechanism for bringing the right people together is vital if we are to make faster progress in addressing challenges and capitalising on opportunities.

Together we will:

- Launch and complete a programme of work to identify priorities within the research field of 'living with and beyond cancer' and develop recommendations for next steps within each priority area. Ensure the cancer research community is competitive with the wider research community in this area by developing and completing a grantsmanship programme. Influence the research funding community to provide opportunities to consider 'living with and beyond cancer' research within existing or new funding schemes.
- Improve access to and use of data resources, for example the cancer registries, and thereby improve the capability of the cancer research community.
- Respond to government programmes across the UK as appropriate, currently the Independent Cancer Taskforce established by NHS England, by working with relevant stakeholders to develop and implement activity related to cancer research.
- Develop and support a series of meetings that will enable the research community, policy makers and others to come together to develop coordinated approaches to emerging advances in research related to cancer.



“The question we patients ask most often is simply, “How do I cope?”. The Living With and Beyond Cancer initiative aims to find more answers for more of us. I am delighted NCRI is leading it and that I am part of it.”



MR RICHARD STEPHENS
Patient Representative for Living With and Beyond Cancer initiative, and
Chair of NCRI Consumer Forum

From identifying a gap to implementing an initiative

Dr Feng Li joined NCRI as a Programme Manager in the summer of 2015 as the NCRI began a new analysis of Partner funding data held within its cancer research funding database (CaRD).

‘We found that despite a growing population of people affected by cancer, the level of research relevant to people living with and beyond cancer is and has been low in the UK compared to other areas of cancer research such as treatment research.’ Explains Feng.

In addition, the 2015 Report of the Independent Cancer Taskforce included a number of recommendations in living with and beyond cancer, providing added impetus to develop and coordinate activity in this area. Several NCRI Partners decided to collaborate to increase the level of research. The next step was to identify and address the barriers that to date have prevented progress in this research field.

‘One of the barriers to research has been that people have different understandings of what living with and beyond cancer research includes. So we developed, through literature reviews and stakeholder consultation, a clear definition which has now been widely adopted.’ Explains Feng.

Feng’s scoping work also uncovered a lack of defined research priorities and a shortage of high quality proposals reaching funders for consideration. To address this, NCRI has set up a new 18 month initiative which includes a James Lind Alliance Priority Setting Partnership involving patients, carers and healthcare professionals to identify research priorities that matter most to people affected by cancer.

In parallel, NCRI will develop a grantsmanship programme and better ways to integrate this research activity into the work of the Clinical Studies Groups. These activities will provide the infrastructure necessary to ensure the newly identified research priorities can be supported.

Continuously improve the quality of research related to cancer

Cancer research will be of limited value if it is not high quality or relevant. We know the importance of collaboration, and sharing knowledge and ideas, in driving up quality. We will aim to continuously improve the quality and relevance of research related to cancer so that, people affected by cancer and the wider public can benefit.



“The NCRI brand of multidisciplinary experts, patient advocates and commercial partners assures a uniquely broad national portfolio of cost effective, high impact cancer research studies which consistently contribute to changing practice and improving outcomes for patients both nationally and internationally”



DR PIPPA CORRIE
Chair of NCRI's Skin Cancer Clinical Studies Group (CSG),
Department of Oncology, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Opportunities and Challenges:

- Collaboration and information sharing is at the heart of the research endeavour. To address the challenges we face as a cancer research community it is vital for the whole community to come together to share perspectives across disciplines and to develop new and innovative approaches to research.
- Clinical research is vital if advances are to translate into benefits for patients. The development and maintenance of a comprehensive national portfolio of high quality clinical trials and other well-designed studies is essential to ensure this happens.
- Scientific advances and developments in clinical research delivery have led to a rapidly changing clinical research landscape. The clinical research community must respond to these changes to ensure clinical research remains innovative.
- Sharing knowledge and best practice within specific disciplines is critical to ensure that research can be designed and conducted in the most effective way possible.

Together we will:

- Inspire and ignite the cancer research community through the cross fertilisation of ideas and sharing of knowledge by bringing together stakeholders with differing perspectives and disciplines, through our meetings and workshops, across all our activities, and through further development of the NCRI Cancer Conference.
- Ensure strategic oversight of and effective peer involvement in clinical research in cancer in the UK by developing high-quality clinical studies through the NCRI Clinical Studies Groups.
- Drive innovation in the clinical research community by continually reviewing activities of Clinical Studies Groups to ensure they are responsive to the external environment and 'fit for purpose'.
- Continue to share knowledge and spread best practice across the cancer research community through all our expert groups, including, but not limited to, our Cancer Clinical Trials Units Group.

Accelerate the translation of cancer-related research into practice

We realise the urgent need for research to be translated into practice to improve the quality of life of people who are, or may one day be, affected by cancer.

Without the implementation of findings into practice, the positive benefits of research cannot be realised.

Our work will complement existing activities taking place elsewhere.

Opportunities and Challenges:

- A lack of coordination and communication at specific stages in the research pathway can delay translation of research into practice.
- Good research can stumble along the translational pathway if there is a lack of coordination amongst researchers and research funders. Although the NCRI Partnership cannot control the behaviour of individual research groups or organisations, it can do more to facilitate translation of research that has potential to benefit people affected by cancer and the wider public.

Together we will:

- We will form strategic alliances with regulatory bodies and other key stakeholders, e.g. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) to accelerate translation of research into practice.
- Bridge translation gaps in the research pathway by bringing together research funders to explore different approaches to accelerate translation of research, eg. to identify next steps for key studies.



“The NCRI partnership is a vital forum for UK funders of cancer research to jointly consider gaps, assess opportunities, and deliver strategies to optimise cancer research for patients.”



DR HELEN CAMPBELL
NCRI Trustee, and
Portfolio Manager for Department of Health Research Networks

NCRI Clinical Studies Groups (CSGs) design practice-changing research

Delivering a large clinical trial in gynaecological cancer is tough. Many different types of cancer affect the gynaecological organs, and the more we learn about the biology of the disease, the more different ‘subtypes’ of cancer we find. Some subtypes affect only small numbers of patients, but each needs research to define the best treatment, and recruiting enough patients to gather meaningful results becomes a challenge.

The NCRI’s Gynaecological Clinical Studies Group (CSG) is uniquely equipped to meet this challenge. The group includes clinicians, histopathologists, surgeons and patient representatives who have the expertise and insight to deliver well designed clinical studies like ICON7.

Professor Iain McNeish, Chair of the Gynaecological CSG, explained, “The CSG encourages national and international cooperation and coordination to maximise recruitment, for example by opening trials in as many centres as possible, rather than just centres that have recruited patients in the past.”

The ICON7 trial opened in 51 centres across the UK with another 250 centres opening in 10 further countries as far and wide as Spain, Canada and Australia.

For Iain, it’s the substantial scientific impact and direct translation to improved healthcare that is key to the group’s success:

“The cornerstone of the Gynaecological CSG’s strategy is to develop and coordinate a wide range of innovative, internationally significant clinical trials that produce practice-changing research.”

The results of ICON7 were published in 2013. The data is now helping clinicians to identify patients most likely to benefit from a targeted drug, bevacizumab, and has underpinned decisions to make this drug available for NHS patients, by the Scottish Medicines Consortium and the English Cancer Drugs Fund.

Key enabling factors

Progress towards our goals depends on us working together in productive ways. We have identified four enabling factors that underpin all our activities. Our key enabling factors apply to the Partnership as a whole, but the NCRI Executive, the team that drives the work of the NCRI, has a particular role to play in supporting the Partnership in reaching its goals.

There is a culture of information sharing and collaboration amongst the cancer research funding community

Developing a healthy culture of collaboration, challenge and information sharing is essential to realise the ambitions and goals of the Partnership. It is one of the strengths of cancer research funders.

In the context of the NCRI Partnership it relies on mutual respect and trust between Partner organisations, and between Partners and the NCRI Executive. It also requires Partners to recognise the importance of the work of the NCRI Partnership through active participation in meetings and forums.

- We will continue to bring together a diverse range of stakeholder views to drive a cross-fertilisation of ideas and innovation in research related to cancer
- We will drive and promote partnership working between cancer research funders
- We will continue to update Partners on activities taking place across the Partnership and within Partner organisations

The voice of people affected by cancer adds value to the work of the NCRI Partnership

Since its inception, the NCRI Partnership has embedded consumer involvement (involvement of patients, carers and others affected by cancer) in its activities. The contributions of people affected by cancer have brought strength to our work and have added value to our achievements. Continuation of relevant and useful involvement throughout the work of the NCRI Partnership relies on a committed pool of people affected by cancer working voluntarily with us. These people come from all walks of life and reflect the diversity of cancer. Through acting professionally, bringing fresh perspectives and judgements, they contribute effectively both as individuals and collectively through our Consumer Forum.

- We will continue to recruit, train, develop and communicate with a pool of engaged Consumers to be involved effectively in our work
- We will continue to review and improve the ways in which we work with Consumers to enable and support them to add value to our work
- We will seek opportunities to ensure that Consumer involvement in cancer research in our Partner organisations and more widely is appropriately coordinated, developed and harnessed to improve the quality and impact both of the research itself and of the Consumer contribution to it

We are able to develop a unified voice on issues related to cancer research

The NCRI Partnership maintains strategic oversight of cancer-related research activities and initiatives in the UK, remaining cognisant of international endeavours. The Partnership represents the expert voice on the state of cancer research in the UK.

Our Partner organisations each have their own goals and strategies to guide the research they fund, and we would not expect the NCRI Partnership to have a unified voice on every issue related to cancer research. There are, however, issues that some of our Partners will have an interest in working together on and issues that all of our Partners would like to be kept informed on.

- We will provide accurate information to help Partners develop their own policy positions on issues related to research and encourage Partners to develop a unified message where appropriate
- We will provide a forum for and facilitate discussion between Partners to develop unified statements or policy solutions where this aligns with and furthers our goals

The NCRI Executive provides excellent support to the Partnership

The NCRI Executive is efficient and effective and will drive and support activities towards the goals of the Partnership. The NCRI Executive will improve upon our existing work by evaluating our impact to understand where we are delivering value for money for our Partners and, ultimately, bringing benefits to people who have, or who may one day develop, cancer.

- We will continue to seek opportunities to actively develop and improve our skills and knowledge as a staff team and to ensure that the appropriate resources, training and skills are in place to achieve our objectives
- We will continuously monitor and review our ways of working and champion improvement across the NCRI Executive
- We will develop our brand identity to ensure that every organisation that we work with understands the value of the NCRI Partnership
- We will develop a programme of work to measure the impact of our activities

Our ways of working

The NCRI is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation governed by a board consisting of elected and appointed trustees. The make-up of our board reflects the diversity of our Partners' interests and benefits from experience honed in the medical, public, third and commercial sectors.

NCRI Partners

Our Partners are UK-based organisations that fund cancer research, and who want to work together to coordinate their research funding activities and collectively address opportunities and challenges in cancer research. In doing so, they maximise the benefits of research for cancer patients and the public and target investment where it is most needed.

Our Partners will:

- Provide funding for NCRI activities
- Support the purpose, goals and enablers of the Partnership strategy
- Foster a culture of information sharing and collaboration within the Partnership
- Support the NCRI Executive by providing advice and help as appropriate

NCRI Executive

The NCRI Executive drives the work of the Partnership. The Executive will ensure the Partnership works by enabling appropriate interactions and discussions between Partners and stakeholders and supporting collective activities.

The NCRI Executive will:

- Develop and implement plans to achieve the objectives outlined in this strategy
- Share information with Partners about the work of the Partnership and the wider cancer research field
- Develop and provide an expert view on the state of cancer research in the UK
- Develop networks both inside and outside of the Partnership to further the goals of the NCRI

NCRI Stakeholders

We work with other key stakeholders with a voice and role in cancer research including, but not limited to, people affected by cancer, industry, researchers, professional bodies, non-Partner research funders, government organisations and representatives from research initiatives to

ensure that the cancer research community is as joined up as possible. We will continue to develop and build on the interactions and relationships we have with key stakeholders to improve upon collaborative working across cancer research in the UK.

“The Dragons’ Den research tables provided confirmation that we are going in the right direction in many cases. Our researchers and clinicians were amazed by the exchange and what we can learn from the patients.”



PROFESSOR BERNARD RACHET
Professor of Cancer Epidemiology, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

A Friendly Dragons’ Den – A model for NCRI’s patient involvement in research development

People affected by cancer who contribute to NCRI activities are known as ‘Consumers’ and are members of the NCRI Consumer Forum. Consumers sit on all NCRI’s external committees and groups, and they also run activities themselves.

One of the activities, a ‘Friendly Dragons’ Den’, builds on the theme of the television programme of the same name, and is an opportunity for researchers to present their research ideas to people directly affected by cancer.

“The Dragons’ Den is a great way of supporting researchers to talk directly with patients and carers and vice versa – and for all of us to learn from each other.” Says Richard Stephens, NCRI Consumer Forum Lead.

In the ‘Den’ participants discuss proposals at all stages of the research process such as patient information and consent, studies seeking support for funding or ethics applications, trials with recruitment problems, or completed studies needing dissemination or lay champions.

The events take place regularly and are a great example of how NCRI encourages collaborative and productive involvement from patients and carers. Researchers apply in advance to attend the session, so that Consumers with experience in a particular topic or issue can be assigned to a relevant research proposal.

The Dragons’ Den forum has become a regular highlight at the annual NCRI Cancer Conference, where the ‘Den’ also attracts clinical trials unit staff, nurses, research professionals and other interested parties.

In 2016 the Conference Dragons’ Den, sponsored by Cancer Research UK attracted 112 people, including 11 research teams, from academia, NIHR, charities and industry, some of whom return every year.

Our values

We have a set of core values that we believe are integral to the success of the Partnership.

We are collaborative, dynamic and determined

- We actively seek opportunities to work with others and share information with one another
- We are open to innovative approaches and are aware of our external environment and how it may be changing
- We are determined to achieve great things for people affected by cancer and the wider public and will not give up in difficult circumstances.

We act with integrity, professionalism and intelligence

- We are open and honest in our interactions and accountable to one another
- We are professional and committed to stretching ourselves to achieve our goals
- We act with intelligence and will continue to develop our skills and capacity to achieve the best for people affected by cancer.

“I really don't think you can put a high enough value on collaboration as a general principle...Some tasks are just too big for one organisation or group to handle.”



MR PETER RAINEY
Member of the NCRl Consumer Forum

“NCRl's Clinical and Translational Radiotherapy Research Working Group (CTRad) has transformed the radiotherapy research environment in the UK – strengthening centres of excellence in academic radiotherapy, increasing clinical trials activity, ensuring radiotherapy quality, enhancing drug radiotherapy combinations, training the research workforce, driving technical developments.”



PROFESSOR TIM MAUGHAN,
Former Chair of CTRad, and
Professor of Clinical Oncology, CRUK/MRC Oxford Institute for Radiation Oncology

Pathways to Clinical Trials – the PATHOS study

The NCRl's CTRad* group was established in 2009 to revitalize the UK's radiotherapy research community. This collaborative group of over 85 clinicians, medical physicists, radiographers, scientists, people affected by cancer and others, is revolutionising radiotherapy treatment, and translating discovery science and innovative technological advances into patient benefit.

Between 2009 and 2014, the number of patients recruited to radiotherapy clinical trials doubled from 4000 to 8300, and the number of clinical radiotherapy trials taking place in specialist units around the UK increased from 33 to 75.

Dr Mererid Evans, a Consultant Clinical Oncologist in Cardiff, developed her PATHOS study concept between 2012 and 2013. During this time she presented her study at CTRad's proposals guidance meetings and Clinical Trials workshops, where she received valuable advice and guidance that helped her to refine the study.

'CTRad provided invaluable advice and support during development of PATHOS'. Dr Evans said. 'The workshop discussions helped improve the study design and refine endpoints with input from experienced clinical trialists, statisticians and funders. Patient representatives also gave valuable advice on how to engage possible trial participants.'

The trial was funded as a randomised multicentre phase II study in 2014 and recruited its first patient in October 2015. By February 2017, 87 patients had been registered to the trial, and recruitment is currently ahead of target. The study is open in 14 UK sites, with 10 other sites in set-up. A phase III study is planned and will measure continuing survival in the reduced intensity treatment groups.

In early 2017, CTRad supported the establishment of the CRUK-EORTC strategic collaboration for PATHOS, which will enhance and accelerate the delivery of multicentre clinical trials, evaluating complex, radiotherapy-based interventions in the UK and abroad.

* CTRad is the NCRl's Clinical and Translational Radiotherapy Research Working Group: <http://ctrad.ncr.org.uk>

Strategy development

This strategy was developed in partnership between the NCRI Executive, NCRI Partners and other key stakeholders. In the Spring of 2016 a Strategy Reference Group of Partner representatives, NCRI staff and Consumers was formed to formally advise on the strategy setting process and the content of the strategy itself.

We held a series of interviews, and a focus group with a variety of stakeholders with historical and current knowledge of NCRI to understand the important role that NCRI plays in accelerating progress in research. This information was analysed and presented back to Partners in June 2016.

We held a workshop with Partners and stakeholders in June 2016 to explore what NCRI's core purpose, goals and enablers should be. This was followed up with a more focussed workshop with the Strategy Reference Group to map outcomes and activities against these goals.

This strategy is intended to be a high level document to provide clarity on purpose, goals, high level activities and ways of working for the

Partnership. The NCRI Executive will develop implementation plans on an annual basis which will be mapped against the five year objectives within the strategy and will report on progress to our Board of Trustees and our Partners.

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Members of the NCRI Strategy Reference Group

Sabine Best (Marie Curie), Jon Bisson (Health and Care Research Wales), Wayne Brads (NCRI Executive), Iain Frame (Prostate Cancer UK), John Gregson (Cancer Research UK), Nicola Keat (NCRI Executive), Karen Kennedy (NCRI Executive), Susan Kohlhaas (NCRI Executive), Nicole Leida (NCRI Executive), Rebecca Nash (Macmillan Cancer Support), Peter Rainey (NCRI Consumer Forum), Matt Seymour (NCRI Executive and NIHR), Richard Stephens (NCRI Consumer Forum), Simon Vincent (Breast Cancer Now)

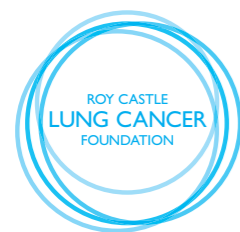


“The NCRI Cancer Conference brings key people together and provides important opportunities to network, discuss ideas and establish new collaborations. Interactive sessions from basic science to public health make the Conference an unmissable event for anyone involved in cancer research.”



PROFESSOR JOHANN DE BONO
Chair of 2017 NCRI Cancer Conference Scientific Committee
The Institute of Cancer Research and The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust

NCRI Partners



Partners in cancer research



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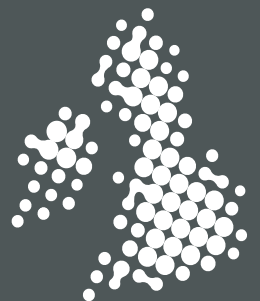
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