



Queen's University  
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# Bulletin

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## QUEEN'S LEADS THE WAY IN UK FIGHT AGAINST PROSTATE CANCER

Queen's University Belfast has partnered with the University of Manchester to form the first regional Movember Centre of Excellence in the fight against prostate cancer. The radical development is in partnership with Prostate Cancer UK and the Movember Foundation and will see an investment of £5 million over a five-year period across Belfast and Manchester via the FASTMAN programme.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer among males in the UK with 40,000 new diagnoses every year. Comprising an outstanding team of internationally recognised scientists from across different disciplines, the key focus of the Belfast-Manchester hub will be improving outcomes for men with advanced disease. The funding will ensure that lab breakthroughs are translated into clinical benefits as quickly as possible. The Belfast-Manchester nexus will also include the Manchester-based Christie NHS Foundation Trust, the largest single-site cancer centre in Europe. A second Centre of Excellence will be located in London and will also receive £5 million over five years.

The two Centres were selected after a rigorous, international peer-review process. To qualify for funding, lead scientists had to prove strong, international track records and their teams needed to demonstrate existing or planned cross-discipline collaborations between basic and clinical scientists.

Over the five-year programme, researchers in Belfast and Manchester will identify men at high risk of aggressive disease, and find which patients respond best to various treatment options – an approach often referred to as 'personalised medicine'. Cancer specialists will also work on refining new and existing treatments such as radiotherapy to improve how well they work for advanced prostate cancer, including cancer that has spread to the bones. The Belfast-Manchester Centre will bring in expertise from outside of prostate cancer, using insights from the latest research into other cancers including melanoma, breast and lung.

Professor David Waugh, Director of the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell



Mr Allister Murphy (patient) with Professor David Waugh and Professor Joe O'Sullivan

Biology at Queen's, is one of two Scientific Co-Directors of the Centre, alongside Professor Richard Marais, Director of the CRUK Manchester Institute.

Prof Waugh said: "The Belfast-Manchester Centre of Excellence provides a rare opportunity to bring together an international team of experts in radiation, biomarker discovery, genetic modelling and tumour biology who will use their individual talents in a collective and focused manner to make significant discoveries to benefit and extend the lives of men with prostate cancer."

Professor Joe O'Sullivan, chair of radiotherapy development and clinical lead for radiotherapy at the Northern Ireland Cancer Centre and Chair of the Uro-Oncology Multidisciplinary Team at the Belfast Trust will be one of two Clinical Co-Directors of the Centre.

Prof O'Sullivan said: "I am extremely excited about the prospect of working with a team of world class researchers and those who are bringing their expertise from outside prostate cancer research in to the field for the first time. Through this research programme we have the opportunity to increase the speed of clinical advances by taking a fresh approach to prostate cancer research involving state of the art technology and a genuine collaborative approach."

Movember UK Country Manager Sarah Coghlan said the Centres of Excellence scheme was "one of the most significant and exciting milestones for the Movember Foundation and prostate cancer research in the UK. We're bringing the best in the research world together for a sustained period to have a real impact and to develop real understanding of how to fight this disease."

In addition to the funding from Movember, the HSC R&D Division of the Public Health Agency has contributed an additional £500,000 to the Centre. It will be used to fund two key posts within the Northern Ireland Cancer Centre – a research radiographer and a post-doctoral research scientist.

Dr Janice Bailie, Assistant Director of the HSC R&D Division at the Public Health Agency said: "I am delighted that we will partner with Movember/Prostate Cancer UK to support the Belfast arm of this new Centre of Excellence in translational prostate cancer research. Crucially, by working in partnership we also hope to increase the speed at which lab breakthroughs reach the man in the clinic and have a direct impact on patient outcomes."

# INVESTMENT OF NEARLY £1 MILLION SET TO BOOST LOCAL CANCER RESEARCH

Cancer patients in Northern Ireland are set to benefit from a landmark investment of nearly £1 million in cancer research from the Friends of the Cancer Centre Charity.

The Charity, based at the Cancer Centre at Belfast City Hospital, has partnered with the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology (CCRCB) to provide a £900,000 funding injection for research into clinical trials – medical research trials involving patients – over the next three years. The investment, which will be delivered through an annual grant of £300,000 over a three year period, will allow the CCRCB to increase the clinical capacity of the specialist team that plans and delivers clinical trials, through a number of critical new staff posts. This increased capacity of the clinical trials research team will allow for further research and development of world leading cancer trials, an increase in patient recruitment numbers by consultants and clinical academics within the Cancer Centre at Belfast City Hospital and ultimately improved outcomes for cancer patients.

Colleen Shaw, Chief Executive of Friends of the Cancer Centre, said: "This is not a donation in our eyes; this is a financial investment in the future of local cancer research and in the future of cancer care in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland has become a world leader in cancer care and the Cancer Centre at Belfast City Hospital provides the highest level of treatment available.

"Northern Ireland, through the team at CCRCB, has been at the forefront of the drive to find the latest and best ways to treat all kinds of cancer and clinical



Colleen Shaw, (Chief Executive, Friends of the Cancer Centre), Professor Joe O'Sullivan and Professor David Waugh

trials have become a vital weapon in this. As a charity whose focus is on supporting those affected by cancer, we recognise the potential that lies in clinical trials and the direct benefits they can have on a patient's life."

Professor David Waugh, Director of the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology (CCRCB) at Queen's University, said: "We cannot emphasize enough how important this funding is. It permits us to increase the capacity of specialist staff we need to implement these world leading and life changing clinical trials. Thanks to the support of Friends of the Cancer Centre, the next three years are set to be a very exciting time for us as we now have a dedicated resource in the Cancer Centre to conduct these trials that take forward innovative discovery from our research and strive for better outcomes for patients.

Professor Joe O'Sullivan, consultant clinical oncologist at the Cancer Centre and head of the clinical research

programme in radiotherapy and prostate cancer at the CCRCB, said: "As a clinical researcher, I am very keen to have a large number of trials available to my patients and it would not be possible to achieve this without the support of Friends of the Cancer Centre."

Friends of the Cancer Centre is one of the leading cancer charities in Northern Ireland working to support cancer patients, their families and carers through key projects in the areas of research, patient comfort and care, clinical care and equipment. In addition to the investment in clinical trials, Friends of the Cancer Centre also supports cancer research through funding a number of other projects, including the Northern Ireland Cancer Trials Centre and the Northern Ireland Biobank. Over the next three years, Friends of the Cancer Centre has committed over £2 million to local research alone.

## FORMER CCRCB SUMMER STUDENT WINS IADR AWARD

Rebekah Eves, a 4th year dentistry student, was recently awarded a prestigious undergraduate prize as a result of research she undertook as a CCRCB summer student in Professor Dennis McCance's laboratory.

Rebekah gave an oral presentation at the annual meeting of the Irish Division of the International Association for Dental Research (IADR), which was held on 14-15 November at University

College Cork. The Hatton Prize pays for Rebekah to travel to Cape Town to deliver her winning presentation at the International IADR meeting on 24 - 28 June 2014. Rebekah also benefits from a visit to Liechtenstein to take a composite resin course in the laboratory of leading international dental company Ivoclar Vivadent.

Rebekah said: "I genuinely cannot believe I won and that I will be heading

off on two very exciting trips this year. Before coming to the CCRCB I had zero research experience and I had never even seen the inside of a lab! I cannot thank the staff in the McCance lab enough for being so welcoming and so willing to help me learn."

The CCRCB will welcome several undergraduate students again this year for their popular Summer Research Programme.

# LEUKAEMIA & LYMPHOMA NI ANNOUNCES £1.5 MILLION RESEARCH INVESTMENT

On 19 March 2014 Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI welcomed the Minister of Health, Health Committee, researchers and supporters to the Long Gallery at Stormont to mark the charity's 50th anniversary celebrations and official launch.

Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI (formerly the Northern Ireland Leukaemia Research Fund) is the only charity in Northern Ireland solely dedicated to funding research into leukaemia, lymphoma, myeloma and other related conditions. As part of the charity's 50th anniversary celebrations, they have announced a £1.5 million three year investment, including a £500,000 Golden Anniversary research programme.

Professor Ken Mills, Chair of Experimental Haematology at Queen's University Belfast, said: "The launch of Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI is welcomed by all those working to enhance the scientific research into leukaemia and associated blood cancers in Northern Ireland. Our scientists are highly respected experts in their field and their research aims to understand how leukaemia and other related diseases develop. From this we can discover better

ways of treating all of these diseases and ultimately improve the outcome and quality of life for patients."

Commenting at the launch Edwin Poots MLA, Minister of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety said: "As we know, the outcomes for patients suffering from leukaemia and lymphoma can be poor. That is why it is important that we do all we can to ensure that we expand our research potential to improve outcomes for patients of all ages who are affected by these illnesses. I am pleased to learn that the haematology research laboratories within the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology (CCRCB) are doing good work in contributing to the research effort."

Mr Bill Pollock, Chair of Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI, said: "The launch of Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI has been something we have anticipated for a few years and are excited to unveil the new branding. Our £1.5 million three year investment will enable researchers and clinicians in Queen's University Belfast and across Northern Ireland to expand



*Professor Ken Mills with Mr Edwin Poots, Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety*

their internationally recognised research. Over the past 50 years, the charity has supported leukaemia research and I am very pleased that we are in a position to make this major investment to support the valuable and innovative research into blood cancers being undertaken in Northern Ireland."

For more information on Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI log on to: [www.leukaemiaandlymphomani.org](http://www.leukaemiaandlymphomani.org)

## MITCHELL LECTURE 2013/2014

The Mitchell Lecture, entitled "The Genomes of Cancer Cells", was delivered on 20 February 2014 by Professor Sir Mike Stratton. Professor Stratton is Director of the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, and founder and co-leader of the Institute's Cancer Genome Project. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) and was Knighted by the Queen in 2013.

Professor Stratton's primary research interests have been in the genetics of cancer. His early research focused on inherited susceptibility. He mapped and identified the major high risk breast cancer susceptibility gene BRCA2 and subsequently a series of moderate risk breast cancer and other cancer susceptibility genes.

In 2000 he initiated the Cancer Genome Project at the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute which conducts systematic genome-wide searches for somatic mutations in human cancer. Through these studies he discovered somatic



*Professor Manuel Salto-Tellez, Professor Sir Mike Stratton, Professor David Waugh and Professor Mark Lawler*

mutations of the BRAF gene in malignant melanoma and several other mutated cancer genes in lung, renal, breast and other cancers. He has described the basic patterns of somatic mutation in cancer genomes revealing underlying DNA mutational and repair processes.

During his visit Professor Stratton met with a number of the Principal Investigators in CCRCB and had an opportunity to talk to the Post-doctoral Research Fellows and Postgraduate students about their ongoing research.

# CCRCB RESEARCHERS LEAD PROFOUND INITIATIVE FOR CANCER PATIENTS

On World Cancer Day (Tuesday 4 February 2014), CCRCB researchers Professor Mark Lawler and Professor Patrick Johnston marked an auspicious occasion for European cancer patients by leading the launch of the European Cancer Patient's Bill of Rights in the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

This patient-centred initiative has brought together European patient advocates, cancer healthcare and research leaders from 40 organisations/institutions in a unique partnership called the European Cancer Concord (ECC). This partnership and the Bill of Rights were developed over the last 2 years under the stewardship of the Society for Translational Oncology. The European Cancer Patient's Bill of Rights aims to address the disparities that many European cancer patients experience every day of their lives. The event in Strasbourg coincided with the publication of two significant papers, one in the *Lancet Oncology* and the second in *The Oncologist* which mapped out the evidence base that underpins the principles of the European Cancer Patient's Bill of Rights.

"The increasing cancer burden that we see throughout Europe will impact not only on patients and their families, but will also be a significant issue for healthcare systems and for the future economic competitiveness of Europe," said Professor Patrick Johnston, Co-Chair of ECC and Vice Chancellor of Queen's University Belfast, UK. "This Bill of Rights represents the input of oncology and patient advocacy leaders from 17 European countries and will act as a catalyst for change for the European cancer patient", added Professor Mark Lawler, ECC Project Lead and CCRCB PI.

Three patient-centered principles (termed Articles) underpin the European Cancer Patient's Bill of Rights:

**Article 1:** The right of every European citizen to receive the most accurate information and to be proactively involved in his/her care.

**Article 2:** The right of every European citizen to optimal and timely access to appropriate specialised care, underpinned by research and innovation.



Professor Patrick Johnston (Co-Chair ECC Steering Group), Tonio Borg (EC Commissioner for Health), Professor Mark Lawler (ECC Project Lead) and Francesco de Lorenzo (ECC Steering Committee and President ECPC)

**Article 3:** The right of every European citizen to receive care in health systems that ensure improved outcomes, patient rehabilitation, best quality of life and affordable healthcare.

Speaking at the Launch, EU Commissioner for Health Tonio Borg welcomed the Bill of Rights, assuring those present that "cancer is very high on the Commission's agenda". He praised the "very first right that the Bill defends, the right for the patient to receive accurate information and to be actively associated in their care", acknowledging that "Information is key to enable the patient to play an active role in his or her treatment rather than just being a passive recipient."

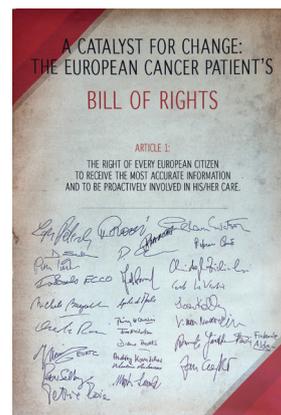
Crucial to the success of this initiative has been the partnership with over 20 patient advocacy groups representing approximately 1,000 national organisations and many millions of cancer patients and their families throughout Europe. The Launch of the Bill of Rights in Strasbourg was performed in partnership with the largest of these pan-European organisations, the European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC).

"The European Cancer Patient's Bill of Rights is a Patient Charter that aims to address the inequalities that cancer patients in Europe face every

day linked to socioeconomic status, patient age, access to quality care and lack of a comprehensive National Cancer Control Plan," said Francesco de Lorenzo, President of the ECPC.

Also speaking at the Launch was Alojz Peterle MEP, former Prime Minister of Slovenia, President of MEPs Against Cancer (M.A.C) group and a key supporter of ECPC and ECC. "We are proud to be associated with this initiative," he said. "It represents a clear mandate to our colleagues that we need to achieve an effective change for the benefit of the European cancer patient," he added.

For further information on the European Cancer Patient's Bill of Rights initiative please go to: [www.mediator.qub.ac.uk/ms/Qtv/ECC.mp4](http://www.mediator.qub.ac.uk/ms/Qtv/ECC.mp4)



# A CELEBRATION OF WORLD CANCER DAY



*Professor Richard Kennedy, Margaret Grayson, (Chair, NICRCF), Edwin Poots (Minister of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety) and Conan Donnelly (NI Cancer Registry)*

On 4 February 2014 the NI Cancer Research Consumer Forum (NICRCF) marked World Cancer Day by hosting an event in the McClay Library Auditorium attended by various stakeholders in cancer care, including Health Minister Edwin Poots.

After lunch, kindly funded with the support of Friends of the Cancer Centre, Mrs Grayson (NICRCF Chair) welcomed the audience and the Minister highlighted the value of early cancer

diagnosis and the important role of research in transforming practice. He noted that all opportunities to improve cancer survival should be explored.

Mr Conan Donnelly, NI Cancer Registry, reported Eurocare 5 and International Cancer Benchmarking Partnership findings. He highlighted NI survival rates were improving for most cancers and were higher compared to UK/Ireland, but lagged behind the best performing countries.

Professor Richard Kennedy, CCRCB, described how local cancer research has an international impact, citing examples of new tests, drugs and clinical trials. He emphasised how integrated scientific and clinical research programmes are a vital approach to improve patient outcomes.

The audience watched a video presentation of Professor Mark Lawler, who was simultaneously speaking at the launch of the European Cancer Patient's Bill of Rights in Strasbourg. He described the Bill as a patient-centred Charter providing a framework to deliver optimal standards of cancer research and cancer care for every European citizen.

Concluding the programme, Mr Paul Burns, a NICRCF member, gave a personal perspective on the Bill of Rights. He commented: "We're fortunate to have excellent cancer facilities here in Belfast, and I personally have benefited from the clinical trials being run here. The Bill of Rights highlights the importance of access to information, and that includes access to information about such trials." NICRCF members welcomed the European initiative, commending Professors Patrick Johnston and Mark Lawler, who have been instrumental in its development.

## EUROPEAN COST ACTION – NANO-IBCT WORKSHOP

Over fifty scientists from across Europe came together in Belfast on 8-9 November 2013 to discuss the use of experimental measurements and methods to test and validate models relevant to ion beam and nanoparticle based forms of radiotherapy as part of Working Group 5: Radiobiological scale effects (DNA DSBs detection, prediction and cellular consequences). Fittingly for such a cross-disciplinary topic, the meeting was hosted jointly by Dr Fred Currell from the School of Maths and Physics and Professor Kevin Prise from the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology.

As well as a series of 13 invited talks there was a lively poster session with local students presenting their work. It was particularly pleasing to see a large number of young (undergraduate and postgraduate) delegates in attendance and actively participating in the meeting where the invited experts discussed various experimental approaches applicable across length scales from small molecules right up to whole organisms. This COST Action has now led to the successful development of an EU Marie Curie Training Network, ARGENT, which launched on 1 March 2014.



*Participants at the Nano-IBCT Workshop in CCRCB*

# NATIONAL CANCER DIRECTOR SEAN DUFFY IMPRESSED BY CCRCB'S VISION AND FOCUS

Recently appointed National Cancer Director at NHS England Sean Duffy visited CCRCB as part of a two day trip to Belfast.

A packed CCRCB lecture theatre heard Sean deliver his lecture entitled "Cancer outcomes and the survival challenge" in which he outlined the progress that has been achieved, the challenges that we still face and his vision as National Cancer Director to deliver optimal care for cancer patients. The interest in his lecture was so great that questions ran for over 30 minutes after the end of his presentation. "I am incredibly impressed by not only the vision, but also the focus of the CCRCB" he said. "There is a clear commitment to translating the knowledge that you generate for the benefit of patients", he added.

Commenting on his visit, David Waugh, Director of CCRCB said "Sean Duffy's visit highlights the importance of engagement by CCRCB with key national opinion leaders and decision makers. It allows us to see the overall plan for the future of cancer care nationally which can inform our vision as a Centre going forward." During his visit, the National Cancer Director for England met many of the key clinical, research



*Professor Manuel Salto-Tellez, Professor Mark Lawler, Professor David Waugh, Sean Duffy and Dr Miriam McCarthy (Consultant in Public Health Medicine, Public Health Agency)*

and policy leaders for cancer in Northern Ireland and was also taken on a tour of the Cancer Centre and the Northern Ireland Cancer Trials Centre. He also met with members of the Northern Ireland Cancer Research Consumers Forum. "This visit was truly transformative," said CCRCB PI Mark Lawler who hosted the visit and

is working with Sean Duffy on a number of initiatives. "This is the first time that the National Cancer Director has visited Northern Ireland and the dialogue that has been generated and the partnership that will follow provides a springboard for real engagement and Belfast leadership at national level," he added.

## EARLY DIAGNOSIS EVENT AT STORMONT

Cancer Research UK held a drop in event for MLAs, health professionals and others at Stormont on 18 February 2014. The event focused on early diagnosis of cancer, and in particular our calls for:

- The development of a coordinated regional campaign to improve awareness of signs and symptoms of cancer;
- The inclusion of bowel scope (flexi-sigmoidoscopy) into the Northern Ireland bowel cancer screening programme as a one-off test for everyone at age 55.

Conan Donnelly from the NI Cancer Registry spoke about NI diagnosis statistics in the context of his work with the International Cancer Benchmarking Partnership. Amanda Boughey (Be Clear on Cancer Lead for Cancer Research UK), presented the charity's rationale and supporting evidence for the two policy calls. Dr Richard Wilson, Clinical Director of the NI Cancer Trials Centre, talked about his experience with bowel

cancer patients and the difficulties in treating advanced disease due to late diagnosis.

Local cancer survivor, Enid Davidson, spoke very movingly about her battle with breast cancer and her brother's battle with prostate cancer, and the importance of screening programmes and also seeing your GP with any symptoms. The event was sponsored by the Northern Ireland Health Committee, and both the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee spoke and supported our calls. The Health Minister, Edwin Poots, who also spoke, was very engaged and supportive of the event's aims.

There were also two interactive science stands which gave attendees a bit of insight into some of the work taking place in the Belfast Centre. Professor Mark Lawler manned the Genetics stand and spoke about the importance of genetic signatures in early diagnosis. Clinical

Research Fellows Dr Ciara Lyons and Dr Phil Turner were on hand at the Imaging stand to talk about the importance of MRI and multiparametric MRI in diagnosing the specifics of prostate cancer.

Attendees were also able to chat with Nick Ormiston-Smith (Cancer Research UK Head of Statistical Information) and visit the 'local stats' stand to view online cancer statistics for their local area.

Over 75 people attended, including 38 MLAs. Among the attendees were several party leaders and health spokespersons as well as Department of Health, Belfast Trust, Northern Ireland Cancer Network and Public Health Agency staff.

MLAs had their photos taken on the day and were sent a press release so they can promote their support of CRUK's early diagnosis calls in their local media.

## AMERICAN IRELAND FUND VISIT

As part of a high level visit to Northern Ireland, the American Ireland Fund (AIF) visited the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology (CCRCB) on 28 February 2014.

Following an introduction to Queen's by Professor Shane O'Neill, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Kevin Prise, CCRCB Deputy Director, outlined the vision of CCRCB and emphasised how discovery science is being translated into clinical benefit for cancer patients.

Professor Paul Harkin, Professor of Molecular Oncology and President/Managing Director of Almac Diagnostics, described how Almac Diagnostics was spun out of research from CCRCB. He went on to highlight some of the recent successes that have positioned the company as a major global player in cancer diagnostics and prognostics. Professor Tim Harrison, McClay Chair of Medicinal Chemistry and Vice President of Discovery Chemistry at Almac Discovery, informed the visiting delegation on the new research

partnership between Almac and CCRCB and how this collaborative approach is driving the development of new drugs for cancer. Both Paul and Tim highlighted how the partnership between Almac and CCRCB was a key enabler of research excellence and its translation into clinical and commercial impact.

Professor Mark Lawler, Chair in Translational Cancer Genomics who hosted the visit to CCRCB, highlighted the University's international leadership role in cancer. He presented to the group on the Queen's University-led European Cancer Patient Bill of Rights, which was recently launched at the European Parliament in Strasbourg on World Cancer Day. Responding on behalf of the AIF delegation, QUB graduate John O'Donoghue, Head of Equities at OTR Global Securities, praised the work of CCRCB and the University in cancer, acknowledging its international reputation and its ability to bridge the cancer continuum from research discovery to cancer care and cancer policy. Though the visit



Members of the American Ireland Fund who visited CCRCB on Friday 28 February 2014

was short, the AIF delegation were very impressed by the vision, drive and accomplishments of CCRCB.

## CCRCB TAKES ON THE BELFAST MARATHON

This May a large team of staff and students from throughout the Centre will be participating in the 2014 Belfast City Marathon on Monday 5 May 2014.

A group of thirty runners in six teams, 'the Running Buffers', will be setting off from City Hall to face the 26.2 mile journey before finally crossing the finish line at Ormeau Park. In addition, David Lyons Ewing and Philip Burn will be running the full marathon. The Running Buffers are raising money for CLIC Sargent, the UK's leading charity supporting children and young people diagnosed with cancer. For the latest Running Buffers updates and the opportunity to donate to the fundraising effort head to: [www.justgiving.com/CCRCBRunningBuffers](http://www.justgiving.com/CCRCBRunningBuffers).

Getting into their stride for the Sean Crummey Memorial Fund are PhD student, Matthew Alderdice, research technician Marc Fuchs and postdoc Abdullah Alvi. The trio are part of a First Trust Bank supported fun run team taking part in the Belfast City Marathon. The Fund, set up to commemorate the popular star of the television and radio show 'The Folks on the Hill', has raised over £38,000 since it



Sean Crummey Memorial Fund runners Marc Fuchs, Matthew Alderdice and Abdullah Alvi with Joe Tierney (Sean Crummey Memorial Fund committee member), Brendan Crummey (brother of the late comedian) and Mark McKeown (First Trust Bank)

was launched and is supporting Matthew Alderdice's PhD research in the CCRCB. To register for this year's Marathon and to support the Sean Crummey Memorial Fund

and CCRCB, register at: [www.belfastcitymarathon.com](http://www.belfastcitymarathon.com) before Friday 18th April 2014. Further details at: [www.justgiving.com/seancrummey](http://www.justgiving.com/seancrummey).

# JOHN MCGIRR FUND DONATES £35,000 TO SUPPORT PROSTATE CANCER RESEARCH

The John McGirr Fund recently presented a donation of £35,000 towards prostate cancer research, which was gratefully received by Professor Joe O'Sullivan on behalf of the University.

The Fund was established in March 2010 in memory of John McGirr, the popular owner of 'Sally's of Omagh', who passed away in December 2009.

The money was raised by hundreds of people taking on various challenges throughout the year, including cycling, running, swimming, playing golf and organising charity fashion shows. Oonagh McGirr paid tribute to all those people who helped with the fundraising activities, saying: "Without your support the Fund would not be able to make this overwhelming contribution to the fight against prostate cancer, we know that there is still a great need to continue fundraising and it is our intention to continue with our efforts."

Joe O'Sullivan was extremely impressed with the amount of money raised and explained how the donation would be used to fund the cost of researchers, who are working very hard to prolong



Professor Joe O'Sullivan (centre) with Connor, Oonagh, James, Aoife and Catherine McGirr

and improve the lives of those suffering with the disease. He said: "Your efforts will make a significant difference to the quality of life of people suffering with prostate cancer and will give us the best possible chance of developing better treatment and eventually cures. On behalf of those people I would like to record our gratitude."

The donation was presented at the launch of the 2013 SW 200 Cycle event, which will also raise money for the John McGirr Fund. Anyone wishing to take part in the South West 200 cycle should contact Enda on 07725 260741 for details.

## PHOTO GALLERY



Ryan Ward and Julie McBrien recently called in to CCRCB to present Professor David Waugh and Dr Gareth Irwin with a significant donation of £5,000, which was raised by Ryan's mother Colette Dennison. Colette held a charity BBQ to raise funds for breast cancer research taking place in the Centre.



Sidney Semple visited the CCRCB recently with his wife Ann, and presented Professor Kevin Prise with a donation of £650 towards lymphoma and prostate cancer research. Sidney and Ann raised this fantastic amount by organising a charity sequence dancing event.



Cancer Research UK held a unique national competition in November - 'The Great Science Bake Off'. 70 entries from 11 CRUK Centres across the country aimed to 'tell stories of cancer research through the medium of cake'. Belfast had three great entries including two solo efforts by Kirsty McLaughlin and Philip Burn. But the group effort by the Haematology Lab won an Honourable Mention in the National Competition. 'When Haematopoiesis Goes Wrong', by Jodie Hay, Nuala Mulgrew and Lisa Crawford.

# PRIZES AND MEASURES OF ESTEEM

Congratulations to **Professor Patrick Morrison**, who received a CBE in the New Years Honours for services to Healthcare in Northern Ireland.

Professor Morrison, a Consultant in Clinical Genetics and Honorary Professor of Human Genetics at the CCRCB in Queen's University, is an expert on hereditary cancers and neurological disorders. His published papers includes work on the recognition and delineation of new phenotypes in human genetic disorders, which details the internationally recognised work that has taken place in the genetics service over the last 25 years.

His international collaborative work has allowed cutting edge translational research to take place in the genetics service, helping a very large number of patients to have world class treatments early on the NHS giving a great cost-saving to the Trust, as well as significantly improving patient care. Professor Morrison has published over 300 papers on hereditary cancer disorders and has particular interests in hereditary breast, ovarian and renal cancers.

**Dr Richard Wilson** was appointed in February 2014 as the new chair for the National Cancer Research Institute Colorectal Clinical Studies Group, replacing Professor Will Steward from Leicester. Richard has been a member of the Colorectal CSG since 2007, and the chair of one of its four subgroups (for adjuvant and advanced disease) since 2009. This appointment will provide increased access for QUB and other locally based colorectal cancer

investigators to bring their research ideas forward to the national arena.

The NCRI CSGs represent a central component of the framework for cancer research across the UK, providing the primary route through which new ideas for cancer clinical trials (and much translational research) are developed. There are currently 21 NCRI CSGs, including 15 cancer site-specific groups and six cross-cutting groups. For more details on the NCRI CSGs, please see: <http://csg.ncri.org.uk/>

**Dr Kyle Matchett** was recently awarded the position of Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA) by The Higher Education Academy.

**Dr Glenn Dickson**, Honorary Senior Lecturer, has been elected to a Fellowship of the Anatomical Society, in recognition of his contribution to the Anatomical Sciences.

**Dr Lisa Crawford** recently spent some time in Professor Ken Anderson's laboratory at the Dana Farber Institute in Boston. She learned some new culture strategies to expand the Multiple Myeloma work in Dr Sandra Irvine's research group. This visit was supported by the Haematology Association of Ireland.

Congratulations to **Dr Stephen McMahon** in the Radiation Biology Group who has been awarded a prestigious Outgoing EU Marie Curie Fellowship for 3 years. Stephen will spend two years working at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard

Medical School in Boston with Professor Harald Paganetti and Dr Kathryn Held developing new advanced approaches for defining the biological basis of treatment planning for proton radiotherapy before returning to CCRCB for the final year of the fellowship. Stephen's recent work, published in the International Journal of Radiation Oncology, Biology and Physics, the top translational radiation biology journal, was also publicised through the Medical Physics Web Network.

Congratulations to **Dr Karl Butterworth** who won a National Institute of Health funded scholarship to attend the 22nd annual course on Experimental Models of Human Cancer at the Jackson Laboratory, Bar Harbour, ME. and a Cancerpoles Grand Ouest travel award to speak at the 7th annual meeting on the Future of Radiation Oncology in Berder Island, Brittany, France.



*Professor Patrick Morrison CBE*

## ROCHE PRIZE WINNER 2013

Congratulations to Dr Philip Dunne who has been awarded the Roche Prize for 2013. Dr Dunne, who is a post doctoral research fellow in Dr Sandra Van Schaeybroeck's research group, was presented with a medal and cheque for £400 at the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology on 16 December 2013. His winning presentation was entitled 'AXL is a key regulator of inherent and chemotherapy-induced invasion and predicts a poor clinical outcome in early stage colon cancer.'

The Roche Researcher of the Year Award was launched by Roche Diagnostics Ireland, to highlight and support excellence in life science research within the academic centres of Ireland, both in the Republic and Northern Ireland.

*Julie McAlinden (Roche representative) presents the Roche Prize to Dr Philip Dunne*



## RECENT GRANTS AWARDED

Investigator(s)	Sponsor	Title	Amount	Start Date	End Date
Campbell, Charles	MRC	MRC CASE Studentship (Oncogenic deregulation of epithelial apical biogenesis as a unifying mechanism for colorectal cancer morphological heterogeneity)	£115,327	01/10/14	30/09/17
Irvine, Sandra	Haematology Association of Ireland	Fellowship – Dr Lisa Crawford	£16,620	01/12/13	30/11/15
Lawler, Mark	International Engagement Fund QUB	Collaborative Genomics Programme with National Cancer Institute USA and University of Pennsylvania USA	€30,000	01/03/14	01/03/16
Mills, Ken	Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI	Infrastructure grant – Golden Anniversary Research Award	£496,000	01/10/14	30/09/17
Mills, Ken	Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI	Summer Studentships 2014	£6,000	01/07/14	30/09/14
Mills, Ken Savage, Kieran	Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research	The molecular and therapeutic relevance of SF3B1 in the aetiology of Myelodysplastic Syndromes	£125,959	01/02/14	31/01/16
Mullan, Paul Scott, Chris Williams, Rich	Invest NI – Proof of Concept	Development of a novel 'lysotherapeutic' delivery system for targeting lysosomal proteases	£105,953	01/03/14	28/02/15
O'Brien, Niamh Mullan, Paul	Breast Cancer Campaign	Characterisation of the propyl isomerase, PIN1, as a novel biomarker and therapeutic target	£94,907	01/10/14	30/09/17
Prise, Kevin	European Union FP7 - RadRes PRO	Fellowship – Stephen McMahon	£235,376	01/06/14	31/05/17
Prise, Kevin	National Physics Laboratory	Methodology for characterising use of Au nanoparticles as contrast agents in diagnostic medical imaging	£27,749	01/10/14	30/09/17
Waugh, David O'Sullivan, Joe Prise, Kevin Salto-Tellez, Manuel Jain, Suneil McDade, Simon	Prostate Cancer UK	FASTMAN – Movember Centre of Excellence	£2,505,219	01/07/14	30/06/19
Waugh, David	CRUK	Belfast CRUK Centre	£1,500,000	01/04/14	31/03/17
Waugh, David	CRUK	Senior Research Nurse	£76,339	01/04/14	31/03/15

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- ACHEVA, A., GHITA, M., PATEL, G., PRISE, K.M., and SCHEITTINGO, G. (2014) Mechanisms of Response to Targeted Irradiation in 3D Organotypic Skin Cultures, *PLoS One*, 5 February 2014 (Epub ahead of print).
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### NEW APPOINTMENTS

Welcome to the following new staff who have recently joined the Centre:

**Academic Staff:**  
Dr Gerry Hanna

**Clinical Research Fellows:**  
Dr Jane McClements

**Research Staff:**  
Dr Abdullah Alvi  
Dr Paul Buchanan  
Dr Sabine Dalleau  
Dr Zsuzsanna Nemeth  
Ms Katy Orr  
Dr Lucia Perez Carbonell  
Dr Abi Savage  
Dr Dharita Upadhyaya

**Technical Staff:**  
Mr Russell Md Al Mustasin Billah  
Ms Karen Magill Young

**Visiting Researchers:**  
Miss Marissa Blume  
Dr Zoe Davison  
Ms Fionola Fogarty  
Miss Joanna Farnan  
Ms Norhayati Binti Omar  
Miss Aoife Richardson  
Mr Duccio Rossi  
Miss Laura Taggart

### CCRCB EVENTS

**Cancer Research Information Evening**  
3 April 2014  
CCRCB Building

**CRUK Centre Lecture**  
8 May 2014  
CCRCB Building  
Professor Bob Brown, Imperial College London

**Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI Open Evening**  
14 May 2014  
CCRCB Building  
For further information please refer to:  
<http://www.leukaemiaandlymphomani.org/>

**CRUK Centre Research Strategy Event**  
21 May 2014  
CCRCB Building

**Summer School in Computational Biology**  
8 – 10 September 2014  
Health Sciences Building  
For further information and registration please refer to:  
<http://www.bio-complexity.com/QUBssc14/Home.html>

### NEW APPOINTMENT FOR PROSTATE CANCER UK

Neil Gillan joined us as Prostate Cancer UK's new Community Support Services Manager for Northern Ireland at the beginning of February.

As the Community Support Services Manager for Northern Ireland, Neil's role is to research, identify and address the needs of local men and their families affected by prostate cancer.

Before joining us, Neil was most recently a Community Project Manager for a charity and was responsible for delivering a range

of services to a local community, including services to young people with autistic spectrum disorders and services to young people coming to the attention of the criminal justice system. Prior to that, Neil was a project co-ordinator with a sub-regional network and was responsible for researching, identifying and addressing the needs of local older people.

To contact Neil or find out more about his role email: [neil.gillan@prostatecanceruk.org](mailto:neil.gillan@prostatecanceruk.org) or call: 028 9097 2370 or 07908 802902.



Comments on the CCRCB Bulletin or suggestions for future editions should be forwarded to [katie.stewart@qub.ac.uk](mailto:katie.stewart@qub.ac.uk)