

RESEARCH STRATEGY

1. The Focus of Our Research

North West Cancer Research (NWCR) is the only independent cancer research charity which funds high quality research for local people in North West England and North Wales.

Our aim is to stop cancer in an era of increased incidence. Our research portfolio will be sufficiently flexible to address changes in regional cancer prevalence, incorporate new technologies and respond to advances in treatment. We will prioritise research which has a direct impact on the people in our region, targeting those cancers which are the most prevalent;

Cancer is a complex disease. We will invest in studies from 'bench to bedside'. We aim to develop a better understanding of the biology of cancer – the mechanisms that drive its development, growth and spread. Our research will investigate ground breaking therapies and develop mechanisms to overcome drug resistance in cancer cells. We will support research into cancers of high prevalence in our region. We will investigate cancers of children and adults. We will support research into the care of the dying.

NWCR will invest in high quality people and projects. We will continue to expand cancer research capacity in the region. We will invest in researchers at every stage of their career, in order to develop cancer researchers of the future while continuing to support our existing research community.

2. Our organisational strategy

NWCR has agreed six key areas into which it will invest its resources at the present time:

- a. Researching the impact of cancer - We will seek to understand the prevalence of cancer and its impact in our communities;
- b. Researching the causes of cancer - We will fund research which improves our understanding of the factors which cause cancer and cancer inequalities in our population;
- c. Clinical Research - We will seek to ensure that there are improved and increased diagnosis and treatment options available for all;
- d. Fundamental Research - We will fund fundamental research which builds understanding of how cells and cancers work and which will help to under-pin specific targeted projects.
- e. Building the capacity for research - We will fund projects and items which help to build the capacity of the research community within our

area to ensure that it remains vibrant with a growing capacity to undertake a broad range of research;

- f. Research for the future - We will seek to fund future researchers to ensure that the skills base within our region remains vibrant.

3. Our funding decisions are grounded on a number of key principles:

- a. Focus - Research we fund must have an impact on people within our region.
- b. Investment - We will make the necessary investments to ensure effective cancer research for the people of the region. We will support the best people and the highest quality science.
- c. Partnership - We will adopt a dynamic and participatory approach to all our partnerships to achieve the greatest impact. We will encourage collaboration between researchers at our funded institutes in order to create the best possible research environment.
- d. Communication – Projects will need to include a lay summary to explain the aims and scope of the project. Researchers are expected to participate in outreach events to explain their work to members of the charity and the public. We believe that this is important for the future of cancer research in our region.
- e. Impact – projects which we fund will be asked to demonstrate their potential for impact and relevance to our aims and will need to complete a report on this at the end of the research.

4. Types of Funding Available

In 2018 the Charity is aiming to invest in the following areas:

- Project grants for research projects of up to three years in length. These may be lab based research projects, projects which consider the impact of cancer, clinical trials, patient studies or projects which consider the societal causes of cancer
- Studentships (BSc, MSc, MRes and PhD)
- Personal funding (Fellowships)
- Centre grants
- Equipment grants for items of laboratory based equipment which are exceptional to further research

We will not fund buildings, or provide funding for direct clinical care.

5. Principles of Scientific Review

As members of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC), NWCR has a robust application and review process. All applications for funding are subject to rigorous peer review, with recommendations being made by our Scientific Advisory Group.

6. Review

This Research Strategy will be reviewed annually.