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NEWS RELEASE

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YORKSHIRE CANCER RESEARCH FUNDS FIRST CLINICAL TRIAL OF BRADFORD 'SMART-BOMB' DRUG

ON World Cancer Day (Thursday, 4th February), Yorkshire Cancer Research has announced plans to fund the first clinical trial of a 'smart-bomb' drug discovered in Bradford.

The charity will invest £634,000 in the trial of the drug, which was discovered with funding from the charity by researchers led by Professor Laurence Patterson at the University of Bradford's Institute of Cancer Therapeutics in 2011.

It is currently being progressed into trials by the University's spin-out company, Incanthera Limited.

The treatment is derived from colchicine, a natural compound occurring in the autumn crocus plant. It is designed to find and destroy solid tumours, sparing healthy tissue.

Patients from across Yorkshire with advanced cancers, including lung, breast, colorectal and prostate cancer, will be recruited to take part in the trial, which will be led by Professor Chris Twelves at the University of Leeds. The trial will be carried out by clinicians at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Laboratory studies supporting the trial will be led by Professor Paul Loadman at the University of Bradford's Institute of Cancer Therapeutics.

The trial will be co-ordinated by the Yorkshire Cancer Research Centre for Early Phase Clinical Trials, which was created in 2014 to provide more opportunities for Yorkshire-based patients to participate in innovative studies. It will be delivered through the National Institute for Health Research Clinical Research Facilities and the Experimental Cancer Medicine Centres in Leeds and Sheffield.

Professor Twelves said: "Cancers need their own blood supply to survive. These blood vessels can be attacked by poisoning them with vascular disrupting agents (VDAs), starving the cancer of oxygen

and nutrients. This will be the first trial in patients with cancer to show that this drug is safe and works correctly.

“Cancer outcomes are worse for patients in Yorkshire than in many other parts of the UK, so there is a particular need for effective new treatments. Cancer patients in Yorkshire also have fewer opportunities to participate in experimental treatment trials.

“This trial will be carried out at the two largest Yorkshire cancer centres giving as many patients as possible in Yorkshire the opportunity to participate. Ultimately, this may lead to a new effective and safe treatment for cancer patients in Yorkshire and beyond.”

Professor Patterson said: “The discovery and development of this new therapy to specifically target the tumour blood supply was made possible by a team of medicinal chemists, tumour biologists and cancer pharmacologists all working together under one roof within the purpose built Institute of Cancer Therapeutics, a facility within The University of Bradford; one of a handful of such resources within the UK.

“The team have identified the benefits of colchicine, an ancient treatment derived from plants such as the autumn crocus and made a synthetic derivative that is inactive until converted to a powerful anticancer agent specifically in the tumour.”

The discovery of the ‘smart-bomb’ drug led to a successful £1m appeal led by the University of Bradford, Yorkshire Cancer Research, the Telegraph & Argus Newspaper and the Sovereign Healthcare Charitable Trust, launched in May 2013.

The initiative allowed the university to purchase a cutting-edge proteomics mass spectrometer, which is now allowing researchers to analyse proteins in cancer cells at a much quicker rate, improving the number of opportunities for the development of new cancer medicines.

The new trial is part of a £2.8m investment by Yorkshire Cancer Research in six new projects aimed at improving the treatment and experience of cancer patients in Yorkshire.



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Charles Rowett, Chief Executive Officer at Yorkshire Cancer Research, said: “We’re very proud to reveal plans for the first clinical trial of a drug discovered in our region thanks to funding from our charity and other organisations. The trial will bring this innovative treatment one step closer to reaching cancer patients.”

Simon Ward, Chief Executive Officer of Incanthera, said: “We are delighted to have been awarded this grant from Yorkshire Cancer Research. Awarding of funds is very competitive and as such this is a great endorsement of Incanthera’s ICT2588 drug, which we are very grateful to receive. The funds will contribute greatly to the cost of our first clinical study in patients and will specifically benefit patients across Yorkshire.”

ENDS

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Notes to Editors:

- Harrogate-based Yorkshire Cancer Research was founded in 1925 and is the largest independent regional cancer charity in England (Registered Charity 516898)
- We are committed to reducing the devastating impact of cancer on the lives of people living in Yorkshire.
- Our mission is to work in partnership, fund research and support initiatives that will help people in Yorkshire avoid, survive and cope with cancer.
- Current statistics show that 527 people are diagnosed with cancer in Yorkshire every week. Incidence and mortality rates are higher than the England average due to social deprivation, post-industrialisation and lifestyle choices but also availability of healthcare services and difficulties accessing early diagnostics, clinical trials and the latest treatments.
- We aim to:
 - Be the leading authority on cancer in Yorkshire, understanding the problems and priorities in the region and sharing knowledge with partners.
 - Raise awareness of cancer and how to prevent it by working in local communities, schools and colleges, sports clubs and with other health-related organisations.



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- Promote screening programmes and fund research that can improve the diagnosis of cancer so we can detect and treat it at the earliest opportunity.
 - Invest in innovative research projects at every stage of a cancer patient's journey.
 - Campaign for fair and equal access to the very best healthcare services and a greater share of the money spent nationally on research.
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- For further information, please visit www.yorkshirecancerresearch.org.uk or follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).