



Wales Cancer Bank

www.walescancerbank.com

NEWSLETTER



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WELCOME

Welcome to the second edition of the Wales Cancer Bank newsletter.

This edition's 'spotlight' features the Information Technology strategies and processes being utilised for the project and their various exciting applications for future use.

CHAIRMAN RETIRES

Dr Frank Wells stepped down as the independent chairman of Wales Cancer Bank at the end of 2005. He brought a wealth of experience in the biomedical and pharmaceutical fields to the Cancer Bank during its critical early development phase. He was previously the Director of the Depart-

ment of Medicine Science and Technology of the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (APBI), prior to which he was Under Secretary of the British Medical Association. He collaborated in setting up the Medico-Legal Investigations agency and he has also served as

Chairman of Allington NHS Trust and Chairman of Marix Drug Development Ltd. He founded the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine and currently serves on the Suffolk Research Ethics Committee.

Everyone at the WCB would like to thank Dr Wells for his invaluable input over the last two years and we wish him well in his future endeavours.



'This is such an exciting project -- and a real investment by today's generation for the Welsh people of tomorrow.'

Huw Edwards
BBC

1 YEAR ON—PATIENTS BACK THE CANCER BANK

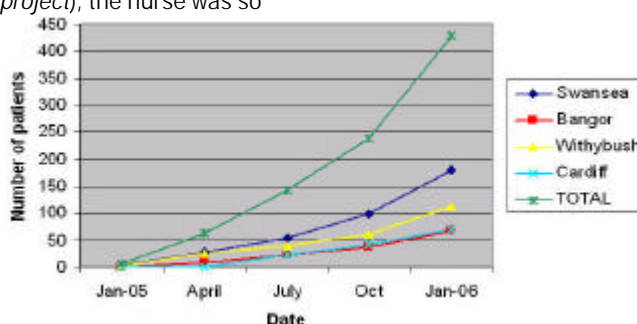
Patients have shown their overwhelming support for the Wales Cancer Bank in its first year of sample collection. During the first twelve months 430 patients consented to donate their excess tissue and give a blood sample to bank for future research projects. Only 0.8% of patients approached by the WCB specialist nurses have declined to participate.

A number of patients have expressed their satisfaction at being able to help patients in the future. Mr Williams from Swansea said, "I think

it's a great idea that left over tissue is used for research – I certainly don't want it, so it's better to be used than thrown away". Mrs Thomas from West Wales said, "I can't believe anyone would say no (to consenting to the project), the nurse was so

nice and explained everything to me and my husband – but there's nothing much to do to take part".

A big thank you to everyone who has donated tissue and blood to the WCB.





SPOTLIGHT ON: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information Technology (IT) systems are vital to log, track and store information on all the samples the WCB collects.

Mr Daniel Naeh is the WCB IT manager. He has an MSc in Computing with 14 years of international experience in large institutions and software houses. He previously worked as a project manager and IT consultant.

Wales is fortunate to have a Cancer Network Information System (CaNISC) which is an all Wales clinical database where cancer patient records are stored. This is a secure system on the NHS server and it is on this database that the WCB nurses record that a patient has consented

to donate tissue and blood. A random number is then generated for sample identification—this ensures that there are no patient identifiers on the biological samples that are logged on the WCB database. 2D barcodes are used on the samples for rapid identification.

The Wales Cancer Bank uses the latest technology to develop its own bio specimen tracking system. The WCB system can be accessed from all hospitals in Wales using the secure NHS Digital All Wales Network. All samples are recorded with the Royal College of Pathology minimum dataset.

The ambitious future development program includes a system for storing



Daniel Naeh—IT Manager

digitised images of tumour sections. The images will be used for analysis and quality control of the sample. The WCB website will be extended to include a system for online sample ordering and processing. Researchers will be able to use the website to select available sample types and quantities, place orders and

track the progress of their application.

To ensure that maximum value is gained from the WCB collection all research results will be collected and stored in a database for bioinformatics analysis. This archive of data will allow the results to be correlated at a later date, so that, for example, the investigations by different groups of a number of different genes can be correlated to study their interactions.

The expected amount of data generated requires a huge amount of storage and processing capacity. It is hoped that the new Swansea University super computer (Blue C) can host the WCB database.

'Wales is once again showing the UK the way.....'

Professor Alex Markham
(Chief Executive, Cancer Research UK)

commenting about the Wales Cancer Bank at the launch of the Wales Cancer Institute in January 2005.

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Over the past few months we've welcomed new staff to the WCB and also said farewell.

We wish Liz Penrose, who was the WCB nurse in Cardiff, good luck in her new post as the Tenovus Lung nurse in the Royal Glamorgan Hospital. Liz was instrumental in introducing the project in Cardiff to Llandough and UHW.

Two specialist nurses, one in Llandough, Catherine Powell, and one in the University Hospital of Wales, Sam Holliday, have taken on responsibility for consenting colorectal and urology patients respectively in place of Liz.

Three new WCB nurses have joined the project. Two in Swansea, Janette and Catherine (pictured right) are based in Singleton hospital. They are starting to expand the collection to new tumour sites within Singleton and also starting to collect tissue samples from Morrison hospital as well.

Andrea Jones has also joined us on a part-time basis in Witherby to help consent patients.

Two postdoctoral scientists, also in Swansea, have temporarily joined the ranks to make sure that the tissue samples collected are of sufficient quality for research. They will also start

to extract DNA and RNA from the samples and make tissue microarrays (TMAs).

We welcome all the new staff to the Wales Cancer Bank and look forward to taking the project forward together throughout Wales.



Catherine Lloyd-Bennett (above)

NCRI CONFERENCE—BIRMINGHAM 2ND-5TH OCTOBER 2005



Left to right:
Mr Neil Formstone (Chair, Patient Liaison group), Dr Frank Wells (Chairman), Professor John Williams (Director, Wales Office of Research and Development for Health and Social Care), Professor Malcolm Mason (Director), Dr Brian Clark (Director, onCore UK), Dr Gerry Thomas (Principal Scientist), Dr Alison Parry-Jones (Manager)

The Wales Cancer Bank exhibited at the first NCRI national conference held in October 2005. The event attracted academic researchers and pharmaceutical companies from around the UK and the programme featured many eminent international speakers.

It provided the WCB team with a valuable opportunity to meet with patient groups and researchers and discuss the work of the bank and the future research possibilities. Several individuals and commercial companies have registered an interest to apply for biomaterials when sample issue begins in the spring of 2006 and some very useful networking contacts were established.

The WCB logo mugs with the Welsh dragon proved highly popular on the stand and are now adorning laboratory and office tea rooms around the UK!

The event was such a success that the following year's conference dates are confirmed for October 8-11 2006, again in the International Convention Centre in Birmingham, and the WCB will be exhibiting.

This is a project that puts the future health of the people of Wales at the top of the agenda and it is also a marvellous opportunity to show just what we can achieve in Wales.'

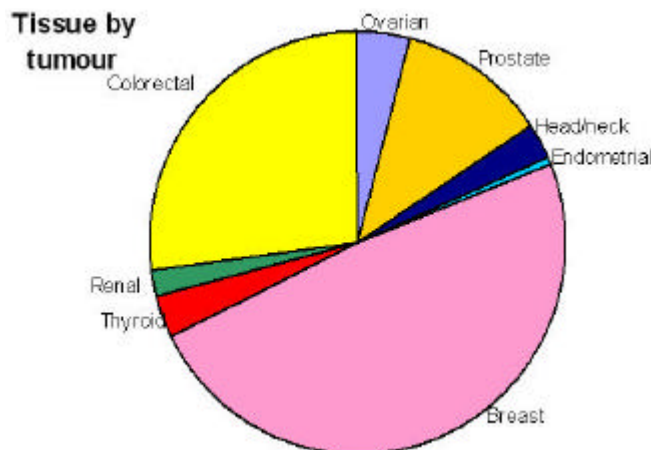
Ioan Gruffudd

SAMPLE ISSUE

The first year of collection has passed very quickly and the sample collection is growing rapidly. All four centres have expanded their initial tumour types to include new tumours and an endometrial collection has been initiated.

A call for scientific proposals will be issued at the 'Collaborating in Cancer Research' conference in March 2006. Researchers from across the UK, and further afield, will be able to apply to the WCB for biomaterials for use in their research projects. Guidance on how to apply for samples can be found on the project website

(www.walescancerbank.com) including an online form for an initial enquiry regarding sample availability. When it has been identified that a sufficient number of samples are available in the bank, an outline proposal should be forwarded to the WCB



office. The Advisory Board of the WCB will screen the applications and those invited to submit a full application will be required to send a detailed submission for review by an External Scientific Panel.

Biomaterials will be available in several formats and will have the facility in the future to link to clinical outcome data.

The WCB is aiming to collect raw data back from all projects where WCB sourced samples are used. This will help us to build up a large set of information for data mining and bioinformatics applications.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Wales Cancer Bank will have a presence at the following events:

The 2006 International
Nursing Research
Conference
Mar 21 - Mar 24, 2006
York Racecourse, York

2006 ISBER Annual
Meeting (International
Society for Biological and
Environmental Repositories)
April 30–May 3, 2006
Bethesda, Maryland, USA

2006 UICC World
Cancer Congress
July 8–12, 2006
Washington DC, USA



'Collaborating in Cancer Research'

March 8th and 9th 2006

Cardiff

The **Wales Cancer Institute** is hosting the first major conference to be held in Wales that will bring together the full range of cancer researchers from laboratory scientists to clinicians conducting clinical trials from academia, the Health Service and industry.

Details of the exciting scientific programme, patient specific breakout sessions and registration forms are on the conference website (www.collaboratingincancerresearch.com)

We look forward to meeting you there!

Director—
Professor Malcolm Mason

Principal Scientist—
Dr Gerry Thomas

Manager—
Dr Alison Parry-Jones

Database Manager—
Mr Daniel Naeh

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Welsh Assembly Government

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