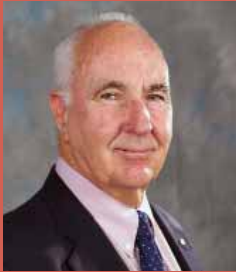


news

one medicine uniting human and animal medicine

Chairman appointed to Advisory Panel



Sir Peter Morris has been appointed as the first chairman of the Comparative Clinical Science Advisory Panel, set up with the advice of the MRC to provide strategic advice to the CCSF. The final

responsibility for strategy and decision-making will remain with the CCSF Board.

A call for research bids will follow once the strategy has been determined.

Sir Peter Morris AC FRS FRCS is Emeritus Nuffield Professor of Surgery and Chairman of the Department of Surgery at the University of Oxford. He is a past President of The Royal College of Surgeons of England. He is currently Director of the Centre for Evidence in Transplantation at The Royal College of Surgeons and is an Honorary Professor within the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. He serves as a trustee of several foundations and is Chairman of the Council of the British Heart Foundation.

Sir Peter is a Fellow of the Royal Society and has received numerous honorary fellowships and degrees. His prizes include the Lister Medal, the Hunterian Medal and the Medawar Prize.

His professional scientific career has revolved around transplantation and transplantation biology and his clinical interests are in transplantation and vascular surgery.

Sir Peter's appointment marks the beginning of real progress towards the first CCSF-funded research projects.

The next priority is to appoint the remaining Panel members and once that has been agreed between the CCSF and the MRC, the Panel will be able to begin its work.

CCSF makes its entrance at the House of Lords

On 31 January, CCSF held its first public event at the House of Lords. Kindly hosted by Baroness Byford, the reception in the Attlee Room introduced the Comparative Clinical Science Foundation to an audience of opinion-formers within the research community, and to potential donors.



The evening was a resounding success and a significant level of interest was expressed in what the Foundation is setting out to achieve.

Guests included representatives from both Houses of Parliament, a number of the leading veterinary and medical schools, the Medical Research Council (MRC), the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), the Wolfson Foundation, the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) Trust, the pharmaceutical

industry, and a number of charities with potential interest in the outcomes of CCSF projects, such as the British Lung Foundation, the Alzheimers' Research Trust and the Kennel Club.

Following a welcome from Baroness Byford and opening remarks by Lord Salisbury, chairman of the CCSF, presentations were introduced by Professor Sir Graeme Catto, President of the General Medical Council and a trustee and enthusiastic supporter of the CCSF. The keynote address was given by Professor Robin Weiss of UCL (University College London) and this was followed by a more technical presentation by Professor David Argyle of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Medicine at Edinburgh University. Professor Argyle described work in comparative science that was already underway in Edinburgh and highlighted the potential benefits for both humans and animals from their studies of the development of cancer in dogs.

All the speakers emphasised the potential benefits of comparative clinical science and explained how this rich vein of research has been neglected over the years. They pointed out the real value and importance of this work and described how, in their own experience, the cross-over between human and animal medical research, where it had taken place, had been an invaluable exchange of information.

Amongst both trustees and guests there was a very real enthusiasm at the reception and a determination that this event marked only the beginning for the Foundation.



Endless possibilities...

Whilst it is easy to talk about the potential of CCSF and comparative science generally, it perhaps helps to focus on specific examples to understand the real impact that research in this area might have. At the reception at the House of Lords a number of research projects were presented as poster presentations – none of these is an official CCSF project but they show the type of project that the CCSF might fund in the future.

The three projects were:

Sweet-itch – an equine model of Eczema, Allergy and Autoimmunity by Professor John L Stanford

“Jointly with the National Sweet-itch Centre, BioEos Ltd. are pioneering immune modulators in trials across the country. The approach is applicable to allergies in man and other animals, with encouraging data already available for flea allergy in dogs and asthma in man.”

An application for Provisional Marketing Authorisation is being prepared for submission to the Veterinary Medicines Directorate.



Starting as an allergic response to midge bites, sweet-itch afflicts 5-8% of ponies, donkeys and riding horses and can lead to permanent and unsightly scarring.



Examination of the gait pattern as a dog walks on the treadmill provides the opportunity for very precise analysis of coordination.

A Programme of Fellowship Training in Comparative Oncology.

Identification of Molecular Targets for Cancer Therapy by Professor David J Argyle BVMS PhD DECVIM-CA (Oncology) MRCVS. Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies.

“The incidence of cancer in dogs is very similar to that in humans: dogs share our environment and there is now mounting evidence from genetic studies that the molecular mechanisms of carcinogenesis are conserved between the species. We also know that specific breeds of dog are at increased risk from certain cancers. Work is underway in several laboratories to try and establish the genetic basis for this predisposition. This programme has been designed to complement these studies and to provide a platform to translate knowledge into clinical practice for both animals and humans.”



Researchers at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies' Comparative Cancer Research group have identified stem cells in dog cancers that are thought to be the cells responsible for the initiation and propagation of tumours. Using genomic techniques they are now trying to identify drug targets within these cells.

Quantitative analysis of alterations in limb co-ordination following severe clinical spinal cord injury in the dog by Lindsay Hamilton, Robin JM Franklin, Nick Jeffery, Department of Veterinary Medicine, University of Cambridge.

“Severe spinal cord injury (SCI) has devastating and currently insoluble consequences in both humans and companion animals. Human patients frequently require expensive and emotionally demanding life-long care, and affected animals are commonly euthanased because of their incapacity. Since human and veterinary medicine are currently at the same stage in approaching the problem of SCI it makes sense that it should be investigated in partnership. During the next decade both human and veterinary medicine are likely to make significant advances in this field.”

Contact Us

To find out more about how you can contribute, please contact Jane Betts, CCSF Chief Executive:

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