



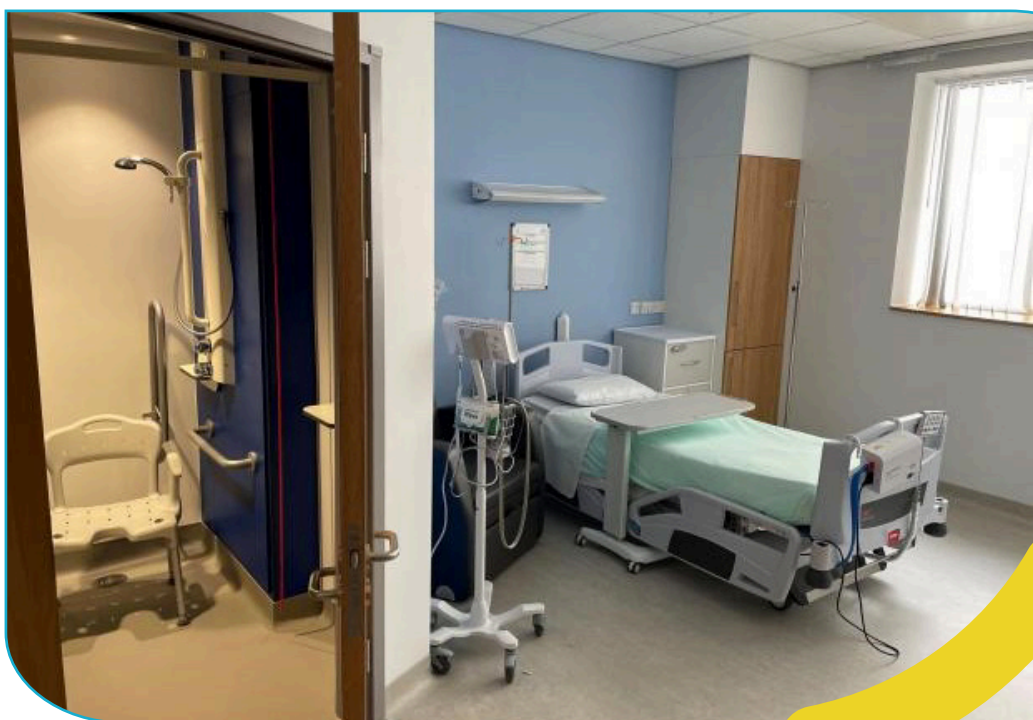
Researchers' capacity expands

Research capability at The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre has expanded with the creation of a unit dedicated to ground-breaking clinical trials.

The Early Phase Trials Unit set up at Clatterbridge Cancer Centre – Liverpool will increase experimental medicine and world-class research for cancer patients across the region.

The Liverpool hospital now has a dedicated unit with four in-patient beds where treatment and care can be provided more efficiently and effectively, while training, education and support can be further enhanced.

Clatterbridge consultant oncologist Dr Anna Olsson-Brown, who was pivotal in setting up the unit with the Clinical Trials Team, said: "The bedrooms for our inpatients are really second to none. Some treatments given on clinical trials, for example immunotherapy, must be administered in a contained environment and the unit has facilities for this."



Research opportunities – it's okay to ask

The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre (CCC) specialises in treatments such as radiotherapy, chemotherapy and immunotherapy. CCC has a very active research department and clinicians encourage patients to take part in research programmes, if they are eligible, to further their personal treatment and to enable medical advances.

Your clinician may discuss research programmes or clinical trials as options

for your involvement, depending on your personal experience of cancer and therapy options.

Listening to information does not commit you to participate in a research study, so ask as many questions as you wish before making a decision to join one.



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SPECIAL INTEREST:

- **Patient and Public Involvement Forum News**
- **ECMC re-accreditation**
- **A day in the life of research staff**

Withdrawal from Clinical Trials

The Forum members were asked to comment on an appropriate form of follow-up when patients withdraw from clinical trials. This was discussed by the group with a range of clinicians.

All agreed that there must be a fine line between perceived pressure to continue with a trial and feedback on reasons for withdrawal and where the team can improve.

Clinicians felt patients must be protected from pressure and a form of words which can ascertain why a patient has withdrawn without obliging them to change their mind.

Forum members stressed it was reasonable to ask in a low-key way, so as not to distress the patient, but to improve future processes or to offer assistance where a patient may be experiencing problems.

However, there is a balance between governance/legal responsibilities and a partnership in holistic care.

CCC's Ethics Board does not want patients to be put under pressure and the clinicians agreed to have a conversation with the Board and will work with the PPI Forum on the wording for an interview to be included in the next study application.

News from the Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Forum

The Forum continues to meet on a monthly basis.

We welcome guest speakers who outline their area of research and more recently we have been asked to comment on areas of patient experience and make recommendations for improvement.

We always welcome new members. So, if you have an interest in cancer research and would like to hear of the latest pioneering work, contact: mary.jordan3@nhs.net

Introducing the new Biobank Manager

Jamie Young
Biobank and Trials
Laboratory Manager

CCC has a new Biobank and Trials Laboratory Manager: Jamie Young.

Jamie has 10 years of experience in research at the Wellcome Trust and the University of Cambridge. He believes that every patient should have the opportunity to donate to Clatterbridge's Biobank and has already engaged with clinicians and academics to assess their need for samples.

He is currently leading the Biobank to support a Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital cardiotoxicity clinical trial by being the repository for every stage of sample/cell collection.



ECMC re-accreditation

The Liverpool Experimental Cancer Medicine Centre (ECMC) is due for re-accreditation and Sara Martin, ECMC Manager, and Charlotte Rawcliffe, ECMC Operational Director, outlined the process and PPI activity.

ECMC status is awarded every five years, however Liverpool's re-accreditation has been pushed back one year due to COVID-19.

PPI is an important aspect of the application and the team need to show public and patient involvement at all stages as well

as outlining how they intend to increase visibility.

Sara and Charlotte welcomed suggestions from the group regarding increasing involvement, as well as new ideas for engagement.

The Forum was happy to make suggestions regarding how greater involvement may be possible, as well as highlighting local charities and amenities for collaboration.

The ECMC team was very grateful for the Forum's involvement.





Research at Clatterbridge

Why are research studies so important

Research studies are carried out into the prevention, detection and treatment of cancer. In some cases they can help identify cancer at an early stage.

More patients entering research studies will lead to faster results, as we saw during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Research studies can help develop new treatments as well as improving the quality of life by reducing symptoms or side effects.

There are a variety of types of research studies but they mainly fall into two major categories – interventional and observational.

Interventional studies involve an intervention such as surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy or immunotherapy. Many will have been initially trialled in a laboratory to ensure safety prior to clinical trials in people.

Observational studies are non-experimental studies in which behaviour or beliefs are systematically observed and recorded. The goal is to obtain a snapshot of specific characteristics of an individual, group, or setting.

These studies are used frequently at Clatterbridge to assess the psychological impact of an intervention.

Clatterbridge's biobank collects blood and other biological materials from patients and healthy volunteers. Samples are used to discover ways of detecting cancer and work out why some patients respond better than others to treatment.



Who can help me decide if a research study is right for me?

There are a number of healthcare professionals at CCC who can help you decide if a particular study is right for you.

A research practitioner will support and advise you through the process. You may also be approached by specialist nurses or other professionals, such as physiotherapists, radiographers, dietitians etc.

You must decide for yourself if you wish to participate, once you have had a chance to discuss all the information with your doctor or research practitioner. You may also wish to discuss the information with family, friends or your GP.

If you meet the requirements of the clinical trial and you want to join it, you will be asked to sign a consent form.

CCC's Clinical Trial Staff



Spotlight on our Research Staff

A day in the life of a... Radiotherapist



Louise Turtle is the Research and Development lead in Radiotherapy. She qualified as a therapeutic radiographer in 1999 and completed an MSc in 2012.

Her role is varied and involves carrying out her own radiographer-led research, of which she had her first publication last year – ‘*Cardiac sparing radiotherapy for locally advanced non-small cell lung cancer*’ in Radiation Oncology.

Louise also facilitates a number of research projects within the department, organises development work in image guided radiotherapy (IGRT)/radiotherapy techniques and manages the Clinical Trials team in radiotherapy.

She was invited to write an article on development work for Rad Magazine in 2020, entitled ‘*Verification imaging for breast and nodal breast diseases: a Varian user’s experience.*’ She has also presented and chaired at a number of national and international oncology conferences.

Louise’s main areas of interest are in the technical aspect of radiotherapy delivery and include cardiac avoidance for non-small cell lung cancer, MRI in planning for radical lung radiotherapy and IGRT.

She reviews articles for a number of international organisations and has recently contributed to national radiotherapy guidelines.

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A day in the life of a... Language Therapist



Dr Heulwen Sheldrick has worked as an NHS Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) since 1990. She has held a variety of clinical, teaching, academic and leadership roles over her career and maintains a clinical role. Heulwen gained her PhD in 2007.

Heulwen’s primary areas of interest and experience are interviews,

observational techniques and documentary analysis. She has held roles in both university and NHS organisations and is currently the Principal SLT at The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre.

She has submitted many successful grant applications, conference papers and publications and reviews papers for publication. Heulwen provides support, guidance and supervision to students and staff (internal and external) and she is a specialist clinical adviser for the Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists (RCSLT).

Recently, her team has been successful in their application to host the SIPSMART 2 trial, exploring the role of prehabilitation and impact of exercises on swallowing, for patients with Head & Neck Cancer. The team will collaborate as Associate Principal Investigators with the support of the Liverpool Head & Neck Centre, and specifically Professor Jo Patterson at Liverpool University.

She said: “The SLT team in CCC is currently small, but it is one with big ambitions.”

Get Involved

www.clatterbridgecc.nhs.uk

Public and patient involvement is central to all activities at The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre, including research.

There are various ways that patients and the public can get involved in research, such as:

- Providing feedback on research documents e.g. information sheets, questionnaires
- Setting priority areas for research and identifying specific research questions
- Supporting the education and training of research students.

If you are interested in becoming a public or patient representative for research at Clatterbridge please contact Mary Jordan for more information by emailing:
mary.jordan3@nhs.net