



The Clatterbridge
Cancer Charity



DONOR UPDATE SUMMER 2021

My name is Dr Yngvar Floisand, Clinical Research Lead for Haemato-Oncology at The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre and it is my great pleasure to be writing for you, the donors to The Clatterbridge Cancer Charity.

First a confession, this time last year I had never set foot in Merseyside!

I was working as a consultant and research leader at the University Hospital in Oslo and had no intention of leaving Norway, so what would convince me to move 1,000km across the North Sea? The answer is of course challenge and opportunity. There is so much potential at Clatterbridge to improve patient's lives and to build a cutting-edge research programme, it really is so exciting to be here.

Before we look forward however we should look back to where we have come from and remember that Clatterbridge only started to incorporate the treatment of blood cancer patients as recently as 2017. The final stage of this integration was completed in Autumn 2020 when our patients in wards at The Royal Liverpool Hospital were moved the short distance to the fantastic new Clatterbridge Cancer Centre – Liverpool.



Thanks to your support, the progress in this time has been remarkable and the benefit for patients is huge – they now have much better access to the specialist care they need and if a hospital stay is necessary, which is often the case with blood cancer patients, then we have fantastic facilities to make their time with us as safe, pleasant and comfortable as possible.

In particular I would highlight the 15 new specialist transplant bedrooms at CCC. Stem Cell Transplant patients are incredibly vulnerable to infection during their treatment and can be with us for weeks and even months, so these rooms are so important to keep them safe – at present we perform around 40 Stem Cell Transplants a year but I think we could see this number double in the years to come.

The facilities are simply fantastic, an ideal environment to help us treat patients. But that is only part of the story. What really excited me about coming to Clatterbridge was the staff and their commitment to making this a world leading centre.



Clinical Trials (drugs being used for the first time in patients), this is great news and means that our patients will have access to these very latest medicines, produced by scientists from all over the world. The future for Clatterbridge patients will also hopefully involve the use of CAR-T therapy, a hugely exciting method of treatment where a patient's immune cells are taken from the body and reprogrammed to kill cancer cells before being returned to the patient – this is yet to be widely used by the NHS but when it is, our patients will be amongst those to benefit.

In talking to the team here I was struck by the opportunity we have to be a leading part of the research world, to bring more and more pioneering methods of treatment to Clatterbridge to help our patients here in the North West. There is a huge appetite and commitment to achieve this at Clatterbridge - this is the next step on our journey and I am sure that with your support we will be able to keep offering patients what they deserve - the best possible care and access to the latest scientific advances.

And this is already starting to pay dividends; we have just dedicated a number of our beds for use in Phase 1

And this is just the tip of the iceberg – we are in such a strong position to make progress for our patients in so many areas – not just through the introduction of new treatments but in constantly evolving our care for all patients, and that is the draw of Clatterbridge for me. As always, funding is limited within the NHS and that is why it is so exciting to have the support of The Charity and its donors.

I hope in time to meet with many of you in person to thank you for your contribution to our new hospital but also to our research programmes – until then, I shall be right here where I now belong!

The Patient's View

Pamela Armillei from the Isle of Man has been treated at CCC-Liverpool since being diagnosed earlier this year with Acute Myeloid Leukaemia.

"I had a routine blood test in April 2021. I had been feeling tired but thought nothing more of it. Within two hours I had a call from my GP who told me to pack a bag and go to A&E"

"Before I knew it, I was on the plane to Liverpool and being treated at the new cancer hospital. It has been a rollercoaster ride since, including developing a chest infection which led to me needing CPR. The hardest part has been not seeing my husband and family due to the pandemic, but I must say that the team here are fantastic and after 10 weeks I feel like they are my family!"

"The new hospital is just stunning, like a hotel really and to be somewhere so comfortable and even with the views towards Snowdonia has made things much easier for me – I'd like to say a big thank you to all

those who made donations towards the building. You are all wonderful!"

Pamela's treatment is ongoing but she has now been well enough to return to the Isle of Man



Chemo in the Community

Life on the road with our nurses

Ten years ago the idea of delivering chemotherapy to patients in their own homes would have seemed like an enormous challenge. But in 2015, with support from The Clatterbridge Cancer Charity, this is exactly what Clatterbridge started to do.

Based out of our Wirral site, the service has been so successful that in 2017 it was expanded to include visits to patients in their workplace too. Since then we have become national leaders in delivering care this way, winning several awards.

During the pandemic this service has been invaluable, and has expanded by 25%, reducing the need for a number of patients to travel to clinics and protecting them from the risk of contracting COVID. The Charity has supported Chemo in the Community since its inception and this year we will be using our funds to help replace the aging fleet of cars which are so crucial to its success. We thought you might like to meet the newest member of their team, Chloe Griffiths...

Chloe, how are you finding the job of being a community chemotherapy nurse?

I love it. I have been nursing for five years in an acute hospital but always knew that I wanted to work in oncology. Clatterbridge is famous for its care so when the chance came to join the team – I jumped at it, I'd never seen a job with so much emphasis on being such a big part of someone's care.

Can you talk us through a typical day for you?

We typically see around 6 patients a day each, calling at their homes or their workplace, and we can travel throughout Cheshire and Merseyside as well as parts of North Wales and Lancashire – we certainly cover the miles! There are a number of cancer treatments which are approved to be given out in the community – including injections, tablet and intravenous treatments. We can also take blood samples from patients and take the time to discuss their treatments and offer support.



And how do the patients respond?

This is the best part of the job, our patients absolute love the chemo at home service – it's often the first thing they tell us when we arrive at their door! For some it's convenience but for others who might be unable to physically make it to a day unit, our service is the difference between them accessing their cancer care or not. We get to know our patients really well and this helps with treatment as we are better able to recognise if something is wrong and quickly act on it. I think this service brings patients and their families a huge amount of comfort and that's amazing for us.

It sounds like you are really loving the role!

I really am! The team is so lovely and they were so supportive during my training. And the service is expanding too, with more nurses joining the team – so we are extremely grateful to The Charity for helping to equip the team with the tools we need. With your support we will keep on expanding and improving the service which has so much benefit for patients.

Thank you Chloe. The Charity is extremely pleased to be helping to fund some of the vehicles which keep this wonderful team on the road delivering such a pioneering and important service to hundreds of patients.

Charity research funding unlocks success in Lung Cancer

The Charity has an increasingly important role to play in helping to fund scientific research projects and roles at CCC. One such recent investment was to help fund a scientific project being conducted by Mark Warren, a Therapeutic Radiographer and Lecturer at The University of Liverpool.

Mark's specialism is in the planning and guidance of radiation treatments in lung cancer. When giving patients radiotherapy it is important to be as accurate as possible in targeting the tumour, causing minimal damage to the surrounding, healthy tissues. In lung cancer this is especially challenging as the patient's breathing causes the tumour to move. Aided by a £25,000 project grant from our Charity, Mark has been seeking to address this challenge:

"Lung cancer is a huge problem on Merseyside – we record 75% more cases than the UK average; treatments have improved significantly in recent years but we must strive to keep making them better

by reducing harmful effects such as heart disease and swallowing difficulties which are too common in our patients".

"The Charity grant brought together a team of medics, radiographers and physicists to set up a study of a new technique for rapid imaging of tumours during treatment. At present tumours are imaged before treatment using CT-scans, but we hope that new methods of MRI scanning will show the tumour and its movement more clearly and could therefore allow us to target the tumour more accurately, and reduce those side effects."

"The early experimental work has shown great promise and that initial investment of £25,000 by the Charity has now turned into a £290,000 (TBC) government grant to expand this research over the next three years. I'm hugely grateful to the donors for their support, without which this trial and the improvements for patients just wouldn't have been possible."

Donor Doves take flight

We are very pleased to offer you the chance to become part of one of the signature pieces of art at CCC-Liverpool.

Crafted from hand cut sheets of stainless steel and highlighted in gold-leaf, Primavera sits proudly in the Winter garden at the front of the building.

This wonderful sculpture was created by local artist Emma Rodgers who wanted to create a piece which would symbolise the hope and renewal of the patient journey but which would also give donors the chance to support the charity and to have their name, or that of a loved one, engraved as a tribute to their support on one of the stunning individual doves which adorn the tree.

The funds raised from the sponsorship of these doves will be used to support our expanding arts programme which seeks to improve our patient's treatment through engagement with the arts.



If you would like to sponsor one of our doves please contact paul.winter5@nhs.net
A short video made by Emma can be viewed by scanning this QR code with your smartphone camera:



Thank you once more for your generous support of The Clatterbridge Cancer Charity. If you would like to discuss any elements of your future support, please call 0151 5565566

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