



# Wales Cancer Bank

[www.walescancerbank.com](http://www.walescancerbank.com)

## NEWSLETTER



Number 1 September 2005

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

**Huw Edwards**  
BBC

## WELCOME

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

The newsletters will keep you up to date with the progress of the project and each edition will 'spotlight' on a particular area associated with the collection. In this first edition the four pilot collecting centres are highlighted with an introduction to the staff involved in each centre.

## THANK YOU

The Wales Cancer Bank (WCB) would like to say a big 'Thank You' to all patients who have donated to the project in its first few months of collection. Without you, there wouldn't be a project and your generosity will help provide the resource to help

cancer researchers nationwide in their quest to better understand the biological mechanisms involved in the development and spread of cancer and ultimately work towards more targeted diagnosis and treatments.

The WCB would also like to thank the staff in the surgery and pathology departments within the collecting hospitals, who are working with us to integrate the project into the NHS in Wales. A special thank you goes to the research and specialist nurses on the wards and in the clinics for their support and assistance in launching the WCB around Wales

## PATIENT POWER

Caroline Harry from Clydach in Swansea was approached by a WCB nurse and asked if she would consider donating tissue and blood to the project. She agreed and felt so strongly that as many people as possible should know about the project and patients should be encouraged to take part, that she wrote the following letter to the Swansea Evening Post.

"I would like to bring the Wales Cancer Bank to readers attention. At the moment I am undergoing treatment for breast cancer at Singleton Hospital. I was approached by a member of

staff there and asked if I would be willing for a blood sample and tissue from my operation to be taken and used towards cancer research.

I was more than happy to help out. The Wales Cancer Bank has been up and running for a year now. Sadly, I was only number 50 on its list.

Not many people with cancer come forward to offer help with this worthy cause. Close friends and family are also invited to take part, a small blood sample is used so that a comparison can be made with cancer patients.

I know that it is a very

delicate subject, some people may be too unwell to want to bother and I fully appreciate that.

But please give a thought to this. Without research, there can be no help for future cancer patients.

All it takes is a small blood sample and your signature on a form.

Easy! Here is the website address:  
[www.walescancerbank.com](http://www.walescancerbank.com) "

Printed with permission from Mrs Harry



## SPOTLIGHT ON: GETTING STARTED

The Wales Cancer Bank (WCB) was officially launched to the public in June 2004. A large group of patient representatives attended to hear the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Health and Social Services launch the project.

Professor Malcolm Mason, Professor of Clinical Oncology, Wales College of Medicine, Cardiff University is the Director of the Wales Cancer Bank. The administrative office is located in the Cardiff Medicentre on the University Hospital of Wales, Heath Park site and houses the Manager, Dr Alison Parry-



Professor Malcolm Mason with Sara Edwards and Nigel Walker, BBC Wales, at the launch

Jones and Miss Sarah Phillips, WCB Clerical officer.

The Principal Scientist, Dr Gerry Thomas and Mr Daniel Naeh, Database Manager are based in the South West Wales Cancer Institute in Swansea.

Four regional centres around Wales are involved in the pilot phase collection. Standard operating procedures are in place to ensure collection standardisation and all biomaterials will be subject to quality assurance procedures.

Scientists from around the UK and internationally will be able to access tissue, blood and the related processed materials, such as DNA and RNA to use in their research to help understand the mechanisms involved in the initiation and progression of cancer.

The project has ethical approval from the Wales Multi Centre Research Ethics Committee and the Bank will be fully compliant with the new regulations under the Human Tissue Act.

### BANGOR — YSBYTY GWYNEDD

The team in Bangor is led by Professor Nick Stuart, Consultant Medical Oncologist in Ysbyty Gwynedd.

Kim Davies (pictured) is the WCB nurse. Kim is in the final stages of an MSc in Health Studies. Bangor are currently collecting colorectal and ovarian samples in

Ysbyty Gwynedd.

Judith Appleton and Claire Smith in the pathology laboratory are organizing the sample preparation and logging the pathology details onto the database.



Kim Davies, WCB nurse

***'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.*

### CARDIFF — UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OF WALES AND LLANDOUGH HOSPITAL



Liz Penrose, WCB nurse

The team in Cardiff is led by Professor Julian Sampson, Clinical Professor of Medical Genetics in the Wales College of Medicine, Cardiff University.

Liz Penrose (pictured) is the WCB nurse and is coordinating the collection of colorectal tissue from Llandough Hospital and prostate and renal tissue from the University Hospital of Wales.

Claire Gammon is the WCB technician in Cardiff who freezes the tissue samples and collates the paraffin and blood samples. She is about to start an MSc in Biomedical Sciences. Claire is also responsible for collating samples for an MRC UK wide colorectal trial (COIN) for which the WCB is acting as host in Cardiff for sample testing and processing.

## HAVERFORDWEST—WITHYBUSH HOSPITAL

Dr Stephen Polacz, Consultant Histopathologist in Withybush Hospital is leading the team in Haverfordwest.

Alison Roch (pictured) is the WCB nurse and she has been consenting patients to collect breast and colorectal tumour tissue.

Congratulations go to Helen Lewis, who has just passed her exams to become a State Registered Biomedical Scientist. She looks after the freezing and collation of the biosamples in Withybush.



Alison Roch, WCB nurse

***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***

## SWANSEA—SINGLETON AND MORRISTON HOSPITALS



Suzanne Williams, WCB nurse

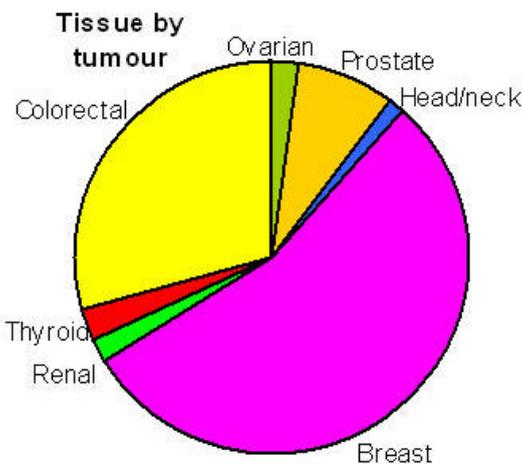
Dr Gerry Thomas, Senior Lecturer in Molecular Oncology in the University of Wales Swansea is leading the WCB team in Swansea.

Suzanne Williams (pictured) is the WCB nurse. The collection in Swansea initially concentrated on breast and thyroid tumours and is now expanding to include head and neck tumours as well.

Suzanne is about to start a BSc in Cancer Care.

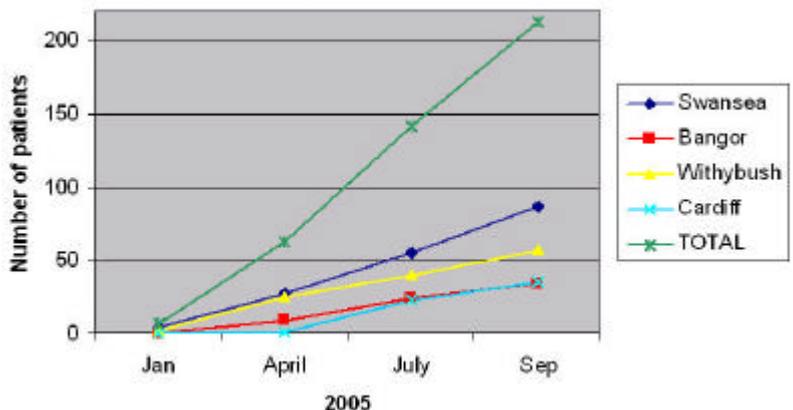
One of the staff in the pathology lab involved in processing samples for the WCB is Colleen Lloyd. She is responsible for freezing the tumour tissue and blood samples. Laboratory staff in Swansea will start to extract DNA and RNA from the tissue samples over the coming months.

## PATIENT RECRUITMENT



Initially 7 different tumour types are being collected from around Wales. Eventually all tumour types will be collected. The pie chart shows the composition of the current

Recruitment in the four pilot centres has shown a steady increase from the beginning of the project. The response from patients has been overwhelmingly positive. Registration of patient consent is via the Cancer Network Information System Cymru (CaNISC), an all Wales clinical database. This ensures confidentiality and the biological specimens are identified only by a randomized number. Researchers will, therefore, only have access to anonymised samples, thereby protecting patient identity.



# FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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

NCRI Conference  
Oct 2 – Oct 5, 2005  
International Convention  
Centre, Birmingham

RCN Welsh Board  
4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and  
Exhibition  
Oct 11 - Oct 12, 2005  
Conference Centre,  
Llandudno

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



*'Collaborating in Cancer Research'*

March 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> 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 to be posted on the conference website in September 2005 ([www.collaboratingincancerresearch.com](http://www.collaboratingincancerresearch.com)), including instructions for abstract submissions (deadline 30<sup>th</sup> November 2005), exhibition opportunities, draft scientific programme and registration procedure.

Director—  
Professor Malcolm Mason

Honorary Chairman—  
Dr Frank Wells

Principal Scientist—  
Dr Gerry Thomas

Manager—  
Dr Alison Parry-Jones

Database Manager—  
Mr Daniel Naeh



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

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