



Alison Fracella
research trust



Newsletter May 2018

TO ALL OUR FRIENDS: ONCE AGAIN THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH!!

A very warm welcome to our latest newsletter and a huge, huge thank you to everyone who continues to support our cause.



Everyone at the Trust would like to say a massive thank you to talented website designer Aaron Strudwick of STRUDWICK CODES

www.strudwickcodes.co.uk for his commitment and dedication in putting in hours of work into re-designing our website. We are all in complete agreement (including the Research Team at the Royal Marsden) that the new look and design is intuitive,

attractive and very user-friendly.

Sadly, Aaron lost his mother to cancer whilst a teenager. He has re-designed our website completely free of charge to us !! We are extremely grateful to him for all his hard work and attention to every detail, nothing has been too much trouble for him. Our website address is www.afrt.org.uk The clinical

information, as always, has been approved by clinicians at the Royal Marsden where, in April, the Trustees were able to present the Neuro-Oncology Research Team with a staggering sum of £8,600!! WOW!! Thank you all so very, very much!!

Your kindness and compassion in continuing to support us is helping to make a real difference to the furthering of research into a disease which claims the lives of more people under the age of 40 than any other cancer. Brain tumours really are cancer's last taboo. A huge thank you to you all for helping us to raise this money which, as always, will go to the "sharp end" of research into this most deadliest of cancers.



Trustees Rob and Sue Kettlewell, Head of Neuro Oncology Frank Saran, Research Fellow Marcus Tomasson and Trustee Graham Panton at our recent cheque presentation.



This certificate has
been awarded to

The Alison Fracella Research Trust

on

20 April 2018

for raising

£8,600

in support of



Registered Charity No. 1095197

Kathleen MacDonald
Philanthropy Manager at
the Royal Marsden says
in her letter of thanks:

"Dear Trustees,
Thank you so much for
your generous donation
of £8,600. Your gift will
support the incredible
research led by Dr
Frank Saran and Dr
Tomasson and the
Neuro-Oncology team
here at the Royal
Marsden.

It was wonderful to see
you. I hope you enjoyed
your visit and learning
more about the exciting
new Glioblastoma
research that they will

be working on over the coming year. This potentially life changing work would not be possible without your dedicated support. On behalf of Dr Saran, Dr Tomasson and everyone here we really appreciate all your hard work and efforts over the year to raise such a wonderful contribution to support the team. Thank you."

A report prepared for The Alison Fracella Research Trust

We are very grateful to The Alison Fracella Research Trust for your dedicated support of a Clinical Research Fellow at The Royal Marsden. Dr Frank Saran, Dr Liam Welsh and their current Fellow, Dr Marcus Tomasson, are playing a key role in the national and international effort to transform the treatment and care of patients with glioblastoma. We are delighted to update you on their exciting plans for the coming year, which are only possible thanks to your generosity.

Driving progress for the benefit of patients everywhere

The Royal Marsden was established as the world's first hospital dedicated to the treatment of cancer and research into its underlying causes. Today, we are a world-leading cancer centre, seeing more than 50,000 patients every year.

The Royal Marsden, together with our academic partner, The Institute of Cancer Research (ICR), is ranked third in the world based on the impact of our research,

placing us alongside the Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York.

Over the past 15 years, there has been a remarkable transformation in oncology. Scientific and clinical research led by The Royal Marsden and The ICR has contributed to greater understanding of the genetic makeup of cancer, which has improved outcomes for patients all over the world.

As a specialist centre, our expert teams see a huge volume of cancer patients every day, including treating those with some of the rarest and most challenging cancer cases. As the UK's biggest training centre for oncology, we share our expertise to improve standards of care nationally and internationally. It is only thanks to generosity like yours that The Royal Marsden can continue to drive forward advances in treatment and care, and train the next generation of oncologists to save more lives.

Changing the outlook for glioblastoma patients

As you know, glioblastoma is the most common and aggressive form of malignant primary brain tumour. Despite decades of research, the prognosis for patients diagnosed with glioblastoma remains poor. The current standard 'one-size-fits-all' treatment is not able to produce the same level of response in all patients because that not all cells in the tumour are the same. This means certain treatments will kill off some cancer cells but leave others, resulting in the remaining cancer cells becoming resistant to treatment and continuing to grow.

Research into the genetic makeup of cancer is helping to identify biological characteristics that inform how the cancer will respond to treatment. This insight is used to create personalised treatment plans that only include therapies which will be the most effective against a person's cancer. It also informs the design of advanced anti-cancer drugs that target weaknesses in cancer cells and result in fewer side effects for the patient.

Collaborating for better cancer treatment

Dr Marcus Tomasson joined Dr Saran's and Dr Welsh's team as a Clinical Research Fellow in January 2018. Dr Tomasson is a clinical oncologist from Umeå, in northern Sweden, with a passion and interest in developing clinical trials that will lead to new treatments for the benefit of glioblastoma patients worldwide. He received his PhD in Oncology from the University of Umeå in 2009 and has worked as a specialist in clinical-oncology since 2012.

I hope to contribute to the continuation of The Royal Marsden's excellent record of novel clinical trials for patients with brain and spinal tumours. This is an important task as there is an urgent and on-going need to improve the treatment for these patients. I am very grateful to The Alison Fracella Research Trust for providing the support to help make my Fellowship possible.

Dr Marcus Tomasson, Neuro-oncology Clinical Research Fellow 2018-19

Guided by Dr Saran and Dr Welsh, Dr Tomasson and the Neuro-Oncology team are participating in the projects to investigate more effective treatments and kinder care for glioblastoma patients. A few highlights of projects they will be working on over the coming year include:

Improving the quality of life for glioblastoma patients

It is standard practice in centres across the world to provide glioblastoma patients with a palliative course of radiotherapy over three weeks, in order to make their disease and symptoms more manageable. However, most of these patients are older, frail, and receiving end of life care. Therefore, it is even more important that they spend less time in hospital, and more time in the comfort of their own home with their loved ones. Dr Tomasson is reviewing records from patients who received palliative radiotherapy at The Royal Marsden over the past 20 years to evaluate the outcomes. With Dr Saran's help, they aim to publish their findings on the ideal course of treatment that will ensure patients receive the treatment they need, that also offers the very best quality of life.

Personalising treatment to eradicate cancer

Cancer treatment is usually determined by cancer type, location and size, amongst other traits. However, treatments prescribed from this information might not work for everyone because of the different genetic makeup of each individual's cancer. Thanks to breakthroughs made in recent years, doctors are now working towards creating personalised treatment plans by matching the genetic mutations present in a person's cancer with a combination of therapies that will be most effective for them.

The standard treatments for glioblastoma include surgery to remove as much of the brain tumour as possible, followed by a type of temozolomide (TMZ) chemotherapy alongside radiotherapy, a combination known as chemoradiation. These treatments can pause tumour growth temporarily, but in most cases, it will start to grow again. Around 50 per cent of glioblastoma patients have a large number of copies of a gene that makes a protein called epidermal growth factor (EGFR). Through the Intellence-1 trial, Dr Saran and Dr Tomasson aim to take advantage of this mutation by combining standard treatment with ABT-414, an anti-cancer drug that has been designed to target the EGFR mutation. ABT-414 attaches to the surface of the cancer cell and then releases a toxin that kills it. Early trials have shown very promising results, where the growth of glioblastoma has been slowed.

Intellence-1 will test the drug in the largest- ever group of glioblastoma patients in order to determine the efficacy of the drug as well as to understand more about the side effects. Over 600 patients have been recruited across 200 centres worldwide, and researchers are currently in the process of providing patients with the new treatment combination.

Checkmate 548: Harnessing the potential of the body's own immune system

The immune system is a powerful defence against threats to the body. However, cancer can hide by taking advantage of the inherent 'brakes' that stop this system from attacking healthy cells. Immunotherapy drugs work by stimulating the body's immune system so it can identify and attack cancer cells. We are at the forefront of research trialling immunotherapies and have already seen promising results for patients with kidney, bladder, head and neck cancer, and melanoma.

Patients with methylated glioblastoma (MGMT) have an altered gene that is responsible for repairing the DNA in cells. Unfortunately, this alteration helps tumour cells repair themselves, thus making TMZ less effective. Nivolumab is an immunotherapy drug that targets the mutated MGMT gene. It has already been approved for use against advanced melanoma, non-small-cell lung cancer, and kidney cancer. The Checkmate 548 study is testing if nivolumab can enhance the effectiveness of standard TMZ and radiotherapy for patients with MGMT. The international group of centres running this trial are aiming to recruit a total of 693 patients worldwide.

Rioglio: Using viruses to revolutionise cancer treatment

Viruses designed to target and kill cancer cells, or oncolytic virotherapy, is a rapidly advancing field. Many promising new drugs are being tested in clinical trials for a wide variety of cancer types, and the first oncolytic virus has been licensed for the treatment of melanoma. Viruses take advantage of cells to create more viruses; thus the modified virus seeks out and spreads to all the cancer cells. Furthermore, the virus naturally stimulates the body's immune system to recognise the cancer cells as a threat that needs to be eradicated. Once the immune system has a blueprint of the cancer cells, it will recognise and attack them if they regrow. This should prevent the cancer from returning and becoming life-threatening. Importantly, initial trials show that a treatment using modified viruses does not cause any adverse side effects, adding to evidence that it should be safe to use with patients in the clinic. The Rioglio trial is testing if Riovirus can be added to standard treatment in order to establish a radically more effective and kinder treatment for glioblastoma patients. Dr Tomasson and the Neuro-Oncology Team hope to start recruiting patients to participate in this groundbreaking trial in June 2018 and we look forward to reporting on his progress in due course.

Thank you for your support of our world-leading research

As a specialist cancer hospital with an international reputation, we have a responsibility to innovate and ensure that we continue to drive forward advances in treatment to give glioblastoma patients a greater chance of being cured. Great medical research relies on the dedication and brilliance of the people behind it. Significant expertise and resources are required to efficiently design, set up, open, and run complicated clinical trials to a standard that provides both excellent patient care and data of a robust enough quality to meet national and international regulatory requirements. Clinical Research Fellows, like Dr Tomasson, are essential to The Royal Marsden's ability to deliver an ambitious research programme, provide holistic patient care, and help patients cope with their disease and their treatment. Dr Saran, Dr Welsh, and Dr Tomasson aim to translate the benefits from the latest advances in anti-cancer drugs into new, more effective treatments with fewer side effects, thereby improving survival and giving hope to patients who previously had none. Their work is a vital part of transforming the lives of glioblastoma patients world-wide and would not be possible without support from people like you who are passionate about making a difference and investing in a better future. On behalf of Dr Saran, Dr Welsh, Dr Tomasson, the Neuro-Oncology Team and everyone at The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, thank you.

FUND RAISING ~ A CHARITY OPEN DAY

We are so very grateful to two wonderful people Mandy Painting and her daughter Vicki Strudwick of The Beauty Gallery at Lavenham for organising a special open event throughout the day and evening on the 31st October with all ticket sales plus 5% of sales being donated

directly to the Trust. Mandy and Vicki worked tirelessly through the day and evening giving professional Dermalogica skin care demonstrations to appreciative audiences. After a very successful event an amazing £400 was



raised for the Trust. Thank you Mandy and Vicki so very much.



A big thank you also to Julie Thorn from Stour Valley Apiaries for donating some of her delicious Lavenham and Suffolk honey for sale at the event with all monies raised going to the Trust.

Many congratulations to the Beauty Gallery on coming 1st in the Best of Sudbury Business Awards and for coming 2nd of all listed beauticians **NATIONALLY!!** Two fantastic and well deserved accolades for Mandy and Vicki.

WOW!! WHAT A SWELL PARTY IT WAS !!



Our very own lovely lady Agnes was 90 in July and so very generously asked for donations to Alison's trust in lieu of birthday presents. It was a wonderful party with afternoon tea, lots of fun and laughter and with Agnes the belle of the ball. The Ansell Centre looked

fantastic decorated with colourful bunting, balloons and cards. She was deservedly spoilt by her lovely family (4 children, 8 grandchildren, 10 great grandchildren and 2 great, great grandchildren) and many friends. Everyone had a great afternoon and Agnes was showered with flowers and gifts and also with many donations for the Trust. Thank you so much for your kindness Agnes, your support is very much appreciated.

59 CLUB LOTTERY

Our monthly lottery goes from strength to strength and continues to raise a considerable amount for us each year being a valuable source of funding. Our very grateful thanks to everyone who continues to support us through having a ticket (subs due again very soon!) and to the very kind people who have donated their winnings back to the Trust. Special thanks to our Trustees Sue and Roy Death who work so hard to sell tickets for us for the lottery.

BACK BY SPECIAL DEMAND~ OUR 6th QUIZ NIGHT!!

The Winning Team



A huge thank you to everyone who came along to the Ansell Centre on Saturday 25th November to give us such fantastic support at our 6th Quiz Night. The Centre was packed for what has become an annual event, we had 20 teams! We could not have squeezed anyone



else in! Everyone said what a great evening it was with lots of fun and laughter.

The chocolate tasting round was an especially big hit as was the Ploughman's Supper.



(The knowledge displayed about National flags was quite something!)

On the night, after all expenses, we raised a fantastic £1,242 which we have divided between our two charities. Almost every penny raised went towards the work we are supporting as our charities have minimal administration costs. The Brendan Oakes Trust



supports teenagers facing cancer and the Alison Fracella Research Trust is helping to fund research into brain cancer, especially in young people, at the Royal Marsden Hospital. A big thank you to Avis Printers for printing our tickets and for selling them for us in the shop. Special thanks to Sue and Roy, to Kathy, Graham and to David for all their hard work. Many thanks also to the people who were so generous in their donations of the many fantastic raffle prizes too numerous to mention. A huge thank you to Orwell Lady Cruises, to Hadleigh Tyres, to The Copper Kettle at Kersey Mill, to the Barber Stop, to Coes, to Mercedes Benz, to the Beauty Gallery at Lavenham and to Paul and Marion of "Wakey Wakey".



It would be fantastic to see everyone again next year! Please save the date- Saturday 24th November 2018! Last but by no means least a huge thank you for all the very generous donations we have received during the year. Every penny of the money raised goes towards research into Glioblastoma at the Royal Marsden. Thank you all so very much for your continued support. We really appreciate everything you are doing to help our cause.

Future Events: Helen Golland of Angel Delights Outside Catering is very kindly holding a Charity Cream Tea event for the Trust on Sunday 15th July 2018 3-5pm in the Ansell Centre Hadleigh. Helen's Cream Teas are always delicious and the event is always well supported and a very enjoyable afternoon. Tickets priced at £6 available from Sue Kettlewell 01473 827206 or from Sue Death 01473 823938 or from Avis Newsagents.