



Eye Trust Newsletter

In and around Cambridge Ophthalmology

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OPENING OF NEW OUTPATIENT UNIT

Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Trust has been awarded status as the East of England's Major Trauma Centre and, with one of Europe's largest intensive care units, will be providing world class emergency medical care to severely injured patients from throughout the East of England. This has necessitated expansion of the A&E department into the Eye Department's Clinic 14 where medical ophthalmology,

plastic and glaucoma outpatients are currently seen.

Capitalizing on the opportunities afforded by this reshuffle, Addenbrooke's has designed a new outpatient department at the very front of the hospital. The unit will be directly next to eye surgical theatres in the Cambridge Eye unit. Patients with limited sight will be able to be dropped off immediately outside the

clinic or walk 30 metres from the bus stop. Along with improved facilities and space, staff will benefit too from working in closer proximity to each other and the improved team working and support which it will ensure.

The unit is due to open at the beginning of March and you may well be reading this newsletter in our very new unit!



Clinic 14 at Addenbrooke's will be replaced with a new eye outpatient department (grey arrow) located next to the eye theatres (purple arrow).

Cambridge University Hospital awarded National Status for Stickler Disease

Stickler syndrome is a genetic disease causing cleft lip, deafness and joint problems. Patients can also develop giant retinal tears and detachments—often causing blindness in children. In the NHS, certain services are considered either so

rare, costly, or require such expertise that local primary care trust funding cannot support a service. A national commissioning group exists at the Department of Health to award central funding for establishment of national centres for their treatment or diagnosis. Since April 2011, Adden-

brooke's has been awarded status as a national Stickler Syndrome Diagnostic Centre. The service will be reviewed after five years but is expected to see 104 new patients & 770 follow up attendances per year. More than 97 genetic tests will also be run per year for Type 1 and 2 disease. The service will be headed by our lead Vitreo-retinal surgeon Martin Snead.



Mr Martin Snead: world expert in Stickler's



Ms Louise Allen is a paediatric eye specialist and Associate Lecturer at the University of Cambridge

FOCUS ON RESEARCH: PAEDIATRICS

Miss Louise Allen is a specialist eye surgeon and responsible for the care of children with eye problems. Her practice involves dealing with patients ranging from premature babies to great-grandparents. One part of an eye exam involves testing the visual field – an estimate of how much peripheral vision a person has. Whilst an adult can be convinced to spend 20 minutes with their head clamped in a special visual field device with flashing lights, young children, - and particularly those with learning difficulties- find this

impossible. Using her ingenuity, Miss Allen recently designed a new test for children. It involves watching a small cartoon video centrally on a big black screen. Children fixate on this, when suddenly another cartoon starts playing far to the left or right or above or below on the same screen. A child with good peripheral vision will notice and switch their gaze, whilst someone with damaged vision might not see it. The device has been patented and proved of great interest to the local Cambridge enterprise com-

munity who rightly see this as an innovative, simple and easy to manufacture tool for helping eye doctors better test children's vision. It is our hope that soon this device, which has proved popular with children here already, will be used the world over and that Addenbrooke's will once again have contributed something very useful to the global ophthalmic community. In addition to field testing, Miss Allen is also in the process of developing other eye tests for our younger patients so stay tuned for further updates.

10% of people over 80 suffer with glaucoma-related loss of vision. Once lost, the sight cannot be restored – at least at the moment!

FOCUS ON RESEARCH: GLAUCOMA

Professor Martin heads a talented group of basic and clinical researchers to understand better how nerves supplying the eye are damaged in glaucoma, a condition more common than diabetes and which can lead to blindness if left untreated. Often progressing slowly



Prof Keith Martin's research merited a major international prize last year

over decades, this 'silent disease' remains the leading cause of irreversible blindness worldwide. Keith's team aim to find ways to protect retinal nerve cells from damage and death. They are also working to restore lost retinal cells with the hope of reversing

the blindness glaucoma can cause. The results of stem cell, drug and gene therapy work emerging from Keith's lab have been so promising that he was last year awarded an international prize given to a researcher under the age of 50 whose research has the greatest potential to lead to major breakthroughs in the treatment of eye disease.



FOCUS ON RESEARCH: TRAINEES & FELLOWS

The NHS recently created its National Institute for Health Research to fund medical science in the NHS. Aimed at rivaling the NIH in the USA, the body seeks to formally fund research conducted in the NHS to benefit our patients – something which was previously done on a more ad hoc basis and without proper controls on research productivity. Last year Prof Keith Martin applied and won a prestigious NIHR designation for Addenbrooke's to train

Academic Clinicians in Ophthalmology. This three year programme aims to free up time for research for junior clinicians so that they can gain early laboratory experience in vision research and apply for independent research funding with the help of a senior mentor. The department has also recruited a number of very senior trainees to Addenbrooke's including Ms Humma Shahid from Oxford who is leading a study into Stickler's disease as well as Andrew

White, an Australian glaucoma consultant working with Prof Martin. We are also about to welcome a new researcher to work in Mr Snead's laboratory as well as a senior trainees with expertise in corneal research to work with Mr Rajan. A paediatric specialist will be joining Ms Allen's team as well as Drs Steve Byard and Anjana Haridas, two plastic surgeons who are receiving specialist training from our Plastic Consultants Drs René & Woodruff.

CAMBRIDGE OPHTHALMOLOGICAL SYMPOSIA

For the past 41 years, Cambridge has hosted an annual eye symposium attracting top international experts to discuss and debate the latest developments in clinical eye research. Each year a different area of disease becomes the focus and in September 2011, Prof John Dart of Moorfields Eye Hospital chaired a very successful meeting on ocular infection. Speakers travelled from San Francisco, Boston,

Florida, Japan, France, India, Australia and Africa for the two-day residential meeting at St John's College. Data contrasting American and British best practice in treating eye infections identified mutual lessons each country could learn from the other. Professor Dart also presented data on the injection of antibiotic into the eye during cataract surgery and his recommendations have already been widely

adopted. For the 2012 symposium, Professor Bertil Damato, a cancer specialist from Liverpool has been elected as chairman. He will be leading discussions aimed at furthering our understanding of the pathophysiology of eye tumors and how the latest research developments can be applied clinically to help patients diagnosed with cancer.



Professor Bertil Damato, Eye Cancer Specialist from Liverpool University, will chair the 2012 meeting

Cambridge Ophthalmological Symposium 2012 Cancer and the Eye



FOCUS ON RESEARCH: CORNEAL DISEASE

Two Addenbrooke's Consultants, Prof Buckley and Prof Rajan, recently won an award for the developmental of a tool to refine and improve corneal transplant surgery. Since the first corneal transplant, by Austrian Eduard Zirm in 1905, corneal surgeons have attempted to improve on the technique. A recent review at Addenbrooke's showed that surgeon Mr Kerr-Muir and Dr Paul Meyer had together achieved astonishingly good results by

using ciclosporin A—an immunosuppressant aimed at preventing donor cornea rejection. Following on from this success, Mr Rajan has introduced a new form of corneal transplantation to Addenbrooke's in which only a part of the cornea is transplanted rather than a full-thickness "button". However creating such a part-thickness graft can be difficult and whilst thinner grafts are better, creating them also runs the risk of creating holes through the

material rendering it unusable. The margin for error is less than one fifth of a millimeter. Mr Rajan and Prof Buckley have developed a novel device for slightly drying the donor cornea before thinning it, and this in turn has enabled them to achieve outstandingly thin and reproducible cornea sections. The commercial potential is significant and both surgeons were recently awarded an NHS Eastern Region Health enterprise award for this work.



Prof Madhavan Rajan – Addenbrooke's Lead Corneal Surgeon & recent prize winner

THE CAMBRIDGE EYE TRUST

Founded in 1973, the Cambridge Eye Trust is an independent charity set up in memory of Dr Marjorie Perrers-Taylor, a diligent ophthalmologist who worked in the Cambridge area and, during the second world war, ran the eye department single-handedly whilst the two consultants were called up for military service. Well-liked by her patients, a fund was created after she died to support research into eye disease in Cambridge and so the first

Cambridge Ophthalmological Symposium was born and which are now in their 42nd iteration. The trust works to promote research in Cambridge and recently succeeded in creating the University of Cambridge's first professorship of Ophthalmology with the appointment of Keith Martin. The six trustees include Prof Tony Moore—England's most senior eye specialist, as well as the medical director of Moorfield's Dr Declan Flanagan, both of

whom were previously Addenbrooke's Consultants. The trustees meet to promote education and to sponsor research projects of local, national and international importance. It also aims to educate the public about eye disease and has recently decided to invest in a number of TV screens for the patient waiting areas to educate patients about eye disease and treatments



Marjorie Perrers-Taylor (above) & Prof Tony Moore (below)





Lord Jeffrey Archer helped to auction off a variety of prizes to help fund Professor Keith Martin's research into repairing damaged nerves.

We're all over the web too!
cambridgeyetrust.org.uk
cambridge-symposium.org
vitreoretinalservice.org



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THE 800 DINNER & CHARITY AUCTION

The Cambridge Eye Trust joined forces with the Cambridge 800 Committee and Dr Mary Archer to host a charitable dinner at St Johns College this past October. This annual fixture helps to raise awareness of and funds towards eye research. This year over £13,000 were raised through a charity auction led by the indomitable Jeffrey Archer. On offer were a variety of auction items which included local art, dresses, a haircut & make-up session, garden visits, riding in a classic 1935 Lagonda car as well as two week vacations in Bali, Scotland, Norfolk and the French Alps as well as



The dinner was hosted at St John's

portraits to be drawn by top British artists. There were also many guided tours offered up, such as of Lord & Lady Fairhaven's private gardens, the University Astronomy Department's observatory and the entire of East of England by Cessna airplane to list but a few All auctioned items had been generously

donated by many of those attending. Lord Archer himself kindly donated a signed leather bound copy of his collected works. The event was a success and it is hoped that those with an interest in helping eye research in Cambridge may be inspired to donate for auction a week or two in their summer home or provide a business good or service to help raise funds. This year the funds were used to purchase an advanced retinal imaging system for Prof Martin's lab which will help his team to evaluate therapeutic efficacy of neuroprotective drugs.

WANT TO HELP CAMBRIDGE EYE RESEARCH?

Having achieved our first goal with the appointment of Keith Martin as the University of Cambridge's first Professor of Ophthalmology we are now embarking on our second: to establish a first class research institute in Cambridge to harness the University's, Cancer Research UK as well as the MRC's world class basic research environment on campus and translate these discoveries into treatments for patients afflicted with eye diseases. With a solid base established in glaucoma research we wish to expand into better understanding diabetic eye disease, age-related macular degeneration and improving our treatment of ocular infections and autoimmune conditions affecting the eye. As an example— although our campus has some of the world's top complementologists and ARMD has been shown to be associated with a malfunction of these immune proteins we have not yet lead the way in translating this knowledge into therapy. With its strong basic science tradition, talented graduate and undergraduate community, as well as close collaborations with the pharmaceutical industry, Cambridge is in a unique position to develop and trial innovative new therapies. Your donations can help us begin to harness this potential and establish a strong university department of Ophthalmology to attract the best faculty and research projects.

Yes I want to help support research to cure blindness!

Please Tick

I can help by donating private or corporate goods or services for the charity auction next October and my contact details are:

I can help by giving a donation and enclose a cheque made out to the Cambridge Eye Trust

I am a UK Taxpayer and authorize you to claim gift aid on my behalf (this increases the value of your donation by 25% at no cost to you)

Please return this part to the Cambridge Eye Trust at our address in Clerk Maxwell Rd.

If you wish to sponsor a particular project or think that you, or someone you know might wish to donate something to help us greatly expand our research, or have another idea of how you can help, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Peter Watson, Dr Jonathan Roos or Professor Keith Martin via the e-mail addresses on the left.