

Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund



Dr Tanja Crnogorac-Jurcevic

Early diagnostic test heads towards clinical study

Following global headlines in 2015, the PCRF-funded research with potential to be the world's first test to detect early-stage pancreatic cancer has reached a crucial stage.

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) has funded lead researcher, Dr Tanja Crnogorac-Jurcevic, for six months, to determine whether sufficient patient numbers could be recruited to a full clinical study.

This is a critical step towards Tanja's urine test being formally evaluated for its ability to reliably and accurately detect pancreatic cancer in its earliest stages. A successful clinical study could have global impact – underpinning the commercial development of a test that could mean many thousands more patients having potentially curative surgery.

During this 'pilot' period, 200 people will be asked for urine samples to test. These will include patients whose GP suspects pancreatic cancer, who are referred to Tanja's co-researcher Prof Steve Pereira for current standard investigative procedures – such as an endoscopy or CT scan – at University College London Hospital or the Royal Free Hospital.

"A successful clinical study could have global impact"

People in higher risk groups, such as those with a family history of pancreatic cancer, will also be asked to donate urine. This group includes those being monitored through the EUROPAC registry, who have regular CT scans because of their increased risk of developing the disease.

Tanja, based at Barts Cancer Institute at Queen Mary University of London, is currently refining the diagnostic test to make it as accurate and



Why is this research so important?

Earlier diagnosis is crucial to beating pancreatic cancer. Patients diagnosed early enough may be able to have surgery to remove the tumour – currently the only potential cure. For patients diagnosed too late for surgery, the earlier treatment can start, the better.

A great deal of effort is directed at symptom awareness and this will undoubtedly help – but in many cases, symptoms only start to present when the cancer is already advanced.

Tanja's urine test has the potential to detect pancreatic cancer in its very early stages (stage 1 or stage 2) before symptoms even start to appear. This is unprecedented.

Initially, it could mean a simple, effective way to monitor those people in known 'higher risk' groups. In the future, this group could be widened as research uncovers further genetic and lifestyle factors that may increase the risk of developing the disease.

It could also help to prevent the often-seen delays in diagnosis for those presenting with symptoms, allowing patients to start treatment much sooner. New treatments and ways to make existing treatments more effective are being developed all the time and PCRF is at the forefront of many of these. If we can combine an early diagnostic test with these new treatment options, we will finally start to see more people surviving this disease.

Maggie Blanks, PCRF Founder

reliable as possible. PCRF has provided further funding to help in this regard (see p2).

Tanja hopes to submit a full grant application to NIHR by the end of 2017. If funded, she would expect to have interim clinical study results within 18-24 months, and final results after a further 24 months.

PCRF's CEO, Maggie Blanks, says: "We're so proud to have funded this research from the laboratory to this stage. I know we're not quite there yet, but it's hard not to get excited!"

2017's new cutting edge projects

Five research projects with potential to make a real difference to tackling pancreatic cancer have been awarded PCRF grants, worth over £800k in total.



Professor Alex Breeze
University of Leeds (L)
Professor Mike Waring
Newcastle University (R)

This project aims to develop drugs to switch off abnormal signals between two proteins called SOS and Ras, which cause pancreatic tumours to grow unchecked. Ras is very difficult to target with drugs, so the team are developing ways to block SOS instead.



Professor John Callan
Ulster University

Cancer treatments such as radiotherapy need a good supply of oxygen to be effective. John's team uses oxygen-loaded microbubbles, combined with harmless ultrasound, to deliver oxygen and chemotherapy drugs directly to pancreatic tumours. They hope to show this approach will

enhance chemotherapy and radiotherapy-based treatments and improve patient survival.



Dr Tanja Crnogorac-Jurcevic
Barts Cancer Institute, Queen Mary University of London

Tanja's new grant will enable her to further validate urine biomarkers (potentially incorporating further molecules called microRNAs) and develop a combined 'risk score' for each biomarker in a panel – a step which is crucial for interpreting clinical study data and without which her clinical study cannot take place (see p1).



Professor John Marshall
Barts Cancer Institute, Queen Mary University of London

John's previous PCRF-funded work looked at the molecule

alpha-v beta-6 ($\alpha\text{V}\beta\text{6}$), found on the surface of pancreatic cancer cells. He's developed a drug that attaches to $\alpha\text{V}\beta\text{6}$ and is armed with a potent natural poison to kill the cancer cells. John will test the drug with different types of pancreatic cancer, before taking it to a clinical trial.



Dr Sarah McClelland
Barts Cancer Institute, Queen Mary University of London

Pancreatic cancer cells have a defect that sees some of their genetic material being deleted or rearranged as they divide. This 'genetic chaos' makes tumours very hard to treat. Sarah will analyse possible causes to see whether efforts to limit this defect before chemotherapy will improve patients' response to treatment.

PCRF joins ranks of UK's major cancer research funders

PCRF has joined the National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI), a partnership of the UK's major cancer research funders.

NCRI includes both charity and government organisations such as Cancer Research UK and the Medical Research Council and members must fund research worth at least £1 million per year. PCRF is the only member

whose sole focus is pancreatic cancer.

NCRI's mission is to bring together all the key players in cancer research in the UK to identify where research is most needed, to facilitate collaboration and to address gaps and challenges in research.



PHOTO CALL

In the past we've invited you to send us a photo of your family member or friend whose death has inspired you to support PCRF so that we can create beautiful and powerful promotional materials.

We're still building our collection, so if you haven't sent a photo do consider sending one. We need a colour photo at least 1MB in size, ideally a head shot (or one that can be cropped).

You can upload it easily via: www.pcrf.org.uk/intribute

Thank you!

PCRF's 'critical contribution' to personalised medicine initiative

Pioneering techniques and knowledge generated by a PCRF project are being used in an exciting personalised medicine initiative for pancreatic cancer patients, led by Prof Andrew Biankin from the University of Glasgow.

The PRECISION Panc programme was launched in March 2017, with £10m investment from Cancer Research UK. It aims to transform the treatment of pancreatic cancer patients and fast-track the development of new therapies by matching individual patients with the most suitable new therapies being trialled, based on the 'molecular profile' of their tumour.

"We're proud that what we achieved during the PCRF project will now be used to help many more patients than we originally thought possible." Dr Ged Brady

A molecular profile reveals which gene mutations are present in the tumour. These are usually produced by analysing – or genetically sequencing – tissue samples taken via traditional biopsy procedures.

PRECISION Panc researchers will also use blood samples to carry out 'liquid biopsies'

to produce molecular profiles. Liquid biopsies can capture and sequence the tiny amounts of genetic material – DNA – that the tumour sheds into the patient's bloodstream, to help guide the selection of experimental medicines and monitor the tumour's response. Using a blood sample also offers patients a simpler alternative to the difficult and sometimes painful tissue biopsy procedure.

The blood biomarker approaches being used in the PRECISION Panc initiative were developed in a PCRF research project funded in 2012, led by Professor Caroline Dive and Dr Ged Brady at the CRUK Manchester Institute, together with Professor Juan Valle at the Christie NHS Foundation Trust.

"What we learned from the PCRF project was critical in our inclusion in PRECISION Panc and the success of the funding application to CRUK," says Dr Brady.



A huge thank you to all our supporters who made the past year such a successful one with their fundraising. Here are just a few of these wonderful events.

Why I support PCRF

Whilst on holiday in South America in 2009, my husband Chris began to feel unwell. He didn't feel hungry and didn't even want a glass of wine to celebrate his 59th birthday. After four months of investigations, by which time he was unable to eat and was constantly vomiting, he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

Four courses of chemotherapy increased his life expectancy and allowed him to see our daughter Sarah become engaged to James and take part in discussing their wedding plans. He also saw our son Richard obtain his MSc. Bottles from his wine cellar were labelled so that they could be given to friends after his death for them to enjoy and toast his memory.

Chris died within six months of diagnosis before he reached his 60th birthday.



Audrey Brown with husband Chris

Since his death we have as a family been supporting PCRF by raising funds and trying to raise awareness of the poor prognosis for pancreatic cancer.

Between us, we have bungee jumped, done a half marathon, sold homemade jams, pickles and craft items, run Wine Call my Bluff evenings and Cheese and Wine evenings. I am sure

Supporter Audrey Brown talks about her involvement with the charity

Chris would approve of the wine-related events as he knew a lot about wine and could tell where a wine came from just by the nose and taste. Through these events we have come to terms with the loss of a much loved husband and father. We have raised over £5,000 and hopefully made others aware of the disease.

Having treated cancer patients for over 30 years as a radiographer, I know that cancers which were incurable when I was a student now have a very good cure rate. We hope that the funds raised for PCRF help the research into earlier diagnosis and improved treatments, so that people diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in the future have a much better chance of survival.

Walk for Mandy goes global

2017 saw a local fundraising walk in Norfolk held in memory of Mandy Swift turn into a global phenomenon, raising over £18,000 for PCRF.

Mandy died in September 2016, just five weeks after she was diagnosed. The 11-mile Walk for Mandy was organised by Mandy's husband, Robin, and family friend, Nick Clare. Word spread, and friends and colleagues around the world who couldn't attend organised their own events for Mandy instead.

Twenty-six events took place across 9 UK counties and spanned 14 countries as far afield as USA, Madagascar, the Cayman Islands, Thailand, Brazil, Nepal and the West Indies. In total over 280 people walked, ran, skied, roller-skated and swam in a joyful tribute to their friend.



SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL



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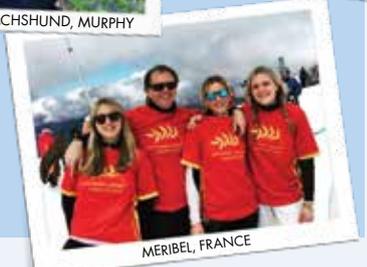
MANDY WITH DACHSHUND, MURPHY



CORNWALL



HOLKHAM BEACH, NORFOLK



MERIBEL, FRANCE

Fantastic five swim the Channel

In a phenomenal display of strength and sheer determination, PCRF supporters completed two successful Channel swims in two months – a relay swim and a solo crossing – raising a total of over £8,500.

In August 2016 Northwood estate agents Operations Manager Greg Wood, alongside friends Jason Ransley, Paul Hancock and Stuart Parris, set off for the French coast at midnight. Despite being stung all over by shoals of

jellyfish, they reached Cape Gris Nez in 9hrs 27m – confirmed as the fastest relay time of the year. Says Greg: "We're very proud of what we did. It was tough, but we'd do it again in a heartbeat."

The following month, in tribute to her late mother, June, who died of pancreatic cancer in 2001, Christine Bradley from North Yorkshire achieved a childhood ambition and completed her solo crossing in just under 19hrs, after two years of hard training and a 3am start.

Left (L-R): Jason, Stuart, Paul and Greg
Right: Christine Bradley

"I'm a slow, steady swimmer, so I knew it was going to be a long swim," she says. After more than 18hrs in the water, she nearly gave up, but her pilot talked her round. "He told me I had less than half an hour to swim, and I would kick myself for the rest of my life if I didn't finish!"



PCRF's pint-sized heroes

We love telling you about our younger supporters, who are a constant source of inspiration.

While his dad Paul completed the Paris Marathon, **Isaac Sear (8)** from Essex ran the 2.2km children's event, called the 'Marathon'. Their fundraising was on behalf of Paul's friend Adrian Fowler, who was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2016. Isaac added more than £350 to the 'Team Fowler' total, with his sponsorship plus bake sales at his school and Cub Scout group (earning him a well-deserved Community Impact badge too!)

Olivia Payne (9) from Grantham raised over £400 for PCRF by completing the Belvoir Challenge – an off road 15-mile run – in tribute to her grandad Tim, who died of pancreatic cancer in 2012. Olivia finished in just over 5 hours. Her Mum Louise, said: "We are unbelievably proud of Olivia. We had no doubt she'd complete the distance, even though the conditions were really tough on the day. She never complained once and wore her PCRF T-shirt with pride."



Lesley steps out in style

Lesley Parham, from Shepton Mallet in Somerset, took on her own version of the 'Walk all over Cancer' challenge by walking 10,000 steps every day throughout June.

Her mammoth 30-day fundraiser was a tribute to her best friend of 50 years, Gwen Robinson, who died of pancreatic cancer in March. Lesley not only smashed her target to raise £1,800, she completed over 327,000 steps in total, covering some 155 miles. "It was a real privilege to be Gwen's friend," said

Lesley. "If this goes towards helping just one person it will have been worth it."



CELEB SUPPORT

You may have seen her on TV as a guest on Have I Got News For You or QI, but you may not know that comedian, actress and writer Cariad Lloyd – whose father died of pancreatic cancer when she was a teenager – has been supporting PCRF in her spare time too. As well as taking part in BBC1's Pointless Celebrities on behalf of PCRF recently

(broadcast date to be confirmed), she donated the takings from a special performance of the riotously funny 'Austenacious' plays, which are entirely improvised comedies in the style of Jane Austen, performed in full Regency costume. Cariad also hosts the thoughtful Griefcast podcast series, interviewing fellow comedians about their own experience of grief after the death of a loved one.

Wonderful Welsh support

After losing both her mother and husband to pancreatic cancer, Lynda Brown chose PCRF as her Charity of the Year during her 12-month tenure as Chairman of District 15 of The Association of Inner Wheel Clubs in Great Britain and Ireland.

The 24 Inner Wheel clubs in District 15, which cover South Wales, raised £6,000 over the year. Lynda presented the cheque to Dr Riaz Janoo, representing PCRF. Riaz is a postdoctoral researcher working on an exciting PCRF-funded project at Swansea University. The project is testing a drug compound which latches onto a protein found only on the surface of pancreatic cancer cells, causing the cancer cells to burst open and die.

Lynda said: "Dr Janoo gave a very interesting talk, and the video showing the drug attacking the cancer cells was very exciting. People are still talking about it!"



Dr Riaz Janoo and Lynda Brown

I'd like to donate to PCRF

We value all donations to fund vital research

Please complete this form on both sides in block capitals and return to:

Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund
P. O. Box 47432, London N21 1XP

Please make cheques payable to Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund

Name
Address
Postcode
Telephone
Email

Keeping in contact via email helps us to keep costs down.

Pedal power in Northern Ireland

Two cycling challenges raised £10,000 for PCRF in tribute to Damian Lennon, a lifelong member of the Aghaderg Gaelic Football Club & Ballyvarley Hurling Club in County Down, who died in July 2016. As well as playing and managing teams at the Club, Damian served on committees at both Club and county level.

"I cannot recall a time meeting Damian when he hadn't a smile on his face and a story to tell," says

Club Chairman, Donal Moran. "The cycle challenge celebrated his love of sport, his love of community and his fun-loving attitude to life."

The Damian Lennon HQ Challenge stretched some 80 miles from Croke Park stadium in Dublin to Aghaderg and the On Yer Bike Challenge covered 30 miles from Scarva to Newry and back. In total, over 150 cyclists took part, alongside members of Damian's family.

Damian's wife, Pauline, said: "He was the bravest, kindest, funniest man we have ever known. The children and I were overcome with the amount of people who supported us and if the fundraising could help just one family it would all have been worthwhile."

Club chairman Donal Moran (left) and Pauline Lennon (right) with PCRF's Northern Ireland co-ordinator, Susan Cooke.



Smoothly does it in Scotland

Chris Douglas from Kirkton, Dundee, braved a full leg wax to raise £1,300 in memory of his dad, also called Chris, who died of pancreatic cancer in March.



Before the event, Chris Jr told his local newspaper: "I have very hairy legs. I've never done anything like this before and I think it's going to be very painful." From the photo he sent us, we think his prediction might have been spot on. "Let's just say I won't be doing that again," he said afterwards.

Chris Jr is continuing his fundraising drive with older sister Louise. In 2018, they'll trek along the Great Wall of China – and hopefully Chris's hair will have grown back by then!

Bags of cash

YOUR M&S

Special thanks to the Southgate (North London) branch of Marks and Spencer, for nominating PCRF as the 'good cause' recipient of its 5p carrier bag charge, raising over £2,100 to date.

Organising a fundraiser?

Do let us know if you're organising an event, no matter how large or small. From coffee mornings and bake sales to sports events and charity balls, we're keen to help make your fundraiser a success! We can provide a range of branded items, including balloons, banners, bunting, collecting tins and T-shirts!

I would like to make a donation to PCRF and enclose a cheque for
£ (payable to Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund).

giftaid it

Yes, I am a UK taxpayer and would like to Gift Aid my donation.

I want to Gift Aid this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund, until I notify you otherwise. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature:

Date:

Tick the box if you would like us to send you a receipt.

If you'd like to set up a regular donation, please email us at admin@pcrf.org.uk or phone 020 8360 1119

Alternatively, you can donate with a credit or debit card by phoning us at 020 8360 1119 or via the website.

Tick this box if you would like to receive future newsletters

We don't pass your details on to any other organisations.

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Raise awareness with PCRF merchandise

You can support PCRF and raise awareness with our range of merchandise – including T-shirts, pin badges and wristbands. See our online shop for more details.



Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund

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www.facebook.com/PancreaticCancerResearchFund

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There are many organised activities that you can get involved in to raise money for PCRF. You could take part in:

Run for Research



- Gt. Edinburgh Run** April 2018
- Brighton Marathon** 15 April 2018
- Gt. Ireland Run** April 2018
- London Marathon** 22 April 2018
- Belfast City Marathon** 7 May 2018
- Stirling Scottish Marathon/5k** May 2018
- Gt Manchester Run** 20 May 2018
- Vitality London 10,000** 28 May 2018
- British 10k London Run** July 2018
- Gt. North Run** September 2018
- Belfast City Half Marathon** September 2018
- Gt. South Run** October 2018
- Royal Parks Half Marathon** October 2018
- Gt. Birmingham Run** October 2018
- Gt. Scottish Run** October 2018

Tandem Skydive



An unforgettable experience. Raise a minimum sponsorship of £395 (£450 in Scotland and Northern Ireland) and you jump for free!

Swimming



- Gt. North Swim**, Windermere, June 2018
- Gt. East Swim**, Alton Water, June 2018
- Gt. Manchester Swim**, Salford, July 2017
- Gt London Swim**, Royal Victoria Dock, August 2018
- Gt. Scottish Swim**, Loch Lomond, August 2018

Cycling



- Nightrider London** June 2018
- Nightrider Bristol** July 2018
- Nightrider Liverpool** TBC
- Edinburgh Night Ride** 23 June 2018
- Prudential RideLondon-Surrey** 29 July 2018
- Wales End to End** 16-19 August 2018

Walking



- Isle of Wight Challenge** 5-6 May 2018.
Walk, jog or run it. 25k, 50k or 100k
- Just Walk** May 2018
10k, 20k, 30k, 40k or 60k routes to choose from on the South Downs, West Sussex
- London2Brighton Challenge** 26-27 May 2018. Walk, jog or run it. 100k, 50k or 25k.
- Trekfest – The Beacons**, June 2018. 25k or 50k.
- Cotswold Way Challenge** 30 June-1 July 2018.
Walk, jog or run it. 100k, 50k or 25k options.
- Jurassic Coast Challenge** 21-22 July 2018.
Walk, jog or run it. 100k, 50k or 25k options.
- Wye Valley Challenge** 11-12 August 2018.
Walk, jog or run it. 100k, 50k or 25k options.
- Trekfest – The Peaks** September 2018.
25k or 50k.
- Thames Path Challenge** September 2018.
Walk, jog or run it. 25k, 50k or 100k.

For information on these events, check our website, email admin@pcrf.org.uk or ring 020 8360 1119.

New events get added throughout the year, so keep checking the website.

Annapurna adventure raises £7k

Rahik Jubran Royle chose the challenge of a 10 day Annapurna trek in the Himalayas, Nepal. She climbed to over 10,000 ft in tribute to her husband Peter, who died of pancreatic cancer in 2015, and raised just shy of £7,000 for PCRF.

"I trained hard and took my genuine Russian snow boots, thinking they'd be perfect for the conditions. They started to fall apart on day one and were held together with duct tape for the rest of the trek," she says. "My party thought it was really funny, but you know, they remained completely waterproof until the very last 50m when the sole detached and they became more like a pair of flip flops!

FANCY A BIGGER CHALLENGE?

If you're inspired by Rahik and the idea of an overseas challenge such as:

- Nepal trek • Great Wall of China trek
 - The Inca Trail • London to Paris cycle
- see our website for more details.

"It was tough going, like a rocky staircase all the way up and was even harder coming down. There were no luxuries – one night we slept in a cardboard shelter. But the climb was unbelievably beautiful and the people in every village were so welcoming, always smiling. The view from the top was truly stunning, but

the feeling of achievement was better!

"I'm really proud of what I did and hope that it will help. I think of those people who've been diagnosed and know how precious every moment is."

