

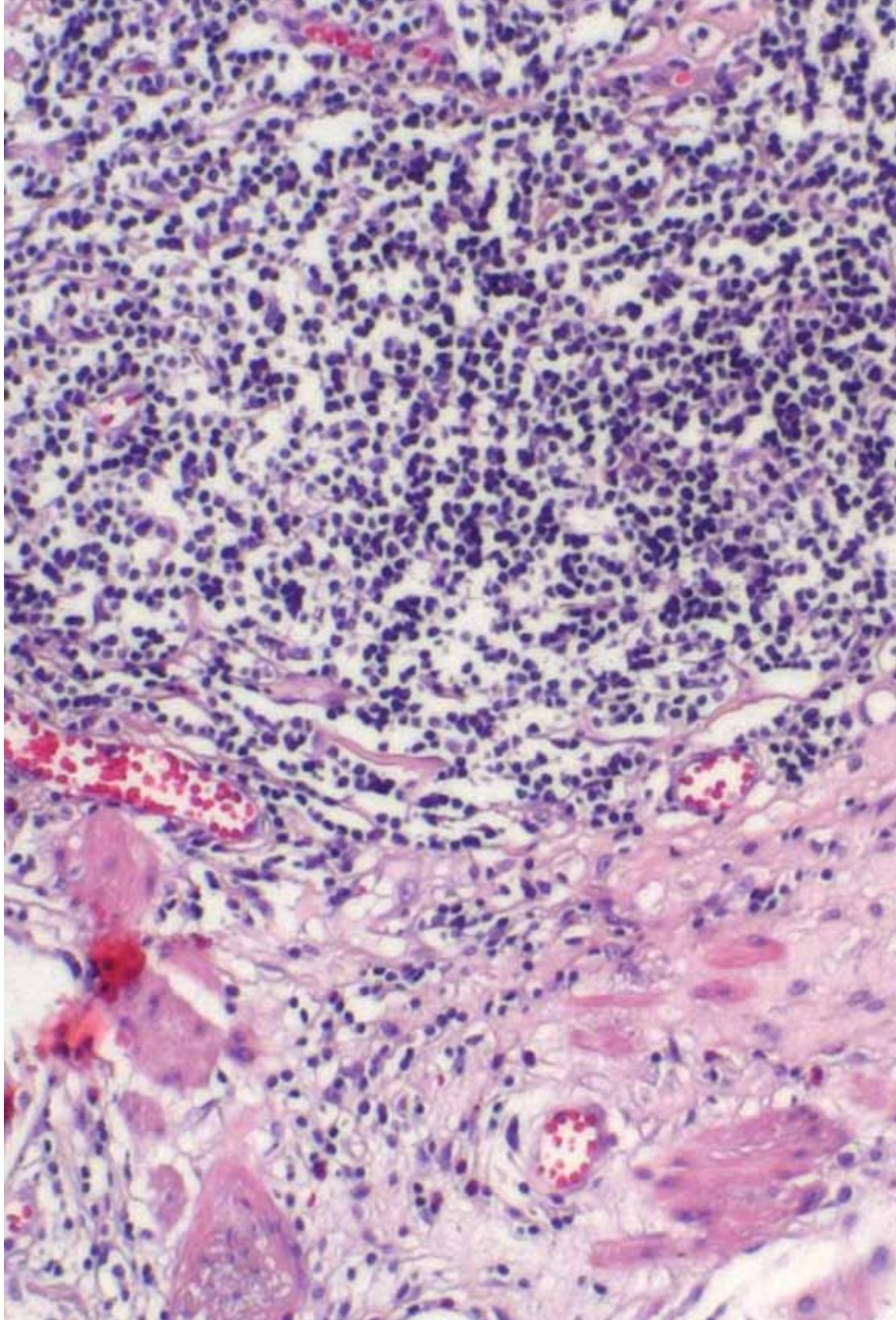


Paterson
Institute for Cancer Research

Paterson Institute

spring newsletter

April 2006



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Paterson Institute for Cancer Research
Wilmslow Road, Withington, Manchester M20 4BX
Tel: 0161 446 3156. www.paterson.man.ac.uk



Paterson
Institute for Cancer Research

Director's Update



The success of the Institute is very much dependent upon the quality and

dedication of its staff, whether it be the scientific staff or the administration and service staff. Therefore, recruitment of new personnel is an important process and requires considerable time and effort.

The last few weeks has been particularly busy in this regard. The annual recruitment of new graduate students involves a very hectic few days of interviewing. But it has been worth it and we now have eight new, high quality students who will start with us in September. The quality of applications was particularly high this year and it is very encouraging that all students offered a position, accept right away.

A big thank you to everyone involved in

the process. We are also interviewing for potential new group leaders - again quite a time-consuming effort but also exciting as we can anticipate new research activities that can enhance our overall scientific programme. This will be an ongoing process throughout the year.

Also, congratulations to Pippa McNichol who has been appointed Director of Operations for the Manchester Cancer Research Centre (MCRC)/PICR. She will be retaining her current Paterson role plus overseeing the operations and development work for the MCRC.

Nic Jones - Director.

Let The Interrogation Begin

Graham Cowling

Every year in early February, there are groups of new students being led around the Institute, Group Leaders gathered in the Holt listening intently to talks about a host of diverse (but not always biological) subjects, and Julie Edwards and I trundling a trolley of wine through the streets of Withington. Yes, you guessed it; the 4 year Paterson PhD studentship interview season is back again.

This annual ritual starts back in October, with Group Leaders submitting projects which are then adeptly entered onto the Paterson website by Mark Wadsworth, followed by adverts in Nature later in the year. Then the e-mails begin, slowly at first but with a crescendo towards the closing date in early January. So far, this year I have received around 150 applications, but in 2005, the end of year total was in excess of 400, a figure which nearly exceeded all the PhD applications received by the Faculty. Julie and I then contact the 3 referees on all of these applications. I start at "A" and Julie starts at "Z" and we plan to meet somewhere in the middle. Replies rain in and

each morning the references have to attach with the correct student file. Over the next few weeks the Group Leaders offering the projects are asked to select their favoured candidates. Armed with this information, the Paterson members of the Education Committee imbibe large amounts of coffee, consider all the candidates and make the final interview selection.



Graham Cowling and Julie Edwards

selected for interview based on CVs, references and the Group Leaders' opinions and allowing for the usual small "drop out" rate, 20 were interviewed for the 8 studentships offered.

At this point, Julie goes into overdrive inviting the students for interview, arranging hotels, meals, meeting rooms and checking travel arrangements. I begin the process of arranging 6 half hour interviews for each of the 10-12 students per day ensuring that they all see a good cross-section of Group Leaders, meet the leaders of their chosen projects and see members of the Education Committee. I can't remember a year in which I haven't made a mistake in this matrix and had to start again. Still all the students do survive at the end of the day but some appear to be almost brain-dead. The interviewers are pretty jaded too. With the big day over what follows is hours of discussion, offers for 8 hopefuls, hundreds of Dear John letters, bundles of expense forms and University Applications. The interview year won't really finish until I see all 8 new PhD students safely on the coach to Ambleside to begin their degree.

This year around 24 students were



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Group Leader Spotlight

Immunology

Immune Interactions



L-R - Back Row:- Tom Southgate, David Shaw, Eyad Elkord, Graeme Smethurst, Adhiraj Chakrabarty, Zihni Yazici
Front:- Peter Stern, Helen Spencer, Kate Mulryan, Lucy Hopcraft, Debbie Burt, Ursula Winters

Peter L. Stern **Immunology Group Leader**

The Immunology Group is focused on the investigation of immunotherapy for human cancer. This ranges from target discovery, through preclinical testing and early phase clinical trials. The ability to take the science from the bench to the clinic is clearly advantaged by the juxtaposition of the Paterson with the Christie Hospital. In particular, our group has close cooperation with the scientists and clinicians of Robert Hawkins' group and this provides a tremendous impetus for a wide range of laboratory and clinical research. A similar cooperation with Henry Kitchener at St Mary's hospital in the field of human papillomaviruses and anogenital cancer has seen the delivery of numerous clinical studies of both prophylactic and therapeutic vaccination approaches. At the heart of the strategy is the desire to directly influence the diagnosis and treatment of human malignant disease. Thus the Immunology group has a mix of clinical research fellows (CRFs), postdoctoral and non-postdoctoral scientists who integrate with different Hospital, Institute, external academic and commercial partners to deliver research in a number of areas.

The first grouping is very much at the clinical end of the spectrum. For example, Eyad Elkord, Debbie Burt, Lucy Hopcraft (joint graduate student with Robert Hawkins) and Adam Dangoor (joint CRF with Medical Oncology) are focused on evaluating human immune responses to the 5T4 oncofoetal antigen including in a clinical trial of the Modified Vaccinia Ankara (MVA) based vaccine (Trovax®). Ursula Winters (joint CRF with Henry Kitchener) is conducting clinical trials of different immunotherapies to treat women with high risk HPV associated vulval intraepithelial neoplasia. David Shaw has been responsible for the delivery of preclinical studies and clinical trials of 5T4 antibody directed superantigen therapy with the latest trial involving the use of PET to measure the localisation of the drug in patients (with the group of Jamal Zweit). We have recently conducted some very interesting studies of T cell function in patients with renal cell cancer (RCC) with Richard Griffiths (CRF, Medical Oncology). This has led to the development of new clinical trial protocols aimed at modulating T regulatory activity (collaborations with the National Blood Service). There is also a need to translate the research evaluations to a standard which complies with the new regulations pertaining to clinical

studies. This necessitates the validation of these assays to GCLP and Zihni Yazici has recently been appointed in a joint position in Immunology/Medical Oncology to deliver these responsibilities.

The second set of researchers is focused on the preclinical studies of vaccines and chimeric receptor directed T cells which underwrite our clinical investigations. Hui-Rong Jiang, Kate Mulryan and Adi Chakrabaty (joint graduate student with David Gilham) are working on the potential for combination vaccine and chimeric T cell therapy in the human 5T4 expressing mouse tumour models. Previously Sumia Ali, who left in December, with Kate Mulryan had investigated various prime-heterologous boost vaccination regimens and our future work will focus on using autologous mouse 5T4 tumour models in combination with modulation of T regulatory activity (new CRF joint with Medical Oncology).

The final grouping involves the theme of embryonic properties which are shared with tumour cells, an approach which led to the discovery of the 5T4 oncofoetal antigen.

.....continues overleaf



Immunology Interactions continued.....

Thus Graeme Smethurst (joint graduate student with Crispin Miller) and Helen Spencer (joint graduate student with Chris Ward), together with Kate Mulryan, Angela Eastham (joint with Chris Ward) and soon to join us Tom Southgate, are utilising mouse and human embryonic stem (ES) cells to study aspects of 5T4 function in malignancy and development. One focus of this work is studying the changes in adhesion molecules in ES cells induced to differentiate which appear to mimic an epithelial-mesenchymal transition (EMT). Our future work will also be exploiting the results of our microarray analyses of differentiating ES cells as well as the 5T4 knock out mouse. The potential to utilise embryonic stem cells for various human therapies

including cancer will also be facilitated by the NWDA resources (£1.54 million) obtained to establish an Embryonic Stem Cell Centre at St Mary's Hospital and The University of Manchester. This will establish and study GMP quality human embryonic stem cells and the principal Investigators are Stern (PICR); Brison, Lieberman (CMMCUHT); Kimber, Dunne, Hardingham (FLS, Manchester University) & Edgar (Liverpool University). On a related EMT theme, Rufzan Bibi, who left in December, set up a unique Pseudomyoma peritonei tissue bank with Surgery (Sarah O'Dwyer and colleagues) and characterised these lesions using novel combination of cytokeratin and cadherin markers.

The Immunology group is thus wide ranging in interests and has links across the NHS, University and PICR. We could not begin to translate our laboratory findings into clinical treatments without the involvement of many organisations willing to provide the necessary collaborations and considerable resources, especially to fund clinical trials. Obviously CRUK is of preeminent importance but several of our clinical trial programmes are sponsored by those companies who licensed our intellectual property (IP) through Cancer Research Technology at an early stage. We are grateful to all our colleagues who provide the support and enthusiasm to sustain such translational cancer research.

Paterson Spotlight



In each issue of the Newsletter, we feature a member of staff who will take the 'Spotlight' and answer a list of questions that we have put together. The next lucky individual to be featured is Shirley Leonard of Administration.

1. What is your favourite part of the UK?
City of Manchester Stadium.

2. What is the most important lesson that you have learnt from life?

That you cannot depend on others, you have to rely on yourself.

3. What is your favourite book?

Bingo book (especially if it's the winning one)!!!

4. What is your favourite film?

Anything involving gangsters (the bigger and tougher the better!).

5. If you had to change careers tomorrow, what would you do?

I'd like to be an actress and star in Eastenders playing Grant Mitchell's wife / mistress / significant other, whatever!

6. Inter-departmental rounders brought out the competitive spirit in people, what other games would you like to introduce in the summer?

Mud-wrestling and mixed tug-of-war.

7. What is your greatest fear?

Birds and fireworks.

8. How would you like to be remembered?

Shirl - with the heart of gold!

9. If you could change one thing in your past, what would it be?

Being too shy (seriously)!!

10. What would be your perfect meal?

Steak, chips and a pint of lager (did I say 'a' pint?).

11. What trait do you most deplore in others?

People who say one thing to your face and something else behind your back.

12. If you had to spend £1,000,000 tomorrow, what would you do with the money?

I'd build a bingo hall opposite the Institute.

13. Which words or phrases do you most overuse?

'House' and 'WHAT???'

14. What is your idea of perfect happiness?

Winning at bingo and being able to 'treat' all my friends.

15. What keeps you awake at night?

Thoughts of winning at bingo, indigestion from eating the steak, chips and drinking the pint of lager and Grant Mitchell (but not necessarily in that order!).



Paterson
Institute for Cancer Research

Student Report

Kai Ren Ong

I've been at the Paterson for fourteen months now, working for my M.D. I came from Birmingham Women's Hospital where I had been a Specialist Registrar in Clinical Genetics for two years. Having trained before that in adult medicine, as opposed to paediatrics, I had developed a particular interest in cancer genetics, a major component of the adult clinical genetics field.

One of the commonest scenarios we encounter in the clinic is family histories of breast cancer. In a large proportion of families, we are unable to find a single gene mutation that is responsible for the cancer predisposition (for example BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutations) and for these families it is difficult to be certain about the risk of breast cancer to currently unaffected women in the family. This problem fascinates me, and my project to investigate gene expression and breast cancer risk, is clearly relevant to my clinical work. I grew up in Manchester and came to the medical school here and so I was aware of the quality of the research and was keen to return.



Kai Ren on the approach to Stob Coire nan Lochan in Glencoe

My project has a number of aspects to it. We are looking at gene expression profiles of normal breast tissue from 'population' risk women compared to 'high' risk women to see if we can find signatures that may be able to distinguish those women who will develop breast cancer from those who will not. I am also examining the changes that occur in gene expression in normal breast and adipose tissue following a period of weight loss, which is known to reduce post-

menopausal breast cancer risk. This has involved taking breast and abdominal subcutaneous fat biopsies from willing volunteers – women who are at increased risk due to a family history of breast cancer – undergoing a strict calorie restricted diet.

One of the hardest aspects of this project has been the logistics of the biopsies, which have required a lot of goodwill on the part of the highly motivated participants, and the staff at the Family History Clinic, the Nightingale Centre and the Withington Community Hospital, to whom I will be eternally grateful. I like the atmosphere in the lab, it has been good to have a change of scene from the purely clinical environment, and I can honestly say I have great colleagues here.

Out of the lab and clinic, I enjoy rock climbing, scrambling and mountaineering, and it has been fantastic to be back up north and closer to the Lakes, North Wales and the Peak District.

Joanne Samuel

Amidst the background drone and whirrs, a putrid smell disseminates in the air and a voice calls out, "Get out of here, run for your life!". Alas, not a scene from a horror movie but my arrival in the KK Human Room when the previous day's washing up was taking place and the voice in my head declared this was not a normal or safe place to be in.

Two and a half years on, I have to agree with the voice in my head. However, I have to say that undertaking an MD project on Prostatic Stem Cells has been the most character-building experience of my life. My analogy would be a novice skier standing atop a black run and knowing that the only way down is on two long, thin blades attached to one's feet. You get as many expert tips as you can, accept any help along the

way and just embrace the challenge. So, many face plants and wipe-outs later, I stand at the bottom of the mountain. The emotions encompass personal satisfaction, bewilderment and pure gratitude towards the people who have been instrumental in helping me complete this journey.

With regards to the project, I have managed to characterise an enriched population of prostatic stem cells. Future direction will involve the genetic characterisation of this enriched population utilising microarray techniques on small cell numbers. It remains for me to thank my supervisors, Noel Clarke and Mick Brown, for their invaluable help and guidance. To all in the KK, it's not often that you get such great camaraderie in the work place. Thanks for all the laughs.

What now? Well, I'm off to be a urologist. Fortunately, I'm off to a good

start, thanks to the scientific and academic exposure over the last 24 months. I'll be back...





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Staff News

A Warm Welcome to:

Sara Bhana a post-doc who started on March 1st and will be working in the Paterson, based in the ADRO office located between the Medical Oncology and Carcinogenesis departments.

Sonia Castillo-Lluva from Spain who started work as a post-doc in Cell Signalling in January.

Carla Moller a post-doc who started in January and who is based in Bioinformatics, working with Crispin Miller and Catharine West.

Alicia Gonzalez who joins the Stem Cell Research group from Complutense University in Spain.

Andrew Marriot who joins the Carcinogenesis group as a placement student

Najma Rachidi a post-doc who has come from the University of Dundee

Tamara Krsmanovic from Dusseldorf University has started in the Cell Division Group as a post-doc scientist

Zihni Yazici started in December and is working between the Immunology and Medical Oncology groups. He joins us from Leeds university - see this month's Group Spotlight for more!

Sadia Ashraf a placement student who will be joining the Radiochemical Targeting and Imaging group.

Lianne Fennelly and **Marie McIntosh** from Withington who have joined the Admin team.

Many Congratulations to:

Jon Chung, Dan Tennant, Gemma Thornton and **Helen Sanderson** who have all recently passed their PhD vivas - well done to you all!!!

Angeliki Malliri (Cell Signalling) and husband Adam on the birth of their beautiful daughter Melissanthi on 3rd January, a welcome sister for four year old Thomas.

Hui-Rong Jiang (Immunology) and her husband on the arrival of a little boy named Yufei born on 30th January, weighing in at a very respectable 7lb 5oz!

Sumia Ali (Immunology) and her husband who welcomed a baby girl (name not known) into the world on 3rd February. Sumia had to undergo an emergency C section, needing a blood transfusion and baby was placed in Intensive Care for a short while. Anyway, the good news is that Mum and daughter are now both doing fine.

Both Hui and Sumia gave birth early (3 days and 17 days respectively), which makes you wonder if they are in a rush to get back to work, maybe.....???

Comings and Goings

Farewell to **Sharon Barnes** (Administration) who will be leaving us on 7th April, after covering Julie Hallett's maternity leave since August 2005. Sharon has been a great asset to the team, always willing to help out with a smile whenever needed and she will be missed by us all. We would like to wish her good health and happiness for the future. Keep in touch!!

Welcome back to **Julie Hallett** who will be returning from the aforementioned maternity leave on April 10th. Julie will no doubt need to come to work for the rest, after having to run around after Lily (aged 3) and Martha (aged 8 months) at home!!



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My Role as Purchasing Manager

Denise Owen

I have been at the Paterson for nearly three years, moving from my role as Creditor Payments Manager at the Trust, so all in all I have been around for about 11 years now. Within that time I am sure most people have been in contact with me for one thing or another.

When I first started at the Paterson, it was my job to take over ordering all goods/services for the Institute, ensuring that we were getting value for money and meeting all the necessary criteria with regards to financial procedures. I am also the first point of contact should a supplier or end-user have a query on an order. The knowledge that I brought with me from the Finance Department at the Christie helped me greatly with this job, as I already knew how the Finance/Ordering system worked, as I was involved in the implementation from the start.

Since then Emily has left for pastures new and for some very strange reason which still eludes me, I offered to do the travel side of things as well as the orders. This involves arranging, issuing and payment of travel tickets, conference registration, hotel accommodation, currency orders and keeping the travel database up-to-date.

This brings us to the present and the recent merger with the University. From the Finance department's point of view,

it was like starting a new job, learning everything from scratch, which was quite scary when you have known the Finance system inside out for years. It was decided that it would be a pointless exercise using the University's current Finance/Ordering system at this time, as they are moving to a new system in June. So, in light of this we have been using the in-house system for orders, as we do for the Pharmacy orders until we can join the University on their system. The invoices for the goods that we receive are being sent to the Accounts Payable office at the University and they are processing them for payment. Again this will all change in June when we join the University on their system, because once again we will be able to process the invoices ourselves as we did at the Christie.

For the travel side of things, they have stricter guidelines at the University, so it is a little bit of a wake-up call as everything that is requested, be it a reimbursement or a currency order, requires a form to be completed. I will let you all know which form is needed depending on what you are claiming for, and unfortunately there is no way round this, no form-no reimbursement!

I would like to say that one of the benefits of the University is that they have given me a Purchasing card, which can be used for booking conferences via the Internet, securing hotel bookings etc. Unfortunately I am unable to give

card details to anyone else for security reasons, so if you would like me to do this for you, please let me know.

I would like to think that all the orders are going out quite smoothly now after a bit of confusion from when we first merged, and hopefully it should stay this way until June when no doubt, we will be thrown into chaos once more!!



items for the newsletter

If anyone would like to submit an article to the newsletter or has information for the 'Staff News' section, we would love to hear from you. Equally, if you have any feedback about the format of our newsletter or ideas for future issues, then we would really like to hear your views!.

Please contact Elaine Mercer on x3101, or via emercer@picr.man.ac.uk



Anna Pearson

Bullying in the Workplace

In this newsletter we wanted to focus on bullying, how to recognise it and how it can be dealt with. The Institute has a Respect at Work Policy and has a zero tolerance stance towards bullying.

The Institute is committed to ensuring that all individuals, wherever they carry out their duties are able to do so in an environment free from intimidation, harassment, bullying, abuse or open hostility. The Institute believes that staff have the right to be treated with courtesy, dignity, fairness and respect at all times. The Respect at Work Policy is designed to prevent problems and where they do occur to ensure problems are addressed in a constructive manner.

“Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient”.

Acas, 2005

Signs of Bullying:

Bullying can be hard to recognise within the workplace as it is not always obvious to colleagues who work in the same environment.

The table (right) displays elements which are associated with bullying in the workplace;

There is also a fine line between strong management and bullying. The line is crossed when the target of bullying is

persistently downgraded with the result that they begin to show signs of becoming distressed.

Managers should recognise that each of their employees are ‘unique’ and can withstand different amounts of pressure within the workplace i.e. what one employee may feel is acceptable may not be acceptable to another.

It is common for employees not to report incidences of bullying as they feel that they will be seen as over reacting or their allegation(s) will be disregarded. However we would like to assure employees that we take all reports of bullying extremely seriously and staff will be supported through the process of resolving the situation.

Long-term Effects:

In the long term, bullying can also lead to:

- poor morale
- poor relationships throughout the whole department
- poor performance
- lost productivity
- increased absence
- resignations

How Can You Help?

All employees have an implied duty of care towards their colleagues; therefore if they find that a fellow worker is being bullied, they should take the following steps:

1. Keep notes of any incidences of bullying that they witness or have been informed about.
2. Speak to the individual who they believe is being bullied to establish if there is an area of concern.
3. Speak to the Human Resources Department for guidance
4. If appropriate and you have the individual’s consent, speak to the alleged bully in a calm and reasoned manner without prejudice.

Staff placed in positions of authority by the Institute also have a responsibility to prevent such behaviour when they see it. They should not wait for a complaint to be made.

.....continues next page

Obvious bullying behaviour	Less obvious bullying behaviour
Repeatedly shouting or swearing in public or private	Setting individuals up to fall
Public humiliation	Setting uncontracted tasks
Dispensing unfair punishment out of the blue	Setting unrealistic deadlines for increased workload
Overruling, ignoring, marginalising or excluding	Removing areas of responsibility and imposing menial tasks
Personal insults and name calling	Deliberately sabotaging or impeding work performance
Persistent criticism	Constantly changing guidelines
Increasing responsibility whilst decreasing authority	Withholding work related information
Constantly undervaluing effort	



Are You a Victim?

If you are a victim of bullying we advise that you should:

1. Keep a diary of all incidents; records of dates, times, any witnesses, your feelings, etc.
2. Inform your Manager, HR Department or Union representative of the situation.
3. Telephone the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) if you require confidential advice.
4. Tell the person to stop whatever it is that they are doing as it is causing you distress, as they may be unaware of their actions. If you find it difficult to tell the person yourself, you may wish to get someone else to approach them – a colleague, HR Adviser or Union representative.

If these informal stages do not resolve the issue and the behaviour is persists, the individual should consider taking formal action as follows:

1. Advise the Human Resources department that you wish to make a formal complaint against the bully. This would lead to a formal investigation taking place. Disciplinary action would be taken against the bully if necessary.

(This could be invoked at any stage of the procedure depending on the serious nature of the issue)

The Employee Assistance Programme is an independent, confidential and impartial advice, information and counselling service and can be contacted on 0800 282 193, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.



Anna Pearson,
HR Adviser

x3231



Laura Humes,
HR Assistant

x3124

Post-doc Seminar Series

Ben Hodgson

Once upon a time post-docs at the Paterson gave weekly talks to the rest of the Institute, providing them with the opportunity to reveal the fruits of their labour. Then the builders moved in to our beloved lecture theatre to carry out some refurbishments putting a stop to it all!

Almost three years since the last post-doc talk we have now resurrected the seminar series and it has to be said that the response to date has been fantastic. Thankfully for those of us organising the talks we have had a number of people come forward and volunteer, taking the opportunity to showcase their work to the rest of us. Originally we planned to hold the talks on a fort-

nightly basis, but due to the high demand we have been able to make it a weekly event.

The content of the talks so far has ranged from complete, published stories through to those describing encouraging results in recently instigated projects, and as far as presentation goes, Cath Merry certainly showed anything goes!

The good attendance at these talks is great to see – it not only shows a decent level of support for our fellow workers, but demonstrates an enthusiasm to find out what's going on in the Institute as a whole.

Obviously we wouldn't dare imply that the cakes and refreshments go some

way to help maintain these attendance levels, but judging by the empty trays at the end of each week everyone seems quite happy with the current suppliers (a big thank-you to Sharon & Shirley who provide the drinks each week!).

At the moment we are fortunate enough to have volunteers lined up for the next couple of months, but we're always happy for more, so for those still contemplating giving a talk please feel free to ask for a slot, no matter what stage your work is at.

Thanks for your continued support – any comments or suggestions are always welcomed!



Paterson
Institute for Cancer Research

TRF Update

Mad about the new labs

Jenny Varley

Well, we have finally started to see the results of the building works! In January we finally took possession of the newly refurbished basement and ground floors, which have provided much needed improved accommodation for Terry's Structural Cell Biology Group, Advanced Imaging, and Crispin's Bioinformatics Group. Most of you probably never went down to the basement before, but believe me it was truly horrible as the image shows. There was old plant, dripping pipes, steam leaks, pools of oil, cockroaches and a very nasty whiff. The first phase of the refurbishment ripped all this out, together with the old lift shaft, and involved building new service towers to the front and rear of the building, new plant on the roof, and a new larger lift shaft. To do this in a building which was still occupied was problematic for all concerned, and we should congratulate Terry and his group and Steve Bagley for staying sane through it all!! We won't mention blocked drains, miners, electrical incidents and sizzled equipment, fume cupboards disposed down lift shafts, leaking ceilings, no water, too much water, no heat, fire alarms.....

It has all come good in the end as you can see in the photo of Terry's new lab downstairs – the same area as the “before” image. Unfortunately it is now cluttered with lab equipment (I am feeling very protective about the new areas and am terribly tempted to buy all new equipment to go in it so it looks nice, but don't tell Steve Bagley!), and apart from a few “snags” everyone is happy. Alas the noise hasn't completely abated, but just moved from below us to above the Holt - the current drilling is due to removal of the unstable concrete screed, and hopefully it has nearly all gone now, and then we can revert to uninterrupted seminars.

Terry has a new main lab in the basement plus purpose-built specialist labs for his electron microscopes, ultramicrotomes and coating units.

Also in the basement is the new Advanced Imaging Facility, including four small rooms which can be temperature-controlled independently to optimise the conditions for lengthy and sensitive imaging experiments. These rooms are already being heavily used, and seem to be doing a perfect job. It is hard to remember how awful these areas were before.

Over the next few months the work on the first and second floors should be completed, and in the next week or so we should have the coffee room renovated after the water ingress. Then we should be able to settle down to a relatively builder-free period.....



The Structural Cell Biology Labs “Before”



The Structural Cell Biology Labs “After”



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CRUK Pay and Grading

Pippa McNichol

Since we last wrote to you at Christmas with an update on the Institutes and Research Services Pay and Grading project we have been focused on developing and testing the proposals with the Institute & Research Services Directors. There have been several meetings with all the Directors and the team have worked with them to come up with proposals for pay scales and grading that were appropriate for all of the areas that are covered by the review, and all the Institutes and Research Services.

We are pleased that following our final meeting with the Directors last month we now have agreement to proceed with implementing the proposals. Therefore, discussions have begun with the Staff Consultation Representatives / Trade Union representatives and the Local (and Central) Design Testing Teams have been testing the viability of the proposal.

Over the next few months the sequence of events will be as follows:

March: each Institute will begin the process of placing jobs onto the new system. The national project team will oversee this process to ensure fairness and consistency, and to understand the implications for each individual affected by the changes

April: staff will be invited to attend briefing sessions to learn more about the system, including information about the new grades and salary bands.

May: details on how the new system will affect each individual will be checked and managers will review the placement of each person. Managers and staff will be invited to attend more

detailed training sessions where they will learn about how to use and implement the new system.

June: Paterson and Beatson staff will receive a letter formally notifying them of the changes to their grade

September: the new system will come into operation in the Paterson and the Beatson.

It is important to let you know at this stage the key principles that are guiding the implementation planning. You will receive more details over the next two months and this gives a brief summary of the key points:

1. Salaries will be lifted to the minimum of the new grade if they are below it
2. There will be no salary cuts if salary is above maximum of the new grade
3. This is not a cost cutting exercise, nor is it expected to add significant cost for the charity
4. No redundancies are expected as a result of this project
5. Jobs will be placed into the new grading structure based on the content of your job compared with the definition and criteria for the grade. Your job will be also compared with other jobs in that grade to ensure consistency, but this will not generally be an opportunity for a promotion to a new job.
6. The new salary bands are based on extensive work on external market rates of pay and contain a reference rate (typically the mid point) equating to the appropriate market rate
7. Salary progression will be based on your contribution

8. The existing pay review and progression (ASP, SSAP, SPSAP, etc) will be applied for 2006

9. Following the application of the 2006 pay review your salary will be transferred to your new grade

10. The first pay review based on the new pay and grading system will be effective in June 2007 and based on your contribution over the previous year

Managers and Group Leaders will be briefed first and a full staff briefing will follow. At these briefing sessions you will receive full details of the new system.

Briefing dates for your diaries:

Group Leaders:

Thursday 20 April 9.30am
Conference Room

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Managers:

Thursday 20 April 2.00pm
Holt Minor
(Service Unit heads & Admin managers)

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Open meeting for everyone:

Monday 24 April 10am
Holt Major



Paterson
Institute for Cancer Research

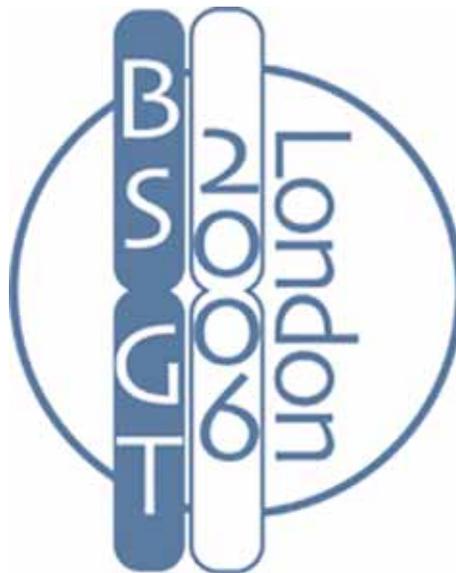
British Society for Gene Therapy

Laura Edwards

The second annual conference of the British Society for Gene Therapy was held at Hulme Hall in Manchester in March 2005. As a key figure in the scientific field and a resident of Manchester, Lez Fairbairn undertook much of the organisation. The meeting was extremely successful, with an improved attendance on the previous year (despite the location – which many of the London-based gene therapists strongly objected to!) and an excellent standard of scientific presentations. Anyone that knew Lez won't be surprised to learn that the social part of the meeting was also highly successful with bar extensions arranged every evening and plenty of wine to accompany the conference dinner.

The hard work undertaken by Lez helped to put Manchester at the forefront of the gene therapy community; and gave Lez a place on the committee of the BSGT. This year, the Paterson Institute will again be strongly represented at the meeting. Professor Robert Hawkins (Medical Oncology –

Gene-Immunotherapy Group) and Mick Milsom (a post-doc in the Gene Therapy group until last year) have been invited to speak, and many members of Professor Hawkins' group and all the current members of Lez's Gene Therapy group will be in attendance and presenting their work.



The third annual BSGT conference will be held at Imperial College, London on

the 28th – 30th March. In memory of Lez and his contribution to the field of gene therapy, the Paterson Institute have sponsored two special symposia; 'Stem Cells' and 'The Lez Fairbairn Award'. This award is to be presented to a PhD student or scientist in their first post-doctoral position and will be judged from a selection of oral presentations to be given at the meeting. Lez was always very much involved in education and the promotion of science; he won the Christie Hospital 'Making a Difference to the Future Through Education' award last year; so it is fitting that the prize will go to a scientist at the beginning of their career. The Stem Cells symposium will focus on the use of stem cell therapy in cancer; reflecting Lez's work in this field.

Other symposia will cover current work in vaccines, vector delivery, safety and efficiency, as well as disease-specific gene therapy. Anyone interested in finding out more about the BSGT can take a look at their website at www.bsgt.org.

MCRC communications team in place

A small team aiming to push a big message about the creation of the Manchester Cancer Research Centre (MCRC) has just started work.

David Wiggins and Mark Wadsworth make up the MCRC communications team, working out of Room RG30 on extension 3035.

An experienced journalist and communication professional, David is busy producing a communications strategy and initial promotional material, and working on branding issues. He is working on a consultancy basis for two days a week.

Mark has been promoted to the team from his IT role to work as web developer and graphic designer. His remit is to develop and maintain the MCRC web site and design promotional material. Mark remains in charge of the Paterson web site, intranet and promotional materials, but is no longer part of the IT team.

This will enable the partners in the MCRC (PICR, University of Manchester, Christie Hospital NHS Trust and Cancer Research UK) to raise the profile as the Centre moves from "virtual" to "real" status over the next few years.

If you have any questions about the MCRC email David at dwiggins@picr.man.ac.uk