

World Cancer Day 2020: Tuesday 4th February.



World Cancer Day is an international day of events aimed at raising awareness of cancer and to encourage its early detection, treatment and prevention.



The Patient & Public Involvement & Engagement (PPIE) Cancer Forum

organised a series of events held at the Oglesby Cancer Research Building with the aim of engaging diverse communities from across Greater Manchester.

“This World Cancer Day we focused on creating connections with the wider communities across Greater Manchester, highlighting two principle goals of our Social Responsibility agenda: Environmental Sustainability and Patient & Public Involvement & Engagement”. Dr Suzanne Johnson, Social Responsibility Lead for the Division of Cancer Sciences.

EcoBricks: Making non-recyclable plastics useful

28 children from a local primary school (Beaver Road) came to learn about how we do research into cancer and how using essential sterile plastics can lead to huge amounts of non-recyclable plastic waste. Sam Littler (DCS SR Environmental Sustainability Champion) and Paulina (Lentil & Lather, Zero waste shop, Withington) ran a session making EcoBricks from this waste with help from Christine Williams (Lab Aides Supervisor). The children plan to make something functional for their school with the EcoBricks they make and had some fantastic ideas!



Embracing diversity to refine personalised medicine and improve cancer screening:

The session of talks focussed on projects to engage patients and the public and to increase awareness of why research is so important.

Prof Rob Bristow talked about the path to personalised medicine and the importance of understanding diversity. Prof Andrew Wardley shared his personal journey and experiences which have led to a number of successful OUTREACH projects. Drs Ellena Badrick and Helena O’Flynn presented their approach to prioritising research themes by engaging with the public and the importance of research when developing techniques for effective screening strategies. Prof Cliona Kirwan discussed the 4P’s project: Identifying Research Through Public and Patients Perspectives and Priorities in breast cancer.

The session emphasised the importance and reciprocal benefits of involving patients at multiple stages through the research life cycle.



Creating Connections: The Black and Minority Ethnic Research Advisory Group (BRAG) and cancer research in Manchester

Tracy Grey (Public Programmes Team) facilitates BRAG, an advisory group of diverse community leaders who provide expertise and advice on inclusive practices for health research in the Manchester Biomedical Research Centre and Clinical Research Facility. They aim to involve diverse audiences in the development, delivery and dissemination of health research. Discussions during this session examined where the current blind spots are in regard to inclusivity.

Collectively we pledged to work towards embedding greater equity in cancer education, treatment and care and to increase engagement in screening and early detection strategies.



“Research is driven by our community engagement. As we strive towards developing personalised therapies we need to embrace our diverse population and therefore it is essential that we continue to forge strong relationships with the wider Greater Manchester communities – the time to reach is now”

Professor Robert Bristow, Director, Manchester Cancer Research Centre

Lab Tour:

Kath Spence (Lab manager, Breast Biology Group) and Megan Thompson (PhD student) gave a tour of the lab and visitors from the Voice Up group were given some practical experience and an opportunity to discuss a career in science.

The Patient & Public Involvement & Engagement Cancer Forum is chaired by Kat Cresswell (Public Programmes Team) and includes representatives from across the MCRC partners with a key role in PPIE activities. Funding for this event came from MCRC/FBMH Cancer Domain and NIHR Manchester BRC PPT.