



PRESS RELEASE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE

IMPACT OF 'GET RANDOMISED' CAMPAIGN IN SCOTLAND

'Get Randomised', a public campaign to highlight the importance of randomised clinical trials, boosted awareness and knowledge of clinical trials around Scotland, a new study has shown.

The first of its kind in the UK, the 'Get Randomised' campaign – which ran in late 2008 - communicated to the public the importance of research trials in determining the most effective way to treat patients. The project was backed by a team of top Scots medics and academics, some of whom appeared in a series of adverts across television, radio and newspapers. A website - www.getrandomised.org - provided more information to the public about clinical trials.

The results of the impact of the 'Get Randomised' campaign are published today (Thursday January 21st) in the British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology.

Thousands of clinical trials take place in the UK, and researchers are always looking for more patients who would be happy to take part. There is also a need to make sure that all ages of people get the chance to take part in clinical research, including the elderly and the very young.

Dr Isla Mackenzie, Senior Clinical Trials Physician in the Medicines Monitoring Unit at the University of Dundee and lead author of the paper which appears in the Journal, said, "Clinical trials allow us to find the best possible treatments for patients by comparing different treatments in a scientific way.

"There is a real need for more clinical research in lots of different disease areas. We rely on patients volunteering to help with research to find the answers to important clinical questions.

"However, there was a feeling that not enough people were aware of the opportunity they have to take part in clinical trials, hence the 'Get Randomised' campaign. We have since measured the impact of that campaign, and it does appear to have had a significant and positive effect."

A survey of 1,040 adults in Scotland before and after the campaign looked at changes in awareness and understanding of clinical trials and measured how

successful the campaign had been in reaching the public.

Results showed that public awareness of clinical trials improved along with understanding of some aspects of clinical trials, such as the need to include all age groups in research. The campaign reached at least 50% of the sample population, with the majority having seen the TV adverts. Most people thought that the main message was that people should take part more in clinical research.

The Get Randomised campaign was led by Professor Tom MacDonald of the Medicines Monitoring Unit, University of Dundee, in collaboration with leading figures from the Universities of Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Professor Tom MacDonald adds “Through this campaign, the importance of clinical trials has become better understood by the public, which is likely to increase participation and ultimately help patients to help themselves and future generations to better treatment.”

Notes to Editors:

Information on the campaign is available at www.getrandomised.org

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Paper: in the February 2010 issue of the British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology

Promoting public awareness of randomised clinical trials using the media: the 'Get Randomised' campaign. Isla S Mackenzie, Li Wei, Daniel Rutherford, Evelyn A Findlay, Wendy Saywood, Marion K Campbell, Thomas M MacDonald. British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology.

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The team of top Scots medics and academics featured in the adverts included: (Professor Tom Macdonald, Prof of Clinical Pharmacology & Consultant Physician), (Prof Jill Belch, Head of Institute of Cardiovascular Research), (Professor Marion Campbell, Director of Health Services Research Unit), (Dr John Dewar, Consultant Clinical Oncologist), (Prof Alastair Thompson, Director of Dundee Clinical Research Centre), (Dr Marianne Nicolson, Consultant Medical Oncologist), (Prof Simon Maxwell, Senior Lecturer in Clinical Pharmacology), (Dr Dan Rutherford GP, St Andrews) and (Dr Alex Watson, GP, Dundee). Many more doctors had agreed to participate but could not be included in such short advertisements.

The campaign had the backing of the four medical school faculties, the Chief Scientist in Scotland (a physician: Sir John Savill) and the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland (a surgeon Professor Harry Burns).

About BJCP

Published by Wiley-Blackwell on behalf of the British Pharmacological Society, the British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology (BJCP) contains papers and reports on all aspects of drug action in man, including invited review articles, original papers, short communications, and correspondence. BJCP enjoys a wide readership, bridging the medical profession, clinical research, and the pharmaceutical industry. The British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology can be accessed at <http://www.bjcp-journal.com>.

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The British Pharmacological Society, which was founded in 1931, is one of the world's leading pharmacological societies. Its clinical section welcomes as members doctors, pharmacists, nurses, and other health-care workers with an interest in clinical pharmacology, therapeutics, and practical prescribing. It also welcomes scientists working to understand the actions of drugs in humans and those working in drug discovery and development. Benefits of membership include access to scientific meetings of interest to those concerned with human pharmacology, CPD, bursaries, travel awards and grants, and free access to the online version of the Society's clinical Journal, the British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology. For more information email info@bps.ac.uk or visit www.bps.ac.uk.

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