



Looking ahead in Wales

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The School of Medicine's important role in clinical trials will be marked by a special event at Cardiff University on International Clinical Trials Day (May 21,2007).

The day will highlight increased participation in clinical trials by volunteers in Wales and the benefits of such trials to medical research in areas such as cancer and diabetes.

Many medical advances now taken for granted, such as the use of insulin for diabetics, required years of clinical trials research. A clinical trial is used to determine whether a drug is safe, what dosages are most effective, and whether there are possible side effects.

This year marks the start of significant new developments to support clinical trials' work in Wales building on a strong tradition in this area. Clinical Research Collaboration Cymru, linked to the University's School of Medicine, has been set up and the South East Wales Trials Unit has been established in the School of Medicine's Department of Primary Care and Public Health.

Keynote speakers at the event 'Looking Ahead in Wales', organised by the School of Medicine, include Professor Colin Blakemore, Chief Executive of Medical Research Council; Sir Iain Chalmers, Editor of James Lind Alliance, Professor John Williams, Director of the Welsh Office of Research and Development, Professor Tim Maughan, Director of the CRC Cymru Co-ordinating Centre and Director of the Wales Cancer Trials Network and Dr Tony Jewell, Chief Medical Officer.

Dr Jewell, Chief Medical Officer said: "I am strongly in support of strengthening the academic and research capability in Wales as I believe we can make a unique contribution and raise quality through the effective integration of teaching, research and service delivery."

Sir Iain said: "Wales can claim a very special place in the history of the evolution of clinical trials. For example, Archie Cochrane, director of the MRC Epidemiology Research Unit in Cardiff, published one of the most influential medical books of the 20th century, showing that evidence from clinical trials is crucially important in helping us to know how to do more good than harm in the NHS."

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