

# Cancer Research– Sustaining the momentum through partnership

*Mike Richards – National Cancer Director  
and Chair NCRI*

# *Strong research is vital in making continued progress on cancer*



- The last decade has seen significant improvements for cancer patients in the UK
  - ❖ The overall cancer mortality rate is falling
  - ❖ The speed and standard of care is improving
  - ❖ More people are being cured of cancer and more are surviving for longer
- Whilst progress has been made it is vital that we sustain the momentum through
  - ❖ Improved public awareness of cancer and how to prevent it
  - ❖ Improved treatments and services for all cancer patients and survivors
  - ❖ Legislation and public health policies to help in cancer control (e.g. smoking ban)
- Research is the engine that drives all of these activities and high quality research will be crucial in helping to deliver the Cancer Reform Strategy

# The NCRI works in partnership towards common goals



# *NCRI and the Cancer Reform Strategy*

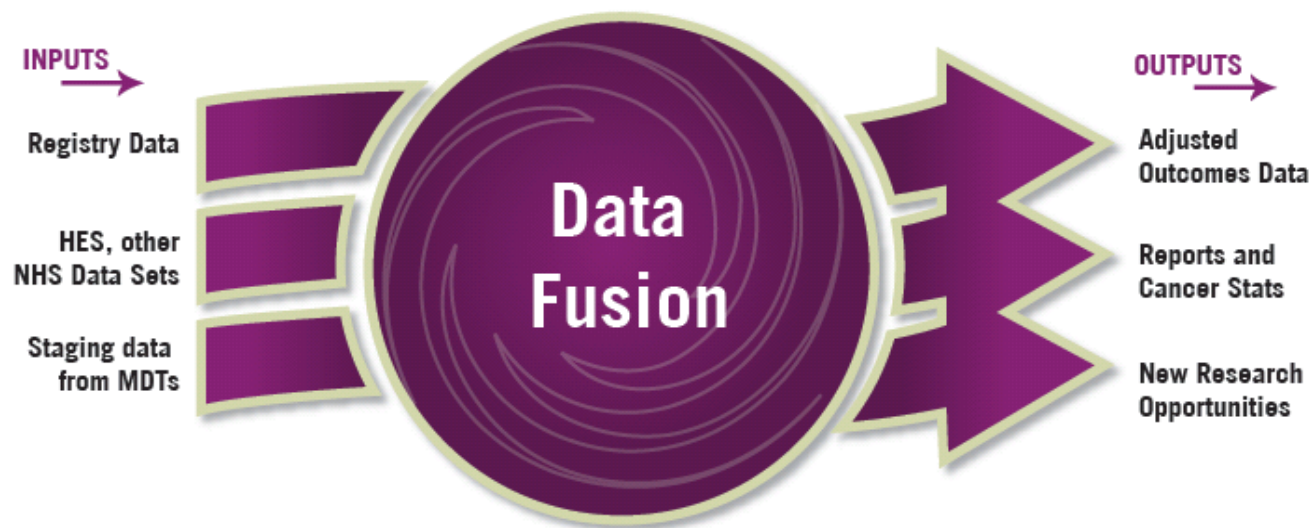


- The NCRI will be publishing a five year Strategic Plan in early 2008
- The Plan complements the Cancer Reform Strategy
  - by focusing on areas where we need a stronger evidence base to help improve cancer services
  - by providing complex tools and resources needed for world class research
- Elements in the NCRI Strategic Plan with particular relevance to the Cancer Reform Strategy are
  - providing high quality cancer intelligence
  - research to enable early diagnosis of cancer
  - research to help improve health behaviours
  - research to help understand how best to support cancer patients and survivors long term
  - research into inequalities

# What is the National Cancer Intelligence Network and why do we need it?



- The UK is uniquely well placed to develop a new national cancer information resource
- By combining patient datasets the National Cancer Intelligence Network will
  - drive development of cancer services
  - provide a resource for epidemiological and health services research



# *How can research contribute to reducing our risk of cancer?*



- Prevention is the most effective form of cancer control
- We have a reasonable understanding of the lifestyle factors that can cause cancer
- We need to better understand
  - why people adopt unhealthy or healthy life styles
  - how we can influence health behaviours most effectively
  - how we can target interventions at sections of society particularly at risk
- We need to provide evidence to help policy makers choose the most effective ways of educating and enabling people to make healthier choices

# The National Prevention Research Initiative funds research on the design of effective interventions



Economic & Social Research Council



British Heart Foundation



Diabetes UK



Research and Development Office,  
Northern Ireland



Llywodraeth Cynullad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government



Scottish Executive



World Cancer Research Fund

# *How can we enable earlier diagnosis of cancer?*



- In general, the earlier a cancer is diagnosed the greater the chance it can be cured
- To maximise the number of cancers caught early we need to
  - extend and widen existing screening programmes
  - investigate opportunities for new screening programmes
  - raise public awareness of the signs and symptoms of cancer
  - encourage people to seek help earlier
  - educate primary care professionals to ensure people with signs of cancer are properly investigated
  - provide better tools and technology to help diagnose cancer

# *How can we provide the best standard of care and support for long term survivors of cancer?*



- **More and more people are being cured of their cancer, or living with it long term**
- **Survivors of cancer have a range of physical, psychological, social, spiritual, financial and information needs**
  - **these needs are not well defined**
  - **services are not configured to meet these needs**
- **The National Survivorship Support Initiative led by Macmillan Cancer Support will**
  - **Develop more appropriate cancer support programmes**
  - **Improve data collection and information provision**
  - **Provide a more comprehensive evidence base**
  - **Help get people back to work**
  - **Tackle the late effects of treatment**
  - **Help people to help themselves**
  - **Get more support for carers**

# *Sustaining the momentum...*



- In the years to come activities funded by the NCRI as a partnership and by individual partners will contribute to;
  - Better prevention leading to each person having a lower risk of cancer
  - Earlier diagnosis of cancer so treatment will be more effective
  - Better treatment and outcomes for ALL patients, including more people being cured of cancer
  - Better quality of life for people who survive cancer
  - Faster pull through of discoveries in basic science to benefit cancer patients
  - Better management and use of patient data