



# Portsmouth leads the way to find brain tumour cure

Campaign launched to fund new centre of excellence at city's university

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THE University of Portsmouth has been designated the first multi-million-pound centre of excellence in a bid to find a cure for brain tumour.

Sheila Hancock, the university's chancellor, is fronting the campaign to raise £1m each year to fund research into the UK's biggest cancer killer of children and adults under 40.

The actress, whose grandson Jack was diagnosed with

a brain tumour aged four, is calling on local businesses, organisations and residents to help raise the £2,740 daily cost of running the university's brain tumour research team.

She said: 'We were incredibly lucky Jack's tumour was low grade and he lives a normal healthy life now, but it is terrible to watch a family member go through the diagnosis and treatment of a brain tumour.'

'I implore you to get involved and support vital research.'

The city's university is the first of seven across the country to be designated as centres of 'hope' or 'excellence', each requiring the same annual pot of funding.

Half a million pounds has already been raised by Brain Tumour Research to kick-start the department's research into disease which receives less than one per cent of national cancer research spending.

There are 16,000 people diagnosed with brain tumours each year - and nearly 90 per cent of them die within five years.

Professor Geoff Pilkington, who lost his mother to the disease, will head up the university's team.

He hopes to find treatments for some of the 130 different strands of brain tumours

and will use his position as president of the British Neuro Oncology Society next year to harness expertise.

Prof Pilkington said: 'The amount of money coming into brain tumour research is minimal and as a result it is a real struggle to make any significant headway.'

'Now we will be able to address a number of different types of brain tumour and look at the genetics that underpin their progression, to help find cures and ways prolonging good quality of lives.'

A 'wall of hope' has been erected outside the university's brain tumour research laboratory to fill with silver plaques representing sponsors. To donate call 01296 733 011 or visit [braintumourresearch.org](http://braintumourresearch.org)

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Prof Geoff Pilkington

