

Asthma UK calls on Scottish scientists to lead the way in transforming the lives of over 300m people with asthma

Thursday 10 March, 2016

Asthma UK is calling on Scotland to lead the way in finding much-needed breakthroughs for people with asthma. With its world class reputation of research¹ and strong infrastructure for life sciences innovation, Scotland can develop the tools and treatments that will transform the lives of over 300 million people across the world and help drive a global market expected to reach £14 billion by 2017.

Dr Samantha Walker, Director of Research and Policy at Asthma UK, said: "There is nothing as frightening as not being able to breathe yet that is the reality for thousands of people in Scotland with asthma. We now have a once in a generation opportunity to attract investment into asthma research, helping millions of people across the UK as well as driving Scotland's productivity, economy and long term growth."

To launch the campaign, a Cross Party Group meeting was held at the Scottish Parliament last night³, attended by leading academics, politicians and policy makers from across Scotland, including Professor Andrew Morris, Chief Scientist at the Scottish Government. There are 368,000 people with asthma in Scotland, including 72,000 children. As many as 15,000 people in Scotland have asthma so severe current treatments simply do not work.

Asthma UK is calling for research into:

- Improved diagnostics - Diagnosing asthma is complex and there are no simple, reliable diagnostic tests for the condition, delaying access to treatments.
- Better treatments – 15,000 people in Scotland have asthma that is so severe that current treatments do not work. We need to change this.
- Tech enabled self-management – technology offers innovative solutions to help people manage their life-long condition more effectively and prevent life-threatening asthma attacks.

Dr Walker adds: "This is a hugely exciting time for asthma research and Scotland is ideally placed to deliver the latest breakthroughs. Through the Asthma UK Centre for Applied Research - co-ordinated and led by Edinburgh University - we look forward to working with Scotland's world-leading universities, the Scottish Government, life science businesses and academics to improve the outlook for people with asthma in Scotland, throughout the UK, and across the world."

ENDS

For more information please contact the Asthma UK media team on mediaoffice@asthma.org.uk, 020 7786 4949 (during office hours) or 07951 721393 (outside of office hours).

The Asthma UK Centre for Applied Research was launched in May 2014 and is a collaboration between leading asthma researchers from 13 universities across the UK. It is coordinated and led by the University of Edinburgh.

- 1)The global market for asthma drugs is projected to reach £14 billion in 2017. **BCC Research (2012) available at**
- 2)Images from launch event available upon request.

About Asthma UK

- Asthma UK's mission is to stop asthma attacks and cure asthma. We do this by funding world leading research, campaigning for improved care and supporting people to reduce their risk of a potentially life threatening asthma attack.

Asthma UK is solely funded by public donations
The Asthma UK Helpline is open weekdays from 9am to 5pm on 0300 222 5800
For more information about asthma please visit www.asthma.org.uk

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