Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales
Y Pwyllgor Materion Allanol a Deddfwriaeth Ychwanegol | External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee
Y goblygiadau i Gymru wrth i Brydain adael yr Undeb Ewropeaidd | Implications for Wales of Britain exiting the European Union
IOB 33
Ymateb gan Cancer Research UK
Evidence from Cancer Research UK

1. We welcome the opportunity to respond to the Committee's call for evidence on the implications for Wales of Britain exiting the EU.

2. Health and science are global. Collaboration between all nations of the UK and countries in Europe and beyond enables the discoveries that benefit patients everywhere. Wales and the UK must explore opportunities to strengthen its world-class science base, building on and developing new global collaborations.

3. Last year Cancer Research UK spent £432 million on research across the UK, including £4 million in Wales[1]. Our ambition is to accelerate progress and see three in four cancer patients survive their disease by 2034. Research is at the heart of our plan to reach this ambition and see cancers diagnosed early and treated well.

4. Medical research benefits patients here, as well as patients across Europe and worldwide. It's in the best interests of all patients that science remains strong and competitive across the UK. In outlining the priorities and opportunities for science following an exit from the EU, we will focus on three principal areas:
   - Building a leadership position in clinical research and supporting global collaboration
   - Attracting and retaining talent
   - Protecting investment in science

Building the UK's position as a global leader in clinical research and developing a regulatory environment that supports global collaboration

5. ***The UK has an opportunity to set itself apart as the top global destination for industry to conduct clinical trials, securing crucial investment and enabling patient access to innovative treatments. It must seize this opportunity by realising the research potential of our NHS.***

6. Being a leader in clinical research will require the UK to have a regulatory framework that supports global collaboration. The UK should explore opportunities to create a regulatory environment that more effectively supports research whilst enabling the UK to participate in and lead international research projects.

7. The compatibility of regulation and standards across member states brings benefits to UK medical research. In areas such as clinical trials, the use of personal data in research and

[1] Cancer Research UK (2016) Helping to shape the policy landscape in Wales, available: http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/we-develop-policy/we-work-with-government/wales

medicines approval, it supports scientific collaboration across EU member states and can streamline approval for large studies.

8. Cancer Research UK supports over 250 clinical trials by providing funding, expertise and facilitating partnerships. These trials recruit more than 25,000 patients each year. Of the trials that we directly fund – currently over 200 - more than a quarter involve at least one other EU country[2].

9. To set up and run pan-EU trials efficiently and effectively, it is important that the legislation, guidance and standards governing their approval and conduct is aligned across member states. Such trials are especially important for rarer cancers and childhood cancers, where trials are often only feasible because they are able to recruit from a large pool of patients across the EU.

10. The UK has played a key role in shaping EU regulations for the benefit of UK patients. We must ensure the UK plays a key role in influencing future regulations.

11. **The Welsh Government should continue to work with the UK Government to consider the importance of aligning with the new EU Clinical Trials Regulation, which the UK has played a key role in shaping for the benefit of UK research. In particular, it should seek agreements that allow for the UK's participation in the central review process for approving clinical trials, which will provide our researchers with access to the new EU portal and database.**

12. The UK must also build a regulatory framework that promotes the UK as an attractive market for pharmaceutical companies to launch innovative treatments so that patients have timely access. It should explore agreements with the EU that would enable the UK to benefit from the centralised processes for authorising drugs and molecular diagnostics.

13. **UK Government should explore agreements with the EU that strengthen our relationship with the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and enable the UK to contribute to and inform its decision making processes. We would welcome the Welsh Government's support in making this case to the UK Government.**

Attracting and retaining the best scientific talent globally, and recruiting the staff needed for our NHS

14. ***The UK must develop an immigration system that enables it to attract and retain the best scientific talent from across the globe and recruit the staff needed for our NHS – including in Wales.***

15. A strong science base requires a skilled workforce. The international make-up of the UK's research community is vital for the sharing of best practice, expertise and skills, and to promote important international collaborations.

16. Cancer Research UK recruits post-graduate students and researchers from an international pool to ensure that we are working with the very best minds to conduct the highest quality research. 33% of our PhD students and 39% of our research fellows are non-UK EU nationals[3]. The mix of UK, European and international researchers within our research community is vital for the sharing of best practice, expertise and skills.

[2] Statistics from CRUK's internal databases and include clinical trials from our Clinical Research Committee, New Agents Committee and Centre for Drug Development.

[3] The PhD student figure is based on data from Researchfish, a self-reporting tool for researchers, including those receiving CRUK funding

17. Wales, like the rest of the UK, plays a key role in training young researchers; many of whom go on to set up labs elsewhere, but maintain important collaborative relationships with research groups in the UK. Wales also benefits from recruiting talented researchers who have received specialist training from centres in the EU and worldwide. Such recruitment is particularly important and sometimes necessary in areas of science where we have a UK-wide skills shortage such as researchers working in computational biology and big data[4,5].

18. In addition to mechanisms that allow for the recruitment of future talent, the UK must ensure that it retains current scientific expertise and supports important collaborations.

19. The UK must also develop an immigration system that enables us to effectively recruit the staff needed for our NHS. Having enough staff, skilled an appropriate level, in the NHS is vital to improve patient outcomes and experience.

20. The NHS workforce is already experiencing a shortfall in staffing levels. The further loss of EU and international staff would have a negative impact on patient outcomes and care and could also impact our ability to carry out research.

21. **All current EU-national researchers working in the UK, and UK-nationals working in the EU, should be given the opportunity to live and work in their present location following the UK's exit from the EU. The rights of their partners and dependents should also be protected.**

22. **A positive message should be sent to researchers globally, including those already based in the UK, to reassure that their contribution to UK science is valued and encouraged.**

23. **We would welcome the Welsh Government's support in making this case to the UK Government.**

Protecting investment in science in Wales

24. ***It is vital that UK Government seizes the chance to create an industrial strategy that enables the UK to grow its investment in science; strengthening the global standing of our research base.***

25. The EU contributes significantly to science investment in the UK. In addition to their financial contribution, EU grants promote global recognition of UK science and support important pan-EU research collaborations. In 2015, the UK received £40 million[6] investment in cancer research from the EU.

26. Although Cancer Research UK does not receive any direct funding for research, in 2015/16, Cancer Research UK's institutes across the UK received £7.5 million income from EU grants; this was more than 4% of their total research funding[7]. Furthermore, universities at Cancer Research UK centres are currently supported by EU grants, totalling more than £110

4 'Bio-informatician' and 'informatician' are included on the Shortage Occupation List, valid from 6th April 2015

5 Medical Research Council and Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (2014) Vulnerable Skills Survey 2014

6 This includes all grants given to cancer-specific and cancer-related research. NCRI analysis using data derived from the Global Grants Award Database and corresponding Dimensions Software platform, provided by UberResearch.

7 Funding data reported directly to us from CR-UK institutes, including the Francis Crick Institute

million[8]. This funding provides important support for individual labs and promotes research collaborations with other EU countries.

27. In leaving the EU, UK researchers should be encouraged to further develop international collaborations and should have access to infrastructure and funding that supports these; the EU Funding Programme 9, for example, which will replace Horizon 2020. The UK should influence the future of such programmes to ensure they align with UK priorities and are awarded based on scientific excellence.

28. UK Government should ensure that with a UK exit from the EU, overall levels of investment in UK science and the diversity of funding are protected and grown in the longer term. The UK Government's new industrial strategy is an opportunity for the UK to put science at the heart of its plan for growth. Government's investment in science supports further investment by industry and charities[9] and brings benefits to patients through enabling the development of new ways to prevent and treat disease. Science and innovation are key drivers of growth and productivity in the UK[10]. Every pound invested in cancer-related research by the taxpayer and charities returns around 27p to the UK economy each year[1112].

29. It is vital that UK Government seizes the chance to create a strategy that enables the UK to grow its investment in science; strengthening the global standing of our research base.

30. **UK Government should now ensure that with a UK exit from the EU, overall levels of investment in UK science and the diversity of funding are protected and grown in the longer term. We would welcome the Welsh Government's support in making this case to the UK Government.**

[8] Self-reported data from universities at current CR-UK centre locations. Includes total award of active grants in August 2016

[9] Economic Insight, What is the relationship between public and private investment in R&D?, 2015

[10] HM Treasury, Fixing the Foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation, 2015

[11] Health Economics Research Group (Brunel University), RAND Europe, and King's Policy Institute, medical Research: What's it Worth? Estimating the economic benefits of cancer-related research in the UK, 2014

[12] http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/policy-institute/publications/SpilloversFINAL.pdf