

Research Grant made to Institute in the Park, Liverpool

Alongside the new Alder Hey Children's Hospital in Liverpool which we covered in our blog last year, an equally innovative and much needed modern research and education facility is being developed on the same campus. The International Centre for Children's Research, Innovation and Education opened its new building in 2015 and plans are in place for phase 2.

The new complex is known as the Institute in the Park. It is becoming the "hot house" for research, development and education into childhood illnesses. This modern building with the state of the art facilities has been designed to meet the Institute's challenges and is attracting the best talent. The aim of the Institute is to significantly increase the scope and reach of collaborative research which in turn will deliver new medicines and trigger, through



targeted education, new and better standards of care. This imaginative approach to these important challenges is being delivered by professional, talented and committed staff and will inevitably lead to improvements in children's healthcare globally. Paediatric medical development has not had the resources that have been channelled into many other areas of health research - this needs to change. The Alder Hey Children's NHS Trust works in partnership with the University of Liverpool and is supported by other local universities. Research is a global challenge and the Institute collaborates with universities and research centres across the world.

Although delivering cures is what everybody would like to see, the focus is on managing and understanding diseases leading to the development of new medicines and treatment techniques. Education and training are key elements of the approach.



We met with Dr Brian Flanagan and Dr Angela Midgley to explore how our Foundation could help the research programmes at the Institute. We are a modest charity and research is always expensive so we focused on vital pieces of kit that would support the work. Brian and Angela are not only experts in their fields they impressed us greatly with their commitment and enthusiasm for the work they do and their vision of the tangible benefits that could flow from the research.

Between us we decided that the purchase of a specialist microscope met all our objectives. A grant for £11930 has been approved to purchase a ThermoFisher Scientific EVOS XL Cell Imaging System which will aid three main research groups currently focusing on:



- Juvenile systemic lupus erythematosus (JSLE) and childhood arthritis
- Respiratory disease (chest infection cystic fibrosis and asthma); and
- Childhood leukaemia

Angela said *"Having this equipment will make a huge difference to our ability to carry out experimental research that will deliver higher quality results to benefit both patients and researchers"*.

We have asked Brian and Angela to write a blog for later in the year to explain how the new Imaging System will be used and more about the research focus. Updates on the research will be posted regularly.

This is an exciting time for the Foundation and the trustees are very pleased that our charity is part of this work.