

Queen's pioneers prostate cancer breakthrough

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Scientists at Queen's University have pioneered a new combination treatment for prostate cancer. The treatment, which has been successful in phase one of trials, will now be tested for efficacy in a second phase.

The treatment, aimed at men with an advanced and aggressive form of prostate cancer which has spread to the bone, is the first of its kind to be developed. It combines traditional chemotherapy treatments with two doses of a radioactive chemical which can target areas of the bone affected by prostate cancer.

Aggressive and advanced prostate cancer is responsible for around 10,000 deaths each year in the UK. Chemotherapy is often used to treat the disease; however, benefits of this treatment are usually short-lived. An ability to combine two different types of drugs against prostate cancer may help improve outcomes including survival for these men.

The results of the first phase of the trial, which are published in the European [Journal of Nuclear Medicine](#) and [Molecular Imaging](#), demonstrate that it is safe and feasible to combine multiple injections of the radioactive chemical (Rhenium-186 HEDP) along with standard chemotherapy in men with an aggressive form of prostate cancer.

Dr Joe O'Sullivan, Consultant and Senior Lecturer in [Clinical Oncology](#) at the Centre for [Cancer Research](#) and [Cell Biology](#) at Queen's University, and leader of the study, said: "This is a significant development in the fight against prostate cancer. While this combination

treatment still has to go to phase two of trials, to know that this combination is safe and feasible as a treatment is a huge step forward.

"Traditional chemotherapy treatments aren't always effective in treating aggressive and advanced forms of [prostate cancer](#), so we needed to develop a new treatment which will provide better outcomes for patients with this type of cancer. The combination of chemotherapy with the radioactive chemical Rhenium-186 HEDP has the potential to improve outcomes, including survival, for men with this form of cancer.

"The second phase of the trial has already commenced in The Netherlands and will start in the UK within six months. The trial will involve up to 100 patients from Northern Ireland and the Netherlands and it is hoped that results should be known within two years."

Provided by Queen's University Belfast

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