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You can help your University maintain its excellence in cancer research

As I'm sure you'll be aware, Birmingham has a long-established reputation for excellence in research - cancer research is a particular strength.

Give a gift today and you could help fund clinical trials into a new treatment for prostate cancer. This innovative approach, not tried anywhere else in the world, combines destroying the tumour with triggering the patient's immune system to fight back.

Sadly, in the current climate, funding is more and more difficult to secure. In the case of research like this, any delay can have a direct impact on patients' lives. It can slow or even prevent further progress in a particular research area.

Momentum is then lost and, crucially, the University could lose out on the chance of pushing forward with an innovative new treatment that saves lives.

Over the years, Birmingham has built an excellent reputation for research. You could help ensure your University continues to be a pioneer.

With a gift today, you could help us ensure these clinical trials go ahead. You could help offer men taking part in the trials the chance of an extended life. They have reached a point where their cancer is advanced and their treatment options are exhausted. Many tell me that they want to live to see a particular family event - to hold a new grandchild or be there at a family wedding.

You could help them to do this. **More than this, because you are funding a clinical trial, you could help us develop a treatment that could benefit many men in the future.**

The University has a whole programme of research taking place. Today, we are asking if you will fund this project, which has so much potential.

I was a medical student myself at Birmingham and specialised in Urology. I'm very proud of our University and I hope you are too. Today, you can play your part in protecting our reputation for research - you could also help develop a new treatment that could help save men's lives.

I want to give now (https://bhamalumni.org/netcommunity/sslpage.aspx?pid=1366)

Yours sincerely,

Mr Richard Viney

(MBChB Medicine, 1995)

Senior Lecturer at the University of Birmingham and Consultant Surgeon at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital

PS I hope, like me, you feel proud of your University and have happy memories of your time here. Give a gift today and we'll put a Birmingham pin badge in the post to say thank you!

Questions and answers

Why are you asking for my help?

The funding of universities is undergoing rapid change. There isn't yet such a developed culture of giving to universities in the UK as there is in, say, the US. But if our universities are to maintain their world standing, we need alumni like you to give your support.

By giving a gift today, you can help fund pioneering research being carried out in your University – direct.

What exactly will my money be used for?

Every penny will go directly towards Richard Viney's clinical trials. If you prefer to give your support to another area of our work, please let us know when you make your gift.

Why are you asking me to support research into prostate cancer?

This is one of many exciting research projects that are being carried out at the University. Richard Viney's new treatment is now at a stage where we can proceed with clinical trials. Your gift will therefore have a direct impact on the lives of men with advanced prostate cancer.

We are also carrying out research into breast cancer and childhood cancers. If you prefer to give your support to another area of our work, please let us know when you make your gift.

What happens if we don't raise all the money you need?

The total cost of the clinical trials is £240,000 over the course of three years. We are asking you to help kick start the funding. If we don't raise the full amount from alumni and friends of the University, we will approach other funders to help us reach the full total. Generally speaking, securing funding is easier when a project already has financial support.

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