Moorfields family raise £4,000 to support acanthamoeba keratitis research

Moorfields’ patient Zach Buller and his family are raising sight-saving funds to help support fellow Nicole Carnt’s leading-edge research into the rare but serious infection, acanthamoeba keratitis. This disease can result in permanent visual impairment or blindness. Twelve-year-old Zach started having symptoms of the disease in October 2011 and has been a patient at Moorfields for two years. Zach’s mother, Becky, said: “The high quality of care that Zach received at Moorfields was exceptional – we call it ‘Moorfields magic’. Although it unfortunately didn’t work out for Zach, it wasn’t from lack of trying. We are fundraising in the hope that others won’t have to go through as much as they can!”

We are fundraising in the hope that others won’t have to go through as much as they can. Everyone raising over £110 on the 14 mile route and £75 for the shorter route will receive an Eye to Eye t-shirt. Please call 020 7566 2486 or email eyecharity@moorfields.nhs.uk for more information or register now using the tear off form attached to the back page.
Many thanks for your generosity

Professor Julie Daniels and ophthalmic consultant Alex Shortt have been overwhelmed by the success of the Moorfields Eye Charity Summer Appeal, raising over £140,000 for the Cells for Sight Jules Thorn Stem Cell Research Unit.

The unit manufactures routine and research cell therapies for patients at Moorfields Eye Hospital who have been blinded by diseases affecting their cornea or retina. It is critical that they are able to grow cells for patient transplantation in conditions similar to those in the human body. The incubators that they so heavily rely upon to provide this environment work 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Following the many generous contributions from large numbers of people, they can now replace worn equipment and maintain cell therapy production for their vital stem cell therapy research programmes and clinical trials. Thank you to all who so very kindly contributed!

Study improves our understanding of diabetic retinopathy progression

Diabetes is a common cause of blindness in young adults. It’s a disease that can damage the small blood vessels in the retina causing them to leak or close down resulting in vision loss.

Current treatments have limited effects and cannot restore areas of damaged blood supply but a team from Moorfields and the UK centre for Ophthalmology led by Dr Marcus Fruttiger and consultant Mr Adnan Tufail are looking at the use of stem cells to repair damaged and leaky blood vessels in the retina. The study, which is supported by a generous donation from a Moorfields patient, has made great progress.

The analysis of clinical data from hundreds of patients found that loss of vessels in certain areas in the retina has a much bigger impact on vision than in other areas. The team has also identified certain clinical factors that help in predicting how quickly blood vessels degenerate in diabetic retinopathy patients. It was also found that certain portions of the blood vessels in diabetic patients are changed depending on whether the patients have leaky vessels or degenerating vessels. This is an important step forward in understanding how cells in the blood (such as stem cells) change during different forms of the disease. Developing a novel cure for a disease is a huge undertaking that requires many different steps. Having made great progress in this project, the research is one step closer to testing stem cell therapies in patients, because it has improved our understanding of how diabetic retinopathy progresses in patients.

nonsense mutations that could treat a substantial proportion of patients irrespective of their disease.

The donation meant the purchase of a microperimeter was also possible. A microperimeter obtains an image of the retina, a light sensitive layer at the back of the eye. Testing points can be individualised to suit the patient and this is especially important in choroideremia as the loss of retinal cells changes depending on whether the patient has healthy, damaged or leaky blood supply.

Choroideremia is a X-chromosome inherited eye disease, causing problems with night vision, loss of peripheral vision, colour vision problems and gradual deterioration in central vision. With the support of a generous donation, Dr Mariya Moczurag is testing how treatment of nonsense- mediated choroideremia using small molecule drugs may help produce normal- functioning protein, prevent retinal degeneration and preserve vision. If successful, small molecule drugs may be employed for use in patients of all ages, but in particular children or patients with early symptoms to prevent or delay the onset/progression of disease. This research, and in particular, the use of stem cell technology to generate retinal cells with nonsense mutations may provide us with a greater understanding of how choroideremia causes damage to retinal cells. The wider implication of this research is the development of a drug therapy that safely targets healthy eye damaged eye

60th birthday celebration raises six-figure support

At a private concert in front of family and friends in May this year, businessman Michael Wade fulfilled a life-long ambition to conduct an orchestra.

He chose Saint-Saëns’ Symphony No.3: “Orchym Symphony” at St John’s Smith Square in London and invited guests to make donations in lieu of presents, raising over £110,000.

In the last few years Mr Wade had detached retinas in both his eyes but following the success of his sight-saving operations at Moorfields Eye Hospital, he decided “to give something back to the world of eye care”.

His appeal for the hospital is supporting the development of a gene therapy treatment for LC4A, a rare but particularly severe form of congenital blindness that affects children.

Although there is no treatment available for this condition, Moorfields’ consultant and scientist Professor James Bainbridge and his team have recently shown that sight can be improved in children who have one form of inherited blindness, by delivering the relevant missing gene into the eye using a modified ‘virus’. An effective gene therapy for LC4A will pave the way for the treatment of other severe blinding disorders affecting both children and adults that are potentially amenable to gene therapy.

If you would like to take part in Eye to Eye, please return this FREESTAT®, by deleting along the perforated line and sealing the gummed edges.

Registration costs just £15 for the 14 mile route and £10 for the four mile route and there is no minimum sponsorship – just raise as much as you can!

More money falling in the form below or call 020 7566 2486 for more information.

Please tick as appropriate

14 mile route __________________________
No. of participants __________________________

4 mile route __________________________
No. of participants (over age 12) __________________________
No. of participants (under age 12) __________________________

I do not wish to take part but would like to donate £ ______ to Moorfields Eye Charity

I would like the funds I raise to go towards research into (please tick one):

Glucoma __________________________
Age-related macular degeneration __________________________
Diabetic retinopathy __________________________
Retinal diseases __________________________
Choroideremia and surface diseases __________________________
Children’s eye conditions __________________________
Inherited eye diseases/diseases __________________________
Otherwise the need is greatest __________________________

Registration fees are non-refundable.

Name: __________________________
Address: __________________________
Company/team name: __________________________
Contact number: __________________________
Email: __________________________
Lead participant email: __________________________
Company/team email: __________________________
Lead participant postcode: __________________________
Lead participant phone number: __________________________

Company/team name: __________________________
Address: __________________________
Contact number: __________________________
Email: __________________________
Company/team email: __________________________
Lead participant postcode: __________________________
Lead participant phone number: __________________________

You will receive a confirmation email to the address you have provided. The email will include a link to a password protected page where you will be able to keep your pledges on line and update your information. You can also find out more information about Moorfields Eye Charity by visiting our website: www.moorefields.org.uk

If you require this form in a larger print please call 020 7566 2486.