

# Press Release

03 April 2017

**For immediate release**

## **Papworth Hospital awarded over £100k for Sarcoidosis Research**

The British Lung Foundation and SILA: The Sarcoidosis Charity have awarded a three-year research grant of £112,816 to the Cambridge Interstitial Lung Disease Unit at Papworth Hospital, to advance cutting-edge research into cardiac sarcoidosis.

Sarcoidosis is a rare disease that causes small patches of red and swollen tissue, called granulomas, to develop in the organs of the body, predominantly involving the lungs. For young, healthy patients the disease usually improves without treatment. However, conditions involving the heart could present severe risks of heart rhythm disturbances and even sudden death. Early detection of cardiac sarcoidosis, therefore, is critical.

The SILA-BLF Sarcoidosis Research grant will enable the formation of a multi-disciplinary clinical research team. Dr Katharine Tweed, Radiologist, will lead on the Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) of hearts in sarcoidosis patients; and Dr Lynne Williams and Dr Sharad Agarwal, Consultant Cardiologists, will investigate the best non-invasive diagnostic tests to identify cardiac disease.

Papworth Hospital will also be working closely with research leads at Imperial College London, Professor Ajit Lalvani, Chair of Infectious Diseases, and Dr Robert Parker, Research Associate, to identify potential blood-based biomarkers that could indicate cardiac disease.

Dr Muhunthan Thillai, Lead Clinician & Consultant Chest Physician of Cambridge Interstitial Lung Disease Unit, said: "This is an exciting collaboration between Papworth Hospital and Imperial College London. Using a sequence of cardiac tests to identify patients at risk, could transform the lives of so many sarcoidosis patients."

"Additionally, the potential of using state-of-the-art protein sequencing to identify blood markers in predicting cardiac disease, could open up more opportunities for early diagnosis."

Jack Richardson, Executive Officer at SILA, commented: "Cardiac sarcoidosis is a seriously debilitating condition. The SILA-BLF Sarcoidosis Research Grant will enable the team to find a more accurate estimate of the number of patients with cardiac sarcoidosis whilst developing vital new tests to diagnose the condition as early as possible. SILA are excited at the prospect of this research significantly improving the detection and prevention of the disease."

**-Ends-**

## Notes to Editors:

### About Papworth Hospital

Papworth Hospital is the UK's leading heart and lung hospital treating over 100,000 patients each year from across the UK. The hospital includes the country's largest heart and lung transplant centre, the only national centre for pulmonary endarterectomy and it is a national centre for a range of other specialist services.

Since carrying out the UK's first successful heart transplant in 1979, Papworth has established an international reputation for excellence in research and innovation, top surgical results and the very best in patient care.

Papworth Hospital carries out more major heart operations than any other hospital in the UK, currently more than 2,500 per year. With regular scrutiny from robust quality performance monitoring systems, the survival rates and outcomes of these operations are among the best in the world.

Papworth Hospital is a member of Cambridge University Health Partners, a partnership between one of the world's leading Universities and three NHS Foundation Trusts. CUHP delivers world-class excellence in healthcare, research, clinical education and improves the health of people across Cambridgeshire and the wider regions.

[www.papworthhospital.nhs.uk](http://www.papworthhospital.nhs.uk)



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