Research Strategy
2019-2020

Introduction
The Migraine Trust leads the fight against migraine in the UK. Our vision is a world free from the stigma and suffering of migraine.

Our objects, as outlined in our Memorandum and Articles of Association, are:

- To relieve sickness and preserve the health of sufferers of migraine, in particular but not exclusively by providing support services to sufferers of migraine.
- To protect and promote the health of the public in particular by research into the nature, causes, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of migraine and to disseminate the useful results of such research.
- To advance the education of health professionals and the public in the subject of migraine, in particular but not exclusively by raising awareness of migraine, its causes and effects amongst the same.

To achieve this, we currently focus on three core goals, namely:

- To help people live better with migraine through practical support and evidence-based information
- To raise awareness of migraine and campaign on behalf of those affected
- To offer hope through funding and promoting migraine research.

Migraine and its impact
Migraine is a long-term neurological condition that involves a disorder of how sensory information is dealt with by the brain. There is currently no diagnostic test and no known cure. The complex nature of the condition means that treatment and management options are varied and their effectiveness differs from person to person.

The World Health Organization recognises that migraine imposes a notable burden including sometimes substantial personal suffering, impaired quality of life and financial cost. Migraine is the third highest cause of disability in the under 50s. There is also a wider impact on society. In the UK, 25 million days are lost from work or school each year due to migraine. The total burden on the economy is conservatively estimated at £3.42 billion per year. Research into migraine is the least publicly-funded of all neurological illnesses relative to its economic impact.

Migraine research is vastly under-prioritised and under-resourced. People who suffer from the condition are all too aware of the consequences. A significant increase in funding is required to address the burden of migraine and improve the quality of the millions of lives’ affected.

Our commitment to advancing migraine research
Since our foundation in 1965, The Migraine Trust has had a vital role in supporting migraine research for the benefit of people affected in the UK and worldwide. We are a small charity, yet have contributed over £3 million to research that has improved understanding of
migraine pathophysiology and treatment, whilst encouraging more young doctors and researchers to specialise in the field of headache disorders. We have funded:

- Research that identified pain nerves in the head as being crucial targets for migraine treatment, paving the way for triptans to move from a blood vessel to a brain target.
- Studies that explored and promoted the development of ditans and gepants, new classes of acute migraine treatment.
- Experimental work to understand the role of calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) in migraine and cluster headache, paving the way for the development of CGRP pathway targeted preventive treatments.
- Human brain imaging studies to understand and characterise the pathways crucial to the disorder.
- Supported basic scientists and clinical scientists with career awards for their research.

To advance migraine research, we will:

- Campaign for migraine to be recognised as a serious public health concern and for adequate funding to be allocated to research, including long term, stable government funding.
- Promote and support patient involvement to ensure patients are at the centre of research and to aid this, keep patients informed about research activity and outcomes.
- Award research grants, with particular focus on fellowships and studentships in recognition that encouraging researchers into this field and supporting their training and career development is vital for the future outlook of migraine.
- Host the Migraine Trust International Symposium, the world's longest established headache conference, to bring together clinicians and scientists every two years to share latest research findings, and to debate and exchange ideas.

In funding research, we will prioritise work that:

- Advances knowledge of the causes and mechanisms of migraine
- Advances migraine diagnosis, treatment and prevention
- Actively involves the public, especially patients and those around them
- Supports UK-wide clinical and scientific activity.

Get involved
If you would like to support our work and help us deliver this plan then please contact us.

This research strategy is informed and supported by our policies on working with funders and industry partners, conflicts of interest, and data management and privacy.

Gus Baldwin           Michelle Walder           Professor Andrew Charles, M.D.
Chief Executive       Chair, Board of Trustees  Chair, Scientific Research Committee

The migraine trust

Get involved
www.migrainetrust.org
Registered charity in England and Wales (1081300) and Scotland (SC042911)