Dr Eva Sharpe

Careers in Science Policy

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ICR The Institute of Cancer Research

Careers in Science Policy

Dr Eva Sharpe

Making the discoveries that defeat cancer

Careers in Science Policy

1 My career path

2 What a career in policy involves

3 How to move into a career in policy

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My career

My background
Career pathway

2002 – 2005	BSc Biological Sciences at University of Edinburgh
2005 – 2006	MRes in Biomedical Sciences
2006 – 2010	PhD in the Cell Stress Group at MRC Clinical Sciences Centre, Imperial College London
2010	Policy Internship
2011 – 2013	HE Policy Officer at the Royal Society of Biology
2013 – 2016	Science Information and Policy Manager
2016 – now	Senior Policy and Engagement Manager at The Institute of Cancer Research, London

My role
Aims and objectives

To give the ICR a **strong and consistent voice** on research policy to **influence** the development of policy in high-priority **areas which affect our work**.

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What is science policy?

Policy that uses science as evidence base

Eg. Climate change, GM crops, breast cancer screening

Policy that affects how science is done

Eg. science funding, legal regulations and governance, reporting requirements

Policy that affects how science is taken to patients

Eg. NICE processes, cancer drugs funding mechanisms

My role
Topics that I’m working on

- Patient data in research
- Gene patenting
- Big data
- Regulation of clinical trials
- Access to cancer trials for children
- Animals in research
- Research funding
- How universities collaborate with industry
- How to speed up access to new drugs on the NHS

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Working in policy
Day to day

- Attending meetings and networking
- Reading policy reports and articles
- Going to lectures/evidence sessions
- Research and evidence gathering
- Writing briefing notes
- Organising events and meetings
- Working with expert groups
- Blogging about policy
- Responding to consultations
- Going to conferences

My role
Developing positions

Building a framework of policy positions to allow the ICR to take a consistent approach to communicating about policy

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The use of patient data in research

Position Statement from
The Institute of Cancer Research, London

Summary

Access to patient data is vital for the research conducted at The Institute of Cancer Research (ICR). Patient data must be stored safely and securely to ensure patient confidentiality. But such safeguards to confidentiality must not come at the cost of efficient access to patient data for research use. We believe the regulatory system is too risk adverse in its requirements for explicit patient consent where research has been ethically approved. Research at the ICR has been delayed while waiting for approval to access patient data because of the complex regulation involved, particularly where initial consent was collected at the start of a long trial, and current norms on data use have developed since initial consent was collected. We are supportive of moves to clarify and streamline processes to access patient data for ethically approved clinical research.

July 2013

ICR The Institute of Cancer Research | The ROYAL MARSDEN NHS Foundation Trust

Clinical trials – regulation and transparency

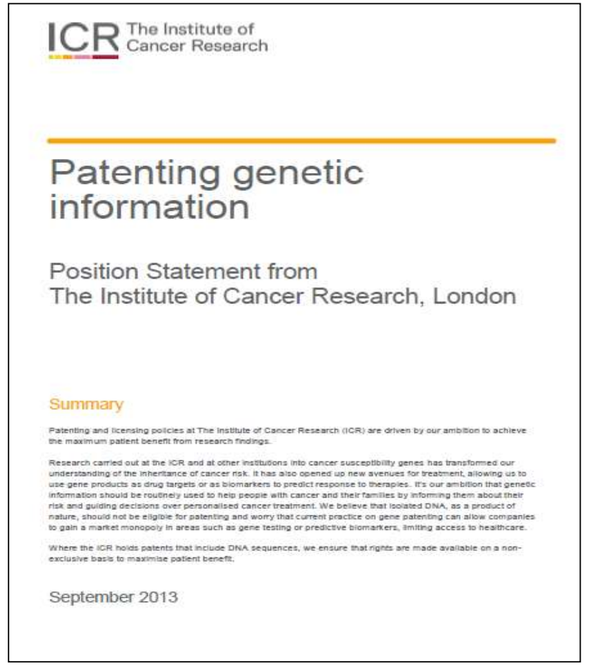
Position Statement from
The Institute of Cancer Research, London, and
The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust

Summary

The Institute of Cancer Research (ICR) and The Royal Marsden believe the regulatory system for clinical trials puts an enormous administrative and financial burden on academic clinical trialists, and has damaged the ability of academic organisations to lead international studies. Since the introduction of the EU Clinical Trials Directive, the complexity, risk and cost associated with running trials has increased. We don't believe the apparently modest increase in the quality of trials data as a result justifies this increase in bureaucracy. We would like the regulation of trials to discriminate far better between the different levels of risk posed. We also believe regulations over safety reporting can be burdensome and excessive, and would like to see them refined, particularly for low risk trials, in order to avoid missing genuine safety concerns.

The ICR and The Royal Marsden support moves to ensure greater transparency in clinical trials and would recommend a legal requirement to make results publicly available within a reasonable timeframe in a form that is suitable for non-commercial sponsors. We support the use of data sharing plans, but stress that all data sharing needs to preserve patient confidentiality.

December 2013



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Patenting genetic information

Position Statement from
The Institute of Cancer Research, London

Summary

Patenting and licensing policies at The Institute of Cancer Research (ICR) are driven by our ambition to achieve the maximum patient benefit from research findings.

Research carried out at the ICR and at other institutions into cancer susceptibility genes has transformed our understanding of the inheritance of cancer risk. It has also opened up new avenues for treatment, allowing us to use gene products as drug targets or as biomarkers to predict response to therapies. It's our ambition that genetic information should be routinely used to help people with cancer and their families by informing them about their risk and guiding decisions over personalised cancer treatment. We believe that isolated DNA, as a product of nature, should not be eligible for patenting and worry that current practice on gene patenting can allow companies to gain a market monopoly in areas such as gene testing or predictive biomarkers, limiting access to healthcare.

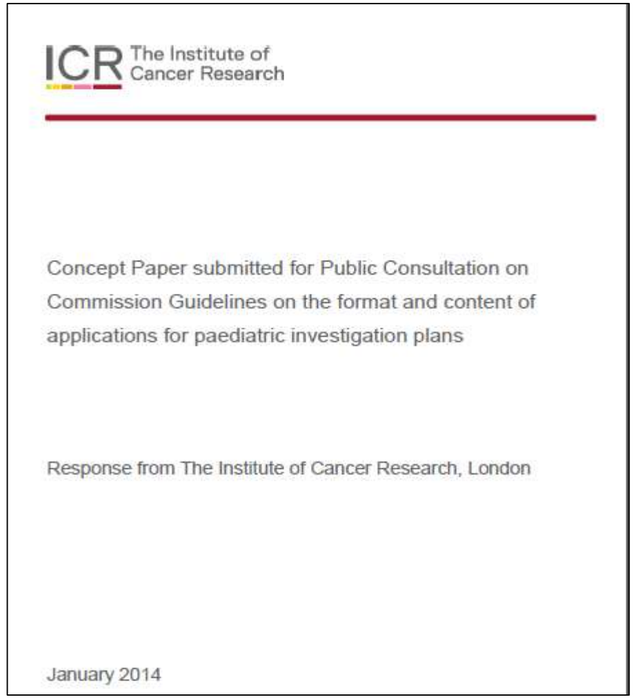
Where the ICR holds patents that include DNA sequences, we ensure that rights are made available on a non-exclusive basis to maximise patient benefit.

September 2013

My role
Communicating our messages

Finding routes to communicate about our policy messages:

- Responding to Government consultations
- Providing evidence for Select committee enquiries
- Releasing reactive media statements



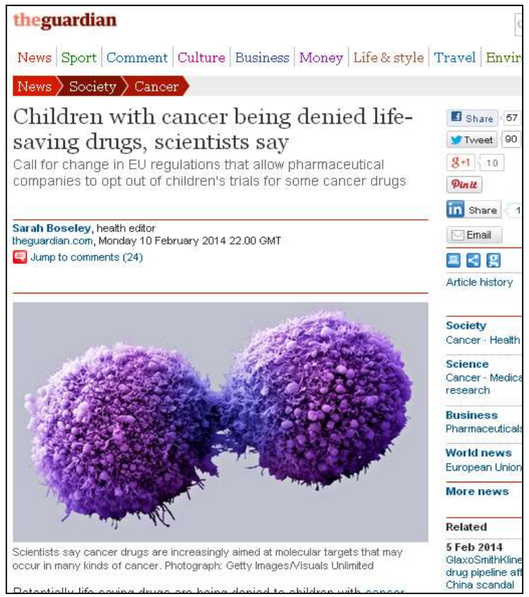
My role
Communicating our messages

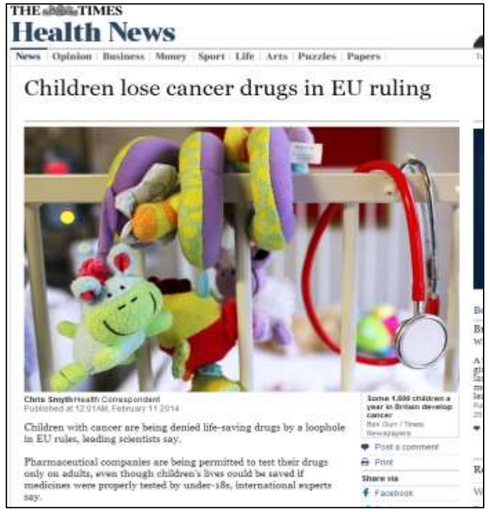
Proactive Public Affairs work:

- Parliamentary event
- Meeting policy makers
- Briefing MPs and MEPs

Working with the media

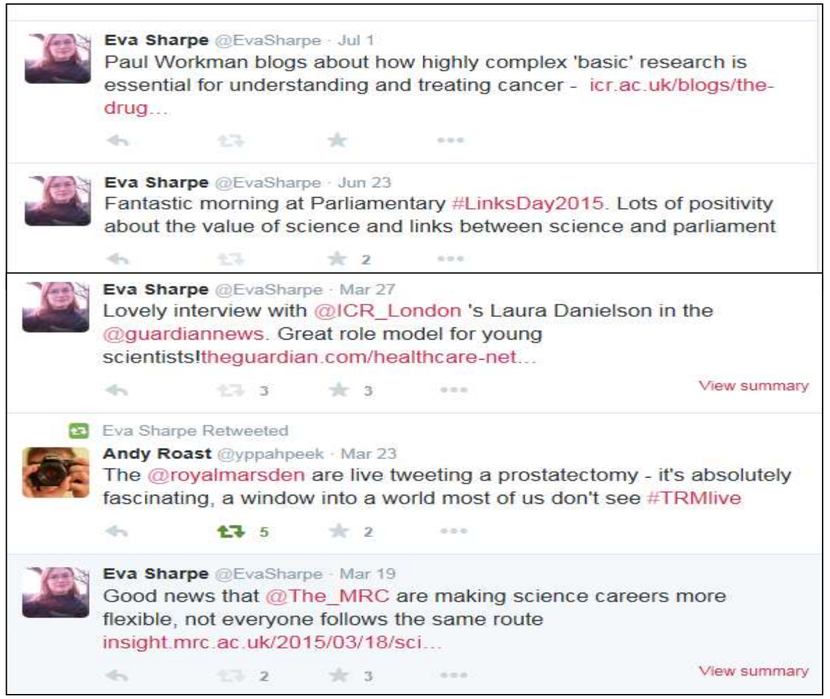
The media team at the ICR arrange media briefings on policy topics and allow us to comment in the press on current issues and recent announcements

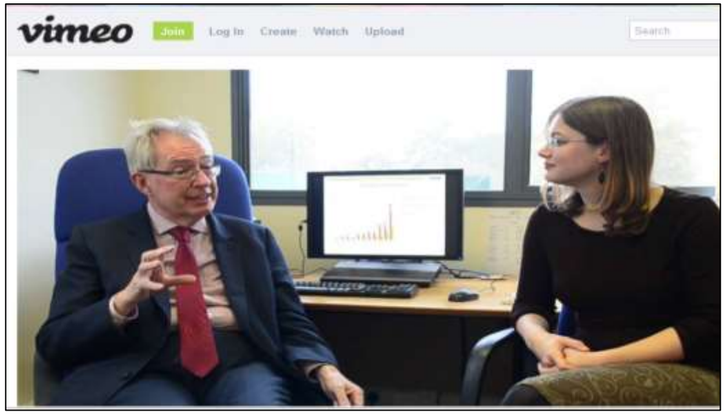




Digital communication and social media

Communicating policy messages through blogging, online news stories, tweeting, and video interviews with researchers about policy





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Working in policy

Careers in policy
Is it for you?

- Quite academic in process
- Work closely with science and scientists
- Always learning new things
- Lots of external meetings, conferences, seminars
- Meet lots of interesting people
- Making a difference

- Can be quite dry at times
- Office based
- Sometimes high pressure - expect a lot to do and with lots of deadlines
- Often working on things outside of your comfort zone

Careers in Policy
Where could you work?

Government and Parliament
- MPs and Peers
- Civil Service
- Special Advisor
- Select Committee clerk

Scientists advising on policy
- Policy committee membership
- Advisory committees
- Chief Scientific Advisers

Policy professional specialising in science
- Professional bodies
- Charities
- Think tanks
- Universities

Careers in Policy
Skills, knowledge and experience

- Writing formally and informally
- Presentations, speaking and networking
- Understanding how science and research work
- Understanding the policy making processes
- Data analysis
- Multi-tasking
- Explaining science to lay audiences

Demonstrable interest is essential

Experience and qualifications are helpful

Careers in Policy

What sort of salary to expect

Policy Officer
£25,000-£32,000

Policy Manager
£34,000-£45,000

Head of Policy
£50,000+

Director of Policy

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How to find out more?

Masters courses in Science Policy

Newton's Apple Introduction to Science Policy Workshop

Professional Development Policy Seminars at Centre for Science and Policy

NERC Science to policy training workshops

Other training listed on Campaign for Science and Engineering website

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Where to get experience?

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Where to get experience?

Lots of opportunities for paid policy internships

amrc
ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL RESEARCH CHARITIES

Royal Society of Biology

CaSE
Campaign for Science and Engineering

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT
PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

CSaP

THE ROYAL SOCIETY

Government Office for Science

Careers in Policy
Keeping up to date with the latest issues

- **Policy newsletters** from Royal Society of Biology, Campaign for Science and Engineering, Medical Research Council
- **Policy briefings** from the Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology
- **Policy blogs** see the Campaign for Science and Engineering website for recommendations
- **Policy events and lectures** eg Policy Lates, Talk Science, Science Question Time
- **Policy magazines and journals** eg Research Fortnight, THE

Careers in Policy
Choosing where to work

Work on a subject you care about

Is it a big or small team? You'll try more things in a small team

What are the opportunities to progress?

Are you doing policy or public affairs or both?

Top tips for moving into policy

- Follow organisations you're interested in through social media to find out what is happening.
- Keep up to date with current affairs.
- Find out what its like through work experience or placements.
- Attend events (even invite yourself along!)
- Gaining experience of other types of science communication is useful too.

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eva.sharpe@icr.ac.uk