



Research Strategy 2025-28

Context

Solving Kids' Cancer UK's Research Strategy is based on SKC UK's Strategic Plan 2022-27, and incorporates key lessons learned since 2017. SKC UK's research focus remains dedicated exclusively to neuroblastoma and this focused approach will continue for the timeline of this strategy. Any additional benefits gained from funded projects, particularly as a pathfinder for therapeutic approaches in other diseases, are highly valued.

The charity's overarching aim remains to expand and enhance therapeutic options for children with high-risk neuroblastoma in the UK and beyond.

SKC UK aims to pursue a course which will benefit future children, as well as prioritising the needs of children currently receiving therapy for neuroblastoma by providing options that will potentially benefit them the most, resulting in more children living longer and an increased number of children being cured of their disease. Furthermore, the charity's Research Strategy is underpinned by its unique position as a parent-led charity bringing insight from the experience and knowledge of its invaluable network of parents and families. International collaboration is of pivotal importance, playing to SKC UK's strengths as a charity with established links with like-minded advocates, charities, researchers and institutions across Europe, North America, and beyond.

Research Strategy

The ultimate goal is to improve the outcome of children and adolescents with neuroblastoma in the UK; this will be achieved by facilitating new clinical approaches evaluated through clinical trials including the UK.

SKC UK's Research Strategy focuses on areas (directed to this goal) which are currently under-resourced; funding for which will facilitate access for children and adolescents with neuroblastoma to the best available treatments and most promising clinical trials.

Therefore, the focus of the Research Strategy is on delivering new and innovative clinical approaches by consolidating existing trial infrastructure, supporting and facilitating transatlantic collaboration and alignment, and enhancing and expediting innovative research in frontline.

Delivering more and better options for children with relapsed and refractory neuroblastoma and identifying the population of children with neuroblastoma for which there are currently no available clinical trials, and addressing these unmet needs are high priorities. SKC UK will take a more proactive funding approach to frontline therapy in Europe, seeking to mitigate delays from fragmented and late funding requests to maximally help drive research forward and help as many children as quickly as possible. The Research Strategy is cognisant of the burden of treatment these children experience, and long-term severe side-effects.



A core pillar of SKC UK's Research Strategy is the support and facilitation of transatlantic collaboration between North America and Europe. SKC UK aims to complement and strengthen ongoing efforts by collaborating with national and international organisations including SIOPEN, COG, EMA and FDA to enhance alignment in treating neuroblastoma. Additionally, SKC UK will also support the work of the UK Neuroblastoma Group in addressing national research priorities.

Research Funding

SKC UK will support the facilitation of clinical trials, including operational aspects, pre-clinical research which is a precursor and essential to opening clinical trials, biological studies, molecular monitoring, and genomics to underpin clinical trials; and efforts to co-ordinate and link clinical trials internationally. SKC UK will also consider funding added-value infrastructure costs to enable the implementation of its Research Strategy; and pre-clinical international collaboration leading to the design and development of truly international clinical studies.

SKC UK will also consider other initiatives to improve patient care.

Funding of basic or translational laboratory research, with a long- or medium-term clinical benefit is not a high priority of the charity, as there are other sources of funding available for this.

Funding Mechanism

SKC UK will issue Requests for Applications (RFAs), congruent with their Research Strategy, with timing determined by budgetary considerations. However, exceptionally applications may be considered out-with these calls via an Exceptional Funding Request mechanism. All applications will undergo external peer review and then review by the Scientific Advisory Board and the Trustees. Collaborative funding applications are encouraged.