

Focus on Parkinson's Disease – Associate Professor, Dr. Camille Carroll

Dr. Camille Carroll is a Consultant Neurologist in Derriford and an international expert on this distressing condition. She writes for *PMF Briefing*:

“One of the major research focuses in Plymouth, is into diseases that affect the brain and nervous system. Many of you will know a family member or a friend who has been diagnosed with this condition. It cannot be cured and like many chronic neurological conditions such as stroke or MS, it is a life sentence to a long decline and considerable suffering. Centuries ago, it was known as the ‘Shaking Palsy’ and was first recognised as a particular disease by an English Physician, James Parkinson in 1817. Parkinsons - as it is known - is associated with a deficiency of a chemical Dopamine in brain cells, but why and how is only partly understood. It affects about 84 people in 100,000. Sixty years ago, it was discovered that life for the afflicted, particularly in the early stages, can be made more bearable by Dopamine which reduces the tremors and stiffness which are so painful and disabling.

The focus of my team and collaborators’ is to find practical ways to improve the lives of patients’ suffering from this remorseless condition. For example, last year we commenced a project where a wrist-worn device known as a Personal Kinetigraph (PKG™) helps patients and a specialist team monitor their condition while at home – saving the hassle of unnecessary appointments and hospital admissions. Another focus is to test the effectiveness of new drugs and I am delighted to say that in this connection we have just been awarded a major grant for an international study from Parkinson’s UK into the effects of COVID-19 on this long-suffering group of patients”

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