

# Research Roundup

This month, we share our announcement of funding for a new Parkinson's research centre. Read more for the latest research news and opportunities to get involved.

## Research news

### **New centre to accelerate Parkinson's research**

Parkinson's UK and the UK Dementia Research Institute (UK DRI) join forces to establish a pioneering research centre.

A new £10m research centre is being set up dedicated to better understanding the causes of Parkinson's and finding new treatments to prevent, halt, and ultimately find cures for the condition. The new centre will recruit and bring together leading Parkinson's researchers. We'll be investing £5m over 5 years to drive forward this vital research and so will the UK DRI.

By collaborating we are joining our expertise, support and networks to work towards a united goal to help identify new approaches to predicting Parkinson's, alongside the development and testing of new treatments to prevent the onset, and slow or even reverse the progression of the condition.

### **Finding new treatments**

Parkinson's results from the loss of neurons in a region of the brain called the substantia nigra, responsible for producing the chemical dopamine, which acts as a messenger between the parts of the brain and nervous system that help control and coordinate body movements. As these neurons deteriorate and the levels of dopamine reduce, the symptoms of Parkinson's appear.

Although the symptoms can be managed with medication and therapies, there are currently no treatments available that slow, stop, or prevent the underlying cause of the condition. The new centre will play a pivotal role in driving research to develop new treatments that will tackle Parkinson's at its root cause.

1 April 2025

Nicky Parsons, who has Parkinson's and works closely with us as a research volunteer, said:

"As someone living with Parkinson's, I know firsthand the challenges it brings, which is why I am so passionate about research and how important it is. More funding and partnerships like these means more hope. I hope for better treatments, a better quality of life, and one day a cure. Every step forward in research makes a real difference, not just for me but for my family, my friends, and everyone affected by Parkinson's."

### **What is the UK DRI?**

The UK DRI is the UK's leading research institute for dementia and related neurodegenerative conditions, including Parkinson's. The mission of the UK DRI is to transform the lives of people affected by neurodegenerative conditions, by discovering the causes of neurodegeneration, developing new tools and treatments, and delivering solutions to maintain brain health in an ageing society.

### **Global cases of Parkinson's predicted to rise to 25 million by 2050**

A study predicting health trends worldwide suggests that incidence of Parkinson's is rising due to an ageing population.

The number of people living with Parkinson's by 2050 could more than double compared to numbers in 2021, according to a study published by the British Medical Journal (BMJ).

Parkinson's is the fastest growing neurological condition, but there's still a lot we don't know about its causes. There's also a big gap in our knowledge about how global healthcare systems, race and ethnicity, and environment might affect the prevalence of Parkinson's.

1 April 2025

In this research, the team studied information from over 195 countries, to build a picture of the number of cases of Parkinson's in 2050, and the factors that might be contributing to this.

### **What does this mean?**

This study is important because it helps demonstrate how much of an impact Parkinson's might have in the future. If people are living longer and more likely to be diagnosed, we need better systems in place in order to be able to support and care for people living with the condition worldwide.

The study also presents an interesting picture globally. As most of our understanding of Parkinson's comes from research that involves people from white, European backgrounds, there's even more need to make sure that research is including everyone so we can build a complete picture of the condition, and how to treat it.

It's important to note that it wasn't possible to get the same information from every country included. And those countries may vary in how they define and diagnose Parkinson's. This means that there could be some important gaps which are not being reflected in the results. The study also only considered age and sex, meaning that information on things such as environment and other health issues were not considered.

## **Take Part in Research**

The development of new Parkinson's treatments is only possible if everyone is part of the research process. We need your help to push promising research forward.

### **Investigating whether nerve stimulation can reduce tremor in Parkinson's**

#### **The research**

1 April 2025

Researchers at the University of Nottingham want to find out if a device which delivers electrical stimulation to the wrist can help to reduce resting tremor in people with Parkinson's. They are also exploring what rate of stimulation is most effective.

### **Who do the researchers need?**

- 30 people with Parkinsons
  - Who experience resting hand or arm tremor
- Unfortunately people with dementia, a history of epilepsy or who have an implanted device such as a pacemaker or deep brain stimulation are unable to take part.

### **What is involved?**

- Taking part in 3 research visits which will last for 2 to 3 hours including breaks.
- All visits will involve:
- Wearing a non-invasive device which will stimulate a nerve in your wrist.
- Researchers will also perform an electroencephalography (EEG). An EEG uses small electrodes placed in a cap to measure electrical activity in the brain.
- There is a small travel allowance for people traveling outside of Nottinghamshire (40p/mile up to 100miles)
- For more information, please contact the researcher

### **Interested in taking part?**

Please contact Kat Gialopsou by email at **[Kat.gialopsou@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Kat.gialopsou@nottingham.ac.uk)**

Send Kat your number to request a call back if you prefer speaking over the phone.

The deadline for taking part in this research is **30 June 2025**.