44 leading medical experts recognised for excellence in research

44 researchers from across the UK have been recognised for their contribution to the advancement of medical science by election to the Fellowship of the Academy of Medical Sciences.

Academy Fellows are elected for excellence in medical research, for innovative application of scientific knowledge or for their conspicuous service to healthcare. The expertise of the new Fellows includes haematology, bioinformatics, immunology, psychiatry, biochemistry and health services provision.

This year, fifteen (34%) of the new Fellows are women, compared to 23.2% of bioscience professors in the UK.*

Professor Sir John Tooke PMedSci, President of the Academy of Medical Sciences said, "The Academy of Medical Sciences represents the excellence and diversity of medical science in the UK, and this is evident in the broad range of expertise demonstrated by this year’s new Fellows. They each bring a unique perspective which we will value immensely – from the industry experience of Fellows such as Professor Jackie Hunter to the policy knowledge of Baroness Finlay. Their election is a much deserved honour for the outstanding achievements they have shown throughout their careers. I know they will contribute greatly to the Academy, and I am delighted to welcome them all to the Fellowship.”

Baroness Ilora Finlay of Landaff FMedSci is Professor of Palliative Medicine at Cardiff University, and a consultant at the Velindre Cancer Centre. In 2003, driven by her work with terminally ill lung cancer patients, she proposed a parliamentary bill to ban smoking in public buildings, and has worked with the government closely to advise on UK policies regarding organ donation, carbon monoxide poisoning, sunbed usage, bereavement in children and the care of prisoners. She has taught more
than 2000 doctors over 25 years, has led on palliative care and hospice development across Wales since 2008, and is a past President of the Royal Society of Medicine.

Another new Fellow, Professor Jacqueline Hunter CBE FMedSci, spent over 20 years working in industry before being elected Chief Executive of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council in 2013. Her area of expertise includes the development of new neurological and gastrointestinal drugs, and in 2011 she formed OI Pharma Partners, which works with universities and other organisations to optimise collaboration and increase the translation of their research.

Professor Sarah Tabrizi FMedSci, also elected this year, is Professor of Clinical Neurology at University College London and studies the cellular mechanisms behind Huntington’s disease. She has worked on the disease throughout her career to wide acclaim, and is said to have set the standard for studying other neurodegenerative diseases. In 2009, she helped set up the UK All Party Parliamentary Group on Huntington's Disease to raise the profile of patients with the disease.

Professor Tabrizi is one of three former Academy mentees who have later been elected Fellows, alongside Professor Andrew Jackson FMedSci this year, and Professor Rebecca Fitzgerald FMedSci in 2013.

Professor Tabrizi has worked closely with the Academy for many years, joining the mentoring scheme in 2002, and being an active member of our Academic Careers Committee. She said:

"My mentor and the Academy’s Careers team have had an influential role in several career decisions, and this support has been invaluable over the last ten years. It is very exciting to be joining the Fellowship, and I look forward to maintaining a close relationship with the Academy in my new role."

The new Fellows will be formally admitted to the Academy at a ceremony on Wednesday 2 July 2014.

- 44 Fellows selected from a pool of 351 candidates
• 15 women (34%) and 29 men (66%) elected
• 8 new Fellows are from the University of Cambridge, 6 are from Imperial College London and 5 from the University of Oxford. Other new Fellows are drawn from across the UK, including Dundee, Cardiff, Bristol and York.

* She Figures 2012: EU Gender in Research and Innovation Report.

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Notes for Editors
This year Fellows were chosen from 351 candidates. The seven Sectional Committees met in March to consider potential Fellows for 2014 entry to the Academy. Three nominators from within the Fellowship must back each candidate. The Academy Registrar, Professor Moira Whyte, Professor of Respiratory Medicine, University of Sheffield, oversees the election.

The election brings the number of Fellows to 1133.

In 2013, the Academy released the report “Representation of women within the Academy’s Fellowship”, which scrutinised the nomination and election process for gender balance and equality.

The independent Academy of Medical Sciences promotes advances in medical science and campaigns to ensure these are translated into benefits for patients. The Academy’s Fellows are the United Kingdom’s leading medical scientists from hospitals, academia, industry and the public service.

Further details may be obtained from The Academy of Medical Sciences, 41 Portland Place, London W1B 1QH. Tel: 020 3176 2183 http://www.acmedsci.ac.uk

Full list of Fellows elected in 2014

Professor Carol Brayne, Professor of Public Health Medicine; Honorary Consultant Public Health England, University of Cambridge
Professor Antony M. Carr, Director, Genome Damage and Stability Centre, School of Life Sciences, University of Sussex
Professor Nicholas Coleman, Professor of Molecular Pathology, University of Cambridge
Professor Richard Cornall, Professor of Immunology and University Lecturer in Renal Medicine and Honorary Consultant Physician, University of Oxford
Professor Donna Davies, Professor of Respiratory Cell and Molecular Biology, University of Southampton
Professor Gideon Davies FRS, Professor of Biological Chemistry, Department of Chemistry, University of York
Professor Anke Ehlers FBA, Wellcome Trust Principal Research Fellow and Professor of Experimental Psychopathology, University of Oxford
Professor Tim Elliott, Associate Dean and Chair of Experimental Oncology, University of Southampton
Professor Majid Ezzati, Professor of Global Environmental Health, Imperial College London
Baroness Ilora Finlay of Landaff, Consultant in Palliative Medicine, Velindre Hospital; Hon. Professor at Cardiff University; Chair of Welsh Medical and Dental Academic Board; Chair of End of Life Care Board in Wales
Professor Adrienne Flanagan, Professor of Musculoskeletal Pathology; Academic Head of Pathology, University College London