

PRESS RELEASE

November 2013

Women On the Move Against Cancer (WOMAC) selects Sarcoma UK as Charity of the Year

Sarcoma UK will be the beneficiary of the annual WOMAC fundraising event in 2014, which is to be held on 11 February aboard HMS President, moored in the City of London and surrounded by many famous landmarks.

Established in 1979, Women On the Move Against Cancer (WOMAC) is made up of around 65 female volunteers working in the automotive and associated industries. WOMAC organises events and activities to raise money for cancer charities. Since 1979, WOMAC has donated approaching £800,000 to cancer-related projects, searching for more effective treatments or improving the quality of life for cancer sufferers, their families and carers.

Sarcoma UK is the only national charity in the UK dealing with all types of sarcoma cancer. Their mission is to increase knowledge and awareness of sarcoma through ground breaking programmes that inspire involvement and transform the landscape for everyone affected by sarcoma. WOMAC have selected one of Sarcoma UK's research projects as the focus of their fundraising activities.

The money raised will support a research project at a sarcoma specialist treatment centre in Newcastle that aims to test two new technologies that may help survivors of bone and soft tissue sarcoma. The treatment for sarcoma often involves major surgery and can involve amputation of a limb. As a result many survivors may be unable to perform normal activities such as walking or climbing stairs. This innovative project will test whether two new devices will provide new, meaningful information about physical activity and functioning in adults who have been treated for lower extremity sarcoma. If this study shows the devices to be useful, there is a good chance that the use of these devices would become a more standard part of the assessment of physical functioning in patients after treatment for sarcoma. WOMAC's fundraising will support a clinical research physiotherapist to run this study.

Sarcoma UK's chief executive, Lindsey Bennister, said:

"I am delighted that Sarcoma UK has been selected as the beneficiary charity for WOMAC's annual fundraising activities. It is a real recognition of the potential that sarcoma research has to improve the lives of people affected by sarcoma. Around £400 million is invested in cancer research in the UK each year but only £2 million of this goes into sarcoma research. Sarcoma UK's research programme focuses solely on sarcoma and we are proud to support ground breaking high quality research that has real potential for making a difference."

For more information about this research project, visit www.sarcoma.org.uk/Research

For more information about WOMAC, visit www.womac.co.uk

Key messages

About sarcoma

- Sarcomas are rare cancers that develop in the muscle, bone, nerves, cartilage, tendons, blood vessels and the fatty and fibrous tissues
- There are around 100 different sub-types of sarcoma
- There are around 3,800 new cases of sarcoma diagnosed each year in the UK:
 - 3,330 people are diagnosed with a soft tissue sarcoma (including GIST)
 - 500 people are diagnosed with a bone sarcoma
- 10 people every day are diagnosed with sarcoma in the UK
- There are around 12,000 people living with sarcoma in the UK
- Sarcomas make up 1% of all cancer diagnoses in the UK
- Sarcomas make up 14% of all childhood cancers (0-14 years)
- Sarcomas make up 11% of all cancer diagnoses in teenagers and young people (15-24 years)
- In **Scotland**, just under 300 new cases of sarcoma are diagnosed each year
 - Approximately 20 children and young people (0-24) are diagnosed with sarcoma each year
- In general, patients with a bone or soft tissue diagnosis tend to be younger than the majority of cancer patients
 - 16% of bone or soft tissue sarcomas are diagnosed in patients less than thirty years of age, compared to around 2% of all cancers *
 - 37% of bone or soft tissue sarcoma patients are aged less than 50 years*
- The five-year relative survival rate for all sarcomas is approximately 55%*
- There has been no significant improvement in survival rates for bone sarcomas in the the last two decades*
- There has been significant improvement in survival rates for soft tissue sarcomas (from 48% to 56%) in the last two decades *

*England data

About Sarcoma UK

- Sarcoma UK is the main charity in the UK focusing on all types of sarcoma
- Sarcoma UK provides information and support for anyone affected by sarcoma –patients, carers, family and friends
- Sarcoma UK’s aim is to achieve the best possible standard of treatment and care for patients with sarcoma. It does this through:
 - Funding scientific and medical research into causes and treatments;
 - Delivering a range of support and information services covering all aspects of sarcoma;
 - Raising awareness of sarcoma amongst the public, healthcare professionals and policy makers;
 - Campaigning on behalf of sarcoma patients for improved treatment and care
- Sarcoma UK relies solely on voluntary donations and fundraising activities to fund its work
- Sarcoma UK is staffed by a small team of five, managed by a board of trustees (many with personal experience of sarcoma), and supported by experts in the sarcoma field
- Sarcoma UK works collaboratively with healthcare professionals and other cancer charities