

Dr O Ogunbiyi - The Royal Free Hospital, London

Grant awarded £5,680 (2 Years)

Investigation of the relationship between inflammatory bowel disease and familial colorectal cancer

This study investigates the relationship between inflammatory bowel disease (Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis) and cancer of the colon and rectum which may run in families. The aim is to determine whether the relatives of individuals with inflammatory bowel disease are more likely to develop cancer of the colon or rectum as compared to the normal population. It may provide information on the way both conditions are inherited. It is hoped that the results will help in the future management of patients with inflammatory bowel disease and their relatives who may be at risk of developing cancer of the colon or rectum.

The study is being carried out by doctors from University Departments of Surgery and The Centre for Gastroenterology at The Royal Free Hospital; Departments of Gastroenterology and Surgery at St. Bartholomew's and The Royal London Hospitals; and the Departments of Surgery and Gastroenterology at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham.

Two groups of patients will be invited to take part in the study. The first (study) group will consist of patients who have inflammatory bowel disease. All individuals who agree to participate will be asked to fill in a questionnaire which asks about specific illnesses/diseases from which the participating individuals or their first-degree relatives (mother, father, brothers and sisters, and children) may have suffered. The questionnaire takes approximately 12 minutes to fill in and we will provide a pre-paid self-addressed envelope for return of the questionnaire. In the questionnaire we ask for names of some of the participating individuals' relatives who have suffered from the illness/diseases of interest. The reason for this is only so that we can check any details given with details that are held in hospital and national registers. We will not contact any of the relatives.

Participating individuals will also be asked if they would be willing to identify four of their friends (who are not related to them or each other) of similar age and gender, who live close to the patients, and would be willing to take part in the study. This group of people will act as a comparison group, and will be sent identical questionnaires to that filled out by the study group. Comparison of the results from both groups will enable us to determine whether the relatives of individuals with inflammatory bowel disease are more likely to develop cancer of the colon or rectum as compared to the normal population.

All the information collected will be stored on a computer database without using the names of participating individuals. A separate hard copy code list identifying individuals will be kept in a secure area. Access to all data and the code list will be restricted to the people involved in the study in keeping with the requirements of the data protection act. The study will be co-ordinated from the University Department of Surgery at The Royal Free Hospital, London.