

# Parkinson's Disease Society Brain Donor Appeal

## Parkinson's Awareness Week 20–26 April 2009

### 40 years of the Parkinson's Disease Society

It is the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Parkinson's Disease Society (PDS) in 2009.

Over the last 40 years, the Parkinson's Disease Society has become the UK's leading charity dedicated to supporting everyone affected by Parkinson's. We campaign for a better quality of life for people with Parkinson's and provide expert information on all aspects of living with the condition. Our pioneering research is transforming treatment and taking us closer to a cure.

The PDS has 33 branches and support groups across Scotland, from Stranraer to Caithness. These groups provide friendship and support to people affected by Parkinson's in their local area.

We also employ Information and Support Workers in each mainland health board area, to provide free and confidential one-to-one support to people affected by Parkinson's.

The Society has a free Helpline 0808 800 0303 (9.30am to 9pm Monday to Friday and 9.30am to 5.30pm on Saturdays) providing expert advice.

### Parkinson's Disease Society Research

Since 1969, we have invested £40million into research to help find a cure for Parkinson's.

PDS currently invests the equivalent of £459 every hour for research. We are the UK's largest non-commercial funder of research into Parkinson's.

Research funded by the PDS has led to major breakthroughs, including the discovery of two of the genes associated with inherited Parkinson's, and the development of highly effective medications.

### Focus on the Parkinson's Brain Donor Appeal

PDS supports one of the world's first ever Brain Banks dedicated to Parkinson's, based at Imperial College London. Since 2001, we have invested about £1.6million into the Brain Bank.

We need a Parkinson's Brain Bank because only humans get Parkinson's – so research needs to be carried out on human brains. But it is impossible to study the living brain without doing any damage, and brain imaging technology is limited. This means that the best way to study nerve cells is to look at the human brain after death.

Since 2001, the Brain Bank has supplied tissue to more than 80 projects, in countries throughout the world. A single donated brain can be used in as many as 50 different research projects.

But there is a real shortage of brain tissue. The Brain Bank needs brains from people who don't have Parkinson's, as well as those with the condition. In order to understand what is happening inside the brains of people with Parkinson's, scientists need to compare the tissue from people who do not have the condition with those who have Parkinson's.

To find out more about registering as a donor with the Parkinson's Brain Bank, please call the PDS Helpline on 0808 800 0303 or email: [enquiries@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@parkinsons.org.uk) for an information pack.

## About Parkinson's in Scotland

Parkinson's is a progressive neurological condition with no known cure. It can be managed with specialist care, including medication and input from a range of healthcare professionals.

Parkinson's affects all aspects of daily living including talking, walking, swallowing and writing. People with Parkinson's can also experience a range of non-motor symptoms, affecting mental health, sleep and continence. Many people find these symptoms have an even bigger impact on their quality of life than the "classic signs" of Parkinson's – tremor, muscular rigidity or stiffness and slowness of movement.

- About 10,000 people in Scotland have Parkinson's
- That's equivalent to one in every 500 people
- One in eight Scots are affected by Parkinson's, because they are close to someone with the condition
- The risk of developing Parkinson's increases with age, and symptoms usually appear after the age of 50
- One in 20 people with Parkinson's are under the age of 40 when they are diagnosed
- Parkinson's is a very variable condition that affects every person differently

For more information about any aspect of Parkinson's in Scotland. Please contact Tanith Muller, Parliamentary and Campaigns Officer, phone: **0844 225 3726** email: [tmuller@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:tmuller@parkinsons.org.uk)

