

## Annual Dementia Conference in Cheltenham calls for “earlier and more accurate diagnosis” of growing disease

Leading medical charity Cobalt has held its inaugural annual Dementia Conference, attracting over 100 healthcare professionals involved in the diagnosis and care of dementia patients, including radiologists, neurologists, psychiatrists, and nursing staff. Held in conjunction with Siemens Healthcare, the event saw educational institutions share research findings and important discussion take place on the disease, as the charity continues to support efforts to improve dementia diagnosis rates through its PET/CT technology.

“Dementia has risen far higher up the national health agenda in recent years, due at least in part to the rising age of the UK population,” states Professor Iain Lyburn, Medical Director and research lead at Cobalt Health. “Dementia is now being recognised for what it is – a sizeable concern that places a significant drain on resources. While there continues to be no cure, heightening awareness is essential to early diagnosis, ensuring that those affected by the disease can have measures put in place in order to receive the best care possible.”

The inaugural Dementia Conference brought together a number of the leading minds in the country for high-end imaging. Presentations included Professor Karl Herholz talking about new clinical imaging techniques for dementia; Professor Sube Bannerjee covering complexity and quality in dementia; and Professor John O’Brien delivering the findings from a completed NIHR study comparing perfusion SPECT and FDG-PET for the differential diagnosis of degenerative dementia. Professor Lyburn co-chaired the event alongside Dr. Tarun Kuruvilla, a consultant in old age psychiatry at Charlton Lane Centre who spoke on the Gloucestershire experience of neuroimaging for dementia in a multidisciplinary setting.

“FDG-PET/CT and Amyloid PET is important in assisting with the clinical diagnosis of the disease causing the dementia syndrome in the most difficult to diagnose people when all other investigations have been inconclusive,” states Dr. Kuruvilla. “It allows people with dementia to get an earlier and more accurate diagnosis which is often the key to accessing disease specific treatments and support services. It can reduce the duration of diagnostic uncertainty for these complex patients and their carers who often have to wait for years and have repeated investigations including invasive tests like lumbar punctures.”

The annual Dementia Conference follows Cobalt’s recent unveiling of a new Biograph mCT Flow Edge™ PET/CT system from Siemens Healthcare, installed at Cobalt Imaging Centre in Cheltenham. Cobalt has been a leading provider of advanced medical imaging services to the NHS, including MR and PET/CT, since 1994, and the charity also provides training and education to healthcare professionals.

Anna Cartwright, UK Molecular Imaging Product Specialist at Siemens Healthcare states, “The first annual Dementia Conference was very positively received, attracting a wide range of healthcare practitioners from across the UK. Not only did it generate further interest and discussion around this significant disease, but it also served as an invaluable opportunity to explore collaborative working opportunities on a national scale. With the evolution of our PET/CT technology paving the way for enhanced dementia diagnosis through the elimination of stop-and-go imaging, Siemens is proud to have been able to support this inaugural event.”

Siemens Healthcare is one of the world’s largest suppliers to the healthcare industry and a trendsetter in medical imaging, laboratory diagnostics, medical information technology and hearing aids. Siemens offers its customers products and solutions for the entire range of patient care from a single source – from prevention and early detection to diagnosis, and on to treatment and aftercare. By optimising clinical workflows for the most common diseases, Siemens also makes healthcare faster, better and more cost-effective. Siemens Healthcare employs some 52,000 employees worldwide and operates around the world

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**Picture caption:** Professor Iain Lyburn, Medical Director and research lead at Cobalt Health, speaks to delegates at Cobalt's inaugural annual Dementia Conference held in conjunction with Siemens Healthcare.



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