

Cancer Research UK urges medical community to help make Wikipedia more accurate

August 11 2014



Cancer Research UK is today (Friday) calling for scientists, doctors and nurses to get more involved in Wikipedia to help ensure the free online encyclopaedia has the most up to date and accurate information on cancer.

Speaking at the [Wikimania 2014](#) conference in London, Cancer Research UK will be discussing Wikipedia's role as a resource for people

searching for cancer-related information on the Internet, and how this fits in with their use of other online medical content.

The charity – working with Wikimedia UK – is employing an 'in-house' Wikipedian in Residence** and at the conference, will also its outline plans – as part of this project - to evaluate how people use the site to find information, and how to make its pages easier to understand.

It will also be evaluating whether the content has improved since the project began.

A panel including Wikipedia's medical editors will discuss the issues.

Henry Scowcroft, Cancer Research UK's news and multimedia manager, said: "Wikipedia is one of the most visited websites in the world, and probably the most frequently used online source of medical information. Keeping it up to date, accurate and relevant is a huge challenge – one that requires a lot of input, effort and time. We'd like to see more medical professionals, researchers and science communicators get involved in editing and reviewing Wikipedia's medical and scientific pages.

"We feel it's our responsibility to make sure that cancer information online is as good as it can be, to remove uncertainty, reduce fear and worry, and to help people take their next steps after they, their family or friends hear the phrase 'it's cancer'."

Jon Davies, Chief Executive of Wikimedia UK, said: "As someone who has personal experience of [cancer](#), I know the information on Wikipedia has to be as good as possible. The work that Cancer Research UK is doing to support the improvement of medical content is excellent and I hope that many others will contribute to their efforts."

Wikipedia is one of the leading online sources of [medical information](#), and as an encyclopaedia the medical content is used by a wide range of groups, including patients, those with a general interest, [medical professionals](#) and students.

It is the world's fifth most popular website*, with half a billion people accessing it and its sister Wikimedia sites every month.

More information: *Data provided by comScore Media Metrix

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**In 2014 a new in-house role - Funded by the Wellcome Trust and supported by Wikimedia UK - was the first of its kind to be created by a medical research organisation. It is hoped this the project will act as an exemplar for other areas of medical research – ensuring that medical experts are working closely with Wikipedia so that cutting-edge scientific research is freely available to everyone.

Provided by Cancer Research UK

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