

New research into terminal care



Marie Curie and the Scottish Government Chief Scientist Office (CSO) have announced the funding for two new research studies looking at care for people with terminal illnesses.

It is hoped that the studies, which are led by researchers at the University of Edinburgh, will inform the provision of services for those affected by terminal illness in Scotland.

Professor Scott Murray at the University of Edinburgh will investigate the challenges involved in providing out-of-hours care and support services, such as helpline support and GP or nurse visits, to terminally ill patients.

The study will look at how such services are currently provided in Scotland and provide evidence to inform a proposed redesign that, it is hoped, will deliver a truly 24/7 care and support service.

The second of the two studies, led by Professor Marie Fallon at the University of Edinburgh, will involve hospice patients in Edinburgh to assess the impact of a programme of exercise and nutrition on patients' survival and quality of life.

The researchers believe that the trial has the potential to change clinical practice and improve quality of life for people with incurable diseases.

Dr Alan McNair, Senior Research Manager for CSO, said: "Research into palliative and end-of-life care is essential if we are to develop the best models of care for those with terminal illnesses, their carers and families.

"We are confident that this research will address some of the

unanswered questions in this area.”

The CSO has contributed £225,000 of funding which has been matched by Marie Curie.

Dr Sabine Best, Head of Research for Marie Curie, said: “We believe these studies have the potential to significantly improve the lives of people living with terminal illnesses and their families in Scotland and across the UK.”