

Oxford scientist awarded £420K funding boost from leading dementia research charity



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BY [ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH UK](#)

Today, Alzheimer's Research UK has announced support for pioneering dementia research at the University of Oxford. The news comes on World Alzheimer's Day, an international initiative to raise awareness of Alzheimer's disease.

Dementia is the umbrella term given to a group of symptoms including memory and thinking problems, communication difficulties and personality changes. Different diseases cause dementia, with Alzheimer's being the most common. There are nearly a million people in the UK affected by dementia, with around 8,500 in Oxfordshire alone.

A hallmark of Alzheimer's is the build-up and spread of amyloid protein in the brain. Researchers think that this protein sets off a chain of events leading to the loss of nerve cells and the symptoms of dementia.

The new £420,000 of funding will allow Dr Becky Carlyle and her team from University of Oxford to investigate ways to boost resilience to Alzheimer's. By identifying the proteins that are most important for protecting nerve cells from damage by amyloid and a second critical protein called tau, they aim to reveal potential targets for new drugs that could help slow the progression of the disease.

Dr Becky Carlyle at the University of Oxford, said: "The interaction of proteins underlies all the complex processes happening in our brain. When things are going right, nerve cells can communicate, form memories, and clear away toxic waste products. In people with Alzheimer's disease, these

processes are disrupted. “To understand why some people with high levels of amyloid build-up don’t develop dementia, we will measure thousands of proteins in the brains of people with and without dementia, figure out where these proteins are active, and how their interactions change in disease. We will then test which of the proteins we identify are the most important for resilience, in experiments using human nerve cells developed from stem cells. “Thanks to this new funding, we will be closer to understanding a key feature of Alzheimer’s, designing treatments to increase resilience in those at risk, and helping limit the impact of this devastating disease.”

Dr Sara Imarisio, Head of Research at Alzheimer’s Research UK, said: “With 944,000 people estimated to be living with dementia in the UK, more than ever before, it is vital that we invest in dementia research. Fundamental research projects such as this one underway in Oxford will allow us to better understand the underlying causes of Alzheimer’s disease and highlight potential new targets for future treatments. “Alzheimer’s Research UK remains committed to funding the best science and Oxford has a strong dementia research community. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters across the country, we can drive progress towards new treatments for people living with the condition.” “If anyone wants more information about this project, or would like to support dementia research by volunteering to take part in research studies, they can call Alzheimer’s Research UK on 0300 111 5 111 or email ”

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