Lifetime Achievement Award

Name of individual nominated

Angela & Neil Dickson

1. **What organisations/programmes/communities have you impacted during your working life?**

Brain Tumour Patients and Brain Tumour Research Patient Support HeadSmart - providing National Guidelines for Early Diagnosis of Brain Tumours

2. **What were you trying to change? Help us understand the vision, aims and objectives. Please include aspects from the entire span of your working life. (maximum 200 words)**

Since loosing our 16 year old daughter to a brain tumour, we were appalled at the lack of support and research to help find a cure for this devastating disease. Brain cancer is responsible for more deaths in children and adults under the age of 40 than any other cancer, and yet there was very little support and has been classified as "the forgotten" cancer. We wanted to increase the amount of high quality research into brain tumours in the UK with the aim of improving treatment and increasing survivability. Within this objective we felt it was also important to reduce the length of time it took to diagnose patients with brain tumours. When our daughter was ill we felt totally isolated and our other main objective has been to provide national support for patients and their families who have been affected by a brain tumour. Finally, we felt it was vital to increase public awareness for brain cancer and try and emulate the success of childhood leukaemia with regard to increasing survivability.

3. **What positive change did you achieve? Please make sure to include aspects from the span of your working life (maximum 200 words)**

We established a first-class Scientific and Medical Advisory Board to help peer review new research applications, and help with patient enquiries. £7 million has been invested into top quality research over the country since 1997, making the UK one of the leading brain tumour research centres in the world after the USA. Our research at Cambridge was the first in the world to discover the genetic mutation leading to the formation of the most common childhood brain tumour, improving diagnosis and allowing new drugs to be developed. At Newcastle University we discovered a new biological marker for the most aggressive childhood brain tumour Medulloblastoma, leading to a new treatment throughout Europe starting in 2012. We have launched

our HeadSmart Campaign to reduce the time taken to diagnose childhood brain tumours, providing national guidelines for GP's, and this should reduce diagnosis time from 12 weeks to 6 weeks, saving children's lives and irreversible brain damage. We opened the first UK "Centre of Excellence for brain cancer" at University College London. We have helped thousands of patients and their families, and developed a national programme of patient information days throughout the country, offering vital support for many isolated families.

Additional Nomination Comments from others

Neil Dickson (with wife Angela) founded the Samantha Dickson Brain Tumour Trust (SDBTT) in 1996 after the loss of their daughter to a brain tumour at just 16. At the time there were no brain tumour charities in the UK and a severe lack of research funding and patient support. Previously running his own multi-million pound aviation business, Neil gave up his job to dedicate himself to the Trust in 2008. Under Neil's Chairmanship, SDBTT has grown to become the largest brain tumour charity in the UK, raising over £10m for research and support. Key achievements include: ~ UK's largest dedicated funder of brain tumour research spending around £1 million p.a. across 10 different institutions. ~ Opened £2.5m Samantha Dickson Brain Cancer Unit at UCL Cancer Institute. ~ Support for 2,000+ children and adults with brain tumours every year. ~ Launch of 'HeadSmart' – a campaign for earlier diagnosis of brain tumours in children and young people. ~ Established a UK-wide network of 79 supporter groups, raising funds and awareness. Without Neil much of the UK's brain tumour research over the last 15 years would not have been funded, and thousands of brain tumour patients would not have been supported.