

Dr Hadwen Trust for Human Research

For immediate release

27 July 2010

Animal Testing Statistics drop by 1%

Statistics released today by the Home Office (Tuesday, 27 July 2010) show that the UK's animal experiments have dropped by 1% - remaining at just over 3.6 million experiments.

The new figures also reveal that the number of toxicology tests on animals in 2008-2009 dropped by 10%¹, which was welcomed by the Dr Hadwen Trust for Humane Research. The charity hopes that this downturn will mark the beginning of a new trend towards the increasing use of animal replacement techniques.

However, whilst there was a decrease in the number of non-human primates used, the number of new world primates used, such as marmosets and tamarins, rose by 90%². This is particularly concerning as most of these animal experiments study human diseases that do not exist in non-human primates, such as Parkinson's Disease. Using such animal models significantly challenges the validity of these tests necessitating the development of more human relevant approaches such as the projects currently funded by the Dr Hadwen Trust.

Kailah Eglington, Chief Executive of the Dr Hadwen Trust, said: “Whilst we acknowledge that some progress has been made in reducing and refining animal experiments much still needs to be done in the area of replacement. Through the projects we fund, scientists are being given the opportunity to push the boundaries of science proving that more human relevant techniques can be implemented and developed. We hope that this year’s figures mark a turning point and that this will pave the way for a greater focus on funding replacement techniques.”

The new Government Coalition has committed to ‘end the testing of household products and work to reduce the use of animals in scientific research’. As the statistics show that in 2009 no animals were used in testing household products, the Dr Hadwen Trust hopes that the coalition will go further in its commitment to reducing the total number of animals used.

The Dr Hadwen Trust for Humane Research funds cutting-edge research at universities across the UK. The projects carried out by its grant-holders aim to replace the use of animals in medical research which will lead to more relevant, high quality research. Current projects include research into breast cancer, multiple sclerosis, cystic fibrosis, skin cancer and brain infections amongst others.

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For more information or to arrange interviews contact Amanda Gent, Press Officer, on tel: 01462 436819 or email a.gent@drhadwentrust.org

Notes to Editor:

Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals – Great Britain, 2009 -

Full details of the statistics can be viewed here:

<http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/scientific1.html>

¹ - Toxicology tests increased by 16% in 2007-2008 and decreased by 10% in 2008-2009.

² - 90% represents the total number of new world monkeys used which corresponds to an increase of 68% in the number of procedures.