CANCER INNOVATION CHALLENGE LAUNCHED
- **Challenge launched at Scotland's first data festival, DataFest17**

A call for innovative data science solutions to improve cancer care in Scotland has been launched today (Friday 24th March).

The *Cancer Innovation Challenge* aims to inspire novel data and tech proposals to help Scotland become a world leading health system for people with cancer.

The pioneering initiative was launched by Dr Catherine Calderwood, Chief Medical Officer, Scottish Government, on the last day of DataFest17, which has attracted international experts to celebrate data innovation and showcase Scotland's world class data science capabilities.

A patient's cancer journey leaves a data trail from diagnosis to treatment to recovery. The *Cancer Innovation Challenge* invites data scientists, technicians and clinicians to develop leading-edge solutions that will allow the NHS in Scotland to use this data to refine diagnosis, select treatments and improve the experience for patients.

This could be by generating unique analytical insights into care resourcing or useful ways of visualising large amounts of data on treatment plans or prescriptions. Or it could be about enabling patients to record experiences of their cancer journey and integrate the resulting data into NHS systems to improve patient care. The challenge will work with health care professionals to create a safe, secure and anonymous environment, which will protect patient confidentially, for data linkage and analysis.

The *Cancer Innovation Challenge* is funded by the Scottish Funding Council and is being delivered by three Scottish innovation centres – led by The Data Lab and supported by the Digital Health and Care Institute (DHI) and Stratified Medicine Scotland (SMS).

Dr Catherine Calderwood, Scotland's Chief Medical Officer, said: "If used in the right way, data can be a vital tool in our efforts to improve services, treatments and outcomes for people with cancer. This Cancer Challenge is about finding innovative ways of using the data that exists, while continuing to guarantee patient confidentiality. I look forward to seeing the outcomes of this challenge, and the benefits it will bring to cancer patients and their families."

Gillian Docherty, CEO, The Data Lab, said: "There have been phenomenal advances in cancer care in Scotland over the last decade, and while we understand the outcomes of patient care, time and funding constraints sometimes limit our ability to analyse how cancer services could be improved.

"The data industry will contribute £20bn to Scotland's economy by 2020 and data has the power to help better provide better cancer services.

"Scotland provides a unique test bed to explore how healthcare data might be used to help make better treatment decisions and better target resources. This funding will drive collaboration across Health Boards, industry, academia, patients, practitioners and cancer charities, enhancing Scotland's ongoing commitment to improving care for cancer patients"

John Kemp, interim Chief Executive of the Scottish Funding Council, said: "A challenge to improve the prevention of cancer and care of people with cancer is good news for patients and for Scotland. Combining the different areas of expertise in the three innovation centres and the NHS will help Scotland become a world leading carer for people with cancer."

To find out more about the Cancer Innovation Challenge and its associated activities and funding opportunities, please visit www.cancerchallengescotland.com

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For further information, please contact: Kirsty Anderson, Joanna Buggy or Stephanie Malcolm on 0131 226 2363 / **datalab@grayling.com**

About the Cancer Innovation Challenge

The Cancer Innovation Challenge is a project funded by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to encourage Innovation Centres in Scotland to work in partnership to help Scotland become a world leading carer for people with cancer.

The project brings together three Innovation Centres, led by The Data Lab in collaboration with the Digital Health and Care Institute (DHI) and Stratified Medicine Scotland (SMS). The Innovation Centres are funded by the SFC to support transformational collaboration between universities and businesses. The Centres aim to enhance innovation and entrepreneurship across Scotland's key economic sectors to create jobs and grow the economy.

The Challenge has two major work streams:

1) An open innovation funding call to identify innovative cancer data science solutions

2) An open innovation funding call to develop new tools for cancer patient reported outcomes and experience measures

There will be a programme of activities surrounding each work stream involving industry, the public and a variety of stakeholders in the wider health sector. The aim is to utilise NHS data to support the delivery of more effective and efficient cancer care to help derive new analytical insights into Scottish cancer data, inspire local start-ups to join in the effort, demonstrate ability to produce large scale NHS data for complex analysis under safe and secure conditions and to support informed discussion about the creation and use of synthetic data.

Organisations supporting the delivery of the challenge include:

- NHS National Services Scotland
- The Usher Institute of Population Health Sciences and Informatics at the University of Edinburgh
- The Innovative Healthcare Delivery Programme (IHDP) at the Farr Institute Scotland
- The University of Edinburgh
- The Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions Research Unit at the University of Stirling
- Find out more here: www.cancerchallengescotland.com

Twitter: @cancerchallscot, #DataSavesLives

Scottish Funding Council

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is helping to make Scotland the best place in the world to educate, to research and to innovate. Investing around £1.5 billion of public money each year, SFC's funding enables Scotland's colleges and universities to provide life-changing opportunities for over half a million people. Its support for university research means every one of Scotland's 19 universities is able to carry out world-leading research. www.sfc.ac.uk

The Data Lab:

The Data Lab is an innovation centre focused on helping Scottish industry to capitalise on a growing market opportunity in data science. Established with an £11.3 million grant from the Scottish Funding Council, The Data Lab enables industry, public sector and world-class university researchers to innovate and develop new data science capabilities in a collaborative environment. Its core mission is to generate significant economic, social and scientific value from data for Scotland.

www.thedatalab.com

www.datafest.global