



**CANCER  
RESEARCH  
UK**



**Royal Papworth Hospital**  
NHS Foundation Trust



## Message from the SPORT study Chief Investigator

**Professor Robert Rintoul**

Welcome to the first SPORT participant newsletter. In this newsletter you will find information about how the study is going, what we are doing with your samples and changes we have made in response to your feedback.

Firstly, I would like to sincerely thank you for your help with the SPORT research study. The study aims to find new ways of detecting lung cancer at its earliest stages, when more can be done to treat and, potentially cure, people.

Due to your generous contribution, the study is going very well. We have recruited 660 people from 12 centres across the UK who have previously had lung cancer and attend follow-up clinics. We are aiming to recruit 850 people in total, so we are fast approaching our target.

Our earliest participants, recruited to the study just before the first Covid lockdown in early 2020, have been donating blood samples every six months for the last three and a half years. The blood samples that you donate are carefully processed and are being used to develop new tests for early detection of lung cancer. We know that not everyone likes giving blood samples, so we are very grateful to you for all your donations.

Going forward, it is your continued donations every six months for five years that will make this study so valuable. The progress that we are making is already catching the attention of our medical and scientific colleagues and we will work with them to develop these new tests.

Thank you again and best regards,  
Robert Rintoul



**12 hospitals**



**660 participants**



**37 litres of blood  
donated**



**1940 visits**

### What are we doing with your blood samples?

Our previous research has shown that it is possible to detect cancer cell DNA in a blood sample – so called ‘circulating tumour DNA’. We now want to use this technology to try and detect cancer at its earliest stage.

The chance of curing someone with early stage lung cancer is much higher than if the cancer has got large and started to spread. However, there is only a very tiny amount of tumour DNA in the blood of patients with small early-stage cancers which makes detection very challenging.

In our laboratory in Cambridge, we are developing new scientific approaches for detecting cancer using your blood samples and we hope that this research will lead to tests that, one day, can be used by a GP or at the hospital to detect early stage lung cancer before it can be seen on a scan. There is still some way to go but our tests are getting more and more sensitive for detecting tiny amounts of cancer DNA in the blood so we are hopeful that we will be able to achieve this ambition to help future patients.



**SPORT**

**DETECTING CANCER EARLIER**

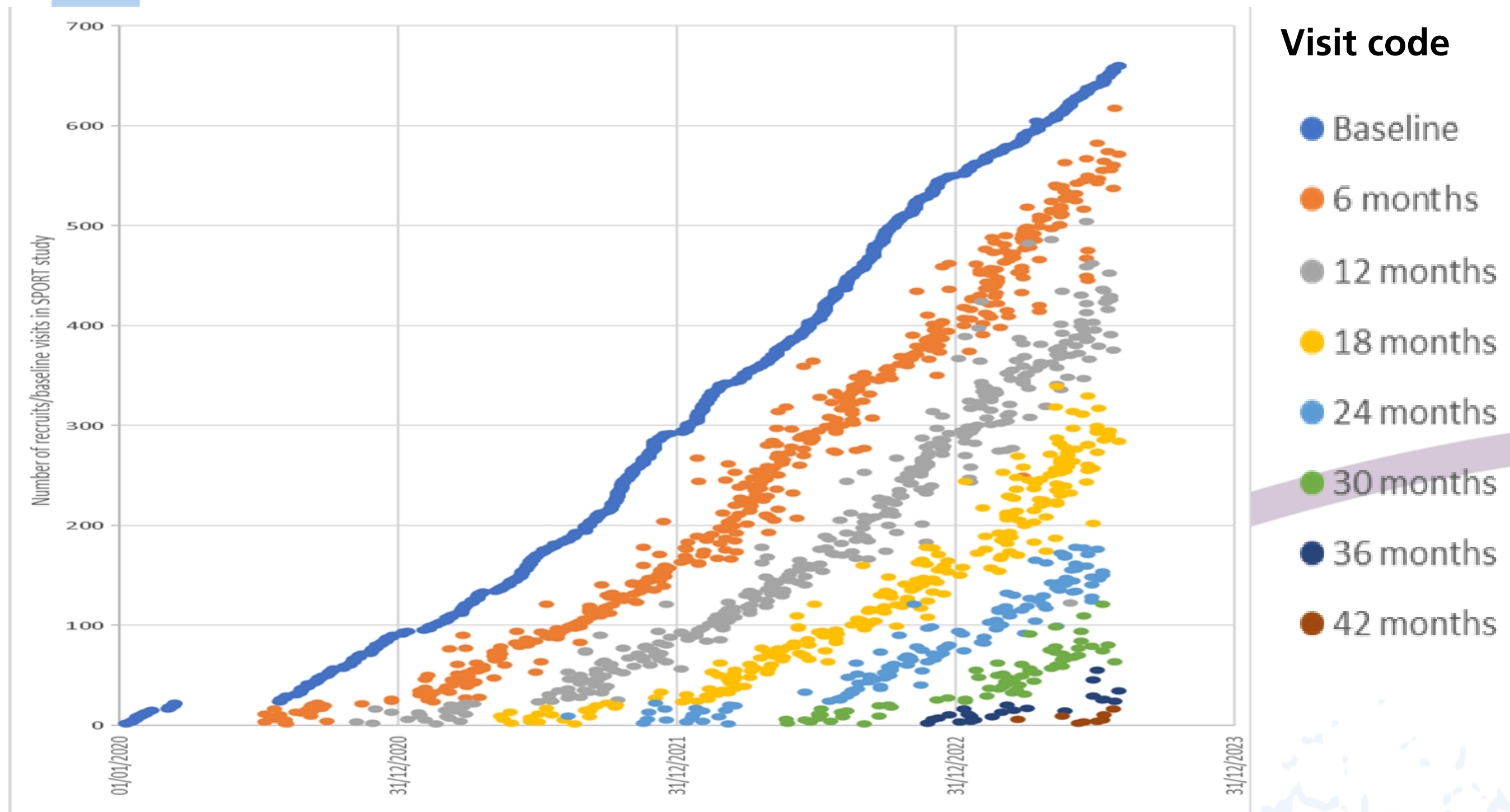




**Study targets:**  
To continue recruitment to study goal of 850

### Visit schedules

Participants in the study are asked to provide a blood sample and data every six months. On the graph below, each dot is a participant visit, showing how quickly this turns into a massive undertaking and how well your study teams are co-ordinating your visits.



## You said, we did

Q: How is the study going? Can we have some feedback?

A: We plan to produce this newsletter annually to keep you updated.

Q: Can the travel costs for research only visits be increased, due to rise in cost of living?

A: To recognise rising costs, we have increased the contribution to travel for research-only visits from up to £20 to up to £30.

Q: Can these special blood samples be collected at the GP practice?

A: Unfortunately not. The blood sample has to be processed quite quickly using special techniques and it would take too long to get from the GP. But this is an important question which we'll look into when we design future studies.

**Please continue to feedback on your research experience, through the Participants in Research Experience survey and communication with your local SPORT team.**