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Top scientist moves team to Manchester to lead graphene revolution

Wonder material could help save millions of lives

TOM BROOKS-POLLOCK

A WORLD-renowned scientist is moving his laboratory to Manchester in a bid to use the 'wonder material' graphene in the fight against cancer and Alzheimer's.

Prof Kostas Kostarelos has been appointed by Manchester University to help turn the ultra-thin substance into treatments for millions of patients around the world.

They hope he will be able to develop tiny needles for injecting drugs into individual human cells.

Discovered in 2004 by Manchester University scientists Andre Geim and Kostya Novoselov – who were awarded the Nobel prize for the breakthrough – graphene has the potential to revolutionise fields including medicine, technology and communications.

Now Prof Kostarelos, an expert in the field of nanomedicine – the use of tiny materials to fight diseases – and his team of 15 scientists will work with doctors at hospitals and the new Manchester Cancer Research Centre (MCRC).

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CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE World-famous scientist Prof Kostas Kostarelos is moving his team to Manchester and is expected to work closely with the new £61m National Graphene Institute, above

They hope to invent groundbreaking new treatments for cancer and 'neurodegenerative' conditions such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and Huntingdon's disease for use at the centre, a collaboration between the university and The Christie hospital.

The 42-year old Greek scientist will move his entire nanomedicine lab north from University College London next month to become professor of nanomedicine.

It will take six months to move all the specialist equipment from the lab including powerful microscopes for analysing cells into the AV Hill Building, on Upper Brook Street in the town centre. The lab is expected to work closely with the new £61m National Graphene Institute, being set up by Profs Geim and Novoselov to develop commercial uses for with substance with electronic firms.

'We believe we can be a very strong asset'

Prof Kostarelos said he would be working to 'bring graphene closer to medicine across the university campus and its great hospitals'.

He added: "At Manchester clinicians (want) to bridge the gap between nanotechnology and medicine. This is not common around the world and strongly influenced my decision to move, along of course with the opportunity to collaborate with great scientists in Manchester from a wide range of disciplines.

"Manchester has an excellent reputation in cancer research and my team wants to build strong links here.

"We believe we can be a very strong asset trying to get nanotechnology treatments for cancer and developing applications to work on tumours."

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