



Research priorities for pituitary adenoma surgery identified together with patients

The first part of the international PitCOP (Pituitary Surgery Core Outcomes and Priorities) study was published last week defining, for the first time, the top 10 research priorities in pituitary surgery.¹

Pituitary adenomas are benign tumours of the pituitary gland, a small gland at the base of the brain. They can cause a variety of symptoms due to pressure on the eyesight nerves or the normal pituitary gland. Some adenomas may produce excessive levels of a pituitary hormone leading to conditions, such as Cushing's, acromegaly etc. Surgery, which is typically undertaken through the nostrils, is the preferred treatment option for most patients. One of the challenges is that current clinical research does not always represent the priorities of patients. Priority setting partnerships bring patients, carers, and clinicians together to jointly identify priorities for future research.

The study was led by Hani Marcus, Consultant Neurosurgeon at UCLH and UCL, Angelos Kolias, Consultant Neurosurgeon at the University of Cambridge and Cambridge University Hospitals and Stephanie Baldeweg, Consultant Endocrinologist at UCLH and UCL.

The researchers collated more than 300 responses from people affected by pituitary tumours and healthcare professionals across 17 countries.

The key themes emerging from the Priority Setting Partnership include enhancing diagnosis and management to avoid delays, advancing surgical techniques and technologies, improving patient support and follow-up, and optimizing the prediction of outcomes and complications.

Hani Marcus said: "The findings of the PitCOP study underscore the importance of involving patients directly in shaping the future of pituitary adenoma surgery. By

prioritising research that reflects patient needs, we can ensure we are ultimately improving the most relevant outcomes for those affected by these complex conditions."

Angelos Kolas said: "We are immensely grateful to all patients who participated in the PitCOP study. The outcomes of pituitary surgery are very good, but we always strive to improve. The participation of patients was critical, as it enabled us to also look outside the operating room. We are hoping that funding agencies will respond appropriately to this call for action."

Stephanie Baldeweg said: "We are very proud of having completed the first ever international study on setting research priorities in pituitary surgery. In my role as consultant endocrinologist and as a trustee and chair of clinical committee of The Pituitary Foundation, the UK national pituitary charity, I am acutely aware that we can achieve most when patients and clinicians work closely together. I am convinced that our study will lead to more patient centred pituitary research."

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References

1. Newall N, Valetopoulou A, Khan DZ, Borg A, Bouloux PM, Bremner F et al. Identifying research priorities for pituitary adenoma surgery: an international Delphi consensus statement. *Pituitary*. 2025 Apr;28(2):1-2.