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Response to the Review of UK Health Research

1. **Edinburgh Neuroscience** is a new ‘umbrella group’ within the University of Edinburgh that has the mission of fostering closer discussion and collaboration between ‘basic’ and ‘clinical’ neuroscientists. As in other large, research-orientated Universities, there are a large number of groups conducting research on diverse topics. Recent reorganisation of the administrative structure of the University has created an opportunity through focused research centres and organisations such as ours to bring such research groups together for a more concerted attack on health-related issues that may benefit from contact with basic biomedical science.

2. Given this background, we welcome the creation of a **Single Fund for Health Research**, but hope that the arrangements for its administration will retain a number of the very important and valued aspects of research appraisal developed over many years by the **Medical Research Council**:

- **Maintaining and further developing a strong science base.**
- **Anonymous peer review, both investigator-led and strategically-identified research projects, thorough appraisal and discussion of applications, and transparency of funding applications with information fed back to applicants in the case of both successful and unsuccessful applications.**
- **An appreciation of the varying needs for infrastructure, personal and equipment to conduct cutting-edge research.**

- **An appreciation of the value of linking basic biomedical science and clinical neuroscientists in large-scale projects wherever this is feasible, but ensuring that the appraisal of such applications is seen by a diverse group of relevant experts.**
3. **Integrity of MRC:** The administrative machinery for running the Single Health Fund should maintain the present strengths of the Medical Research Council, retaining its integrity under the auspices of the new body, and particularly its international reputation for world-class research.
 4. **Medical Research Charities:** The relationships between the new funding body and the medical research charities needs to be considered carefully.
 5. **Devolved Authorities:** By virtue of working in Scotland, we trust that the arrangements put in place for a Single Health Fund will work appropriately with devolved institutions such as the Chief Scientist's Office of the Scottish Executive, and allow suitable UK-wide and more regional decision-making on projects as appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Morris". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small circle above the letter 'i' in "Morris". Below the signature is a horizontal line.

Richard Morris, D.Phil, FRS,
Royal Society/Wolfson Professor of Neuroscience
Co-Director, Edinburgh Neuroscience