

London facial injury centre is world first

Lizzie Edmonds

THE world's first research centre for the study and development of treatments for people with facial disfigurements, injuries and diseases is to open in London.

Researchers at the National Facial Oral and Oculoplastic Research Centre will work on treatments for head, neck and facial injuries, cancers and growth disorders. Up to 80 UK surgeons will collect information from patients and submit it to a central data system, with the results being used to determine which treatments are most effective.

The clinical research centre, which will be based at St Bartholomew's Hospital and The London Medical School, will also study the psychological cost of the treatments and how to grow replacement body parts.

Professor Iain Hutchison, 66, director of the NFORC, said: "This is the first time all the surgeons in the UK have combined with their patients to collect the exact details of the treatment given by each surgeon and every patient's report on the physical, social and emotional outcome of their treatment.

Surgeons create huge database to pool advice on best treatments

Members of the public think that you have to get the best surgeon, but it is more important to get the right treatment for you. For example, surgery that would be right for me – an older man – wouldn't necessarily be right for an athlete or an Olympian.

"NFORC research will eliminate the uncertainty that bedevils decision-making by surgeons."

Figures released by the organisation show that 750,000 people a year suffer facial injuries in Britain, 125,000 of which are serious. The charity Saving Faces is funding the project, with the NFORC distributing the findings.

Professor Hutchison added: "Surgeons around the world are excited about this pioneering centre and want to partner us as they have nothing like it in their own country. I've already had

inquiries from researchers in Europe and the US about the possibility of analysing these huge datasets."

The centre will be launched tomorrow, with a day of talks from the world's top surgeons, including Professor Bernard Devauchelle and assistant professor Jean-Michel Dubernard, the French doctors who did the world's first face transplant on Isabelle Dinoire after she was mauled by a dog in 2005.

The launch day at the Queen Elizabeth Hall will be opened by Saving Faces patron Alan Rickman and compered by Jon Snow. It is free to attend. For more, visit nforc.co.uk/launch

'NO GEORGE CLOONEY BUT I HAVE A FACE'

GEORGE BODEN, 68, was cycling on a country lane in Leaden Roding, Essex, on Good Friday 2011 when he crashed into a piece of road-laying equipment.

He collided with a pole, which hit him in the jaw, removing his mouth, most of his teeth and a large



Bike accident: George Boden

proportion of the jaw. He was treated by Professor Hutchinson at the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel and underwent 10 procedures

in three years. Mr Boden, who lives with his wife Jane in High Easter, Essex, said: "I owe my life to the surgeons and this new research centre will mean so many people can benefit like I did. I am still no George Clooney – but I have a face."