



PRESS RELEASE, for immediate release, 17th November 2024

Cross-party MPs say false claims about human medicine, used to justify horrific experiments on dogs and other animals, should be banned in a rigorous public scientific hearing.

In response to [#OperationBeagle](#), launched by Ricky Gervais, Peter Egan and Chris Packham, cross-party MPs have studied the scientific evidence and agree that animal experiments need to be stopped now.

76 cross-party Members signed last session's [Early Day Motion 25](#), and Chris Law MP has re-tabled the Motion as [Early Day Motion 404](#).

The Early Day Motion (EDM) calls for the Government to mandate a unique public scientific hearing, on claims that results from animal experiments can be used to predict the responses of humans, in disease research and the safety testing of medicines.

MPs are calling for the science hearing to be judged by independent experts from the relevant science fields: including evolutionary biology, complexity science, chaos theory, genetics, clinical research, drug development, basic research and philosophy of science. Never before has an independently judged science hearing been mandated by the Government; previous inquiries into animal testing have been overseen by many with a clear interest in maintaining animal experiments.

'Operation Beagle' spotlights the breed of dog used in these cruel experiments, together with Charles Darwin's great ship HMS Beagle: scientists state that the human medical evidence against using animal experiments is founded upon Darwin's Theory of Evolution and current

understanding of evolutionary biology. Today, scientists understand that it is *crucial* differences between species which explain why animal testing is failing the search for human treatments and cures.

The human medical failure of animal experiments is today widely reported by experts publishing in the peer reviewed scientific literature, including Dr. Fiona Godlee, Editor in Chief of the *British Medical Journal*, who reports that it is “nearly impossible to rely on most animal data to predict whether or not an intervention will have a favourable clinical benefit-risk ratio in human subjects; ... if research conducted on animals continues to be unable to reasonably predict what can be expected in humans, the public’s continuing endorsement and funding of preclinical animal research seems misplaced.” [1] The FDA states that nine out of ten new human medicines fail to pass clinical trials, because animals cannot predict human responses [2]; the US-based National Cancer Institute says we have lost cures for cancer, because studies in rodents have been believed [3] and scientists working in the pharmaceutical industry openly acknowledge the failure of animal experiments in their drug development process, and [write about this often, in the peer reviewed scientific literature.](#) [4]

[Rare footage](#) filmed inside MBR Acres, the Cambridgeshire-based breeder of laboratory dogs, prompted Chris Packham to join the Operation Beagle campaign, with Ricky Gervais, Peter Egan and rescued laboratory dog Betsy Ambassador.

On watching the MBR footage, **Chris Packham says:** "I am ashamed to be human. I am ashamed to be British. I am ashamed that as a dog lover that this could be happening anywhere on earth. Because this footage is a view of hell. It's left me reeling and confused because I simply do not understand how or why this can continue to happen...what is the matter with people? If this were a 'zoo' it would be shut down immediately. Please, please help us put an end to this unimaginable cruelty."

The [new footage filmed inside MBR](#) shows the dismal factory farm conditions of UK-bred laboratory puppies, and the confinement these beagles are forced to endure, whilst awaiting their fate to be transported to laboratories. Puppies are seen pacing up and down displaying repetitive stereo-type behaviour, typical of animals driven insane by being enclosed in too small a space. The small enclosures which confine the dogs are covered in the puppies' faeces, which the dogs cannot avoid when they walk. Each enclosure contains one toy chained to the wall, the dogs cannot play with the toy as they cannot remove it from the wall. Many of the dogs are reduced to motionless shock, displaying signs of severe trauma and clinical depression.

Ricky Gervais says: "I am deeply shocked to see the suffering of these innocent beautiful puppies, crammed into small cells with floors covered in the puppies' excrement. It is absolutely heartbreaking to see the sadness and lack of hope in these Beagles' eyes. They have nowhere to go, nowhere to run, no outside smells to enjoy; one toy is chained to the side of their cells. I'm appalled that this enforced prison torment for dogs is legal in the UK."

Chris Packham, Ricky Gervais and Peter Egan are calling for an immediate ban on experiments on dogs, and for the Government to mandate the rigorous public scientific hearing called for by EDM .

Experiments on dogs typically involve being force-fed chemicals every day, for up to 90 days, with no pain relief or anaesthetic. This force-feeding, or gavage procedure, is classified as '**mild suffering**' by the Home Office licensing system; Home Office statistics show that 67% of all experiments on dogs were for this force-feeding procedure.

Peter Egan says: "Narrating this film is one of the saddest things I have ever done. Nothing can prepare you for the shock of seeing the grief-stricken, clinical depression endured by these beautiful puppies. It is terrible to see the puppies' repetitive pacing, back and forth, as they go slowly insane inside their small cells. It's hard to imagine the stench that greets them as they try to dodge the excrement and urine which covers their cells' floors. Nothing can prepare you for the shocking truth, that this cruelty to dogs is happening right here in the heart of the British Cambridgeshire countryside. I urge everyone to please take action and [ask your MP to sign the EDM 25 science hearing](#), to ban this archaic malpractice. These horrific experiments are today proven to be entirely failing the search for human treatments and cures - the Food and Drug Administration says 90% of all animal-tested medicines fail human trials, because animals cannot predict the responses of humans. If 90% of airplanes crashed there would be an immediate ban on the production of more, not a call for them to be gradually 'phased out'. It is time to ban these horrific animal experiments once - and for all".

MBR Acres breeds between 1,600 and 2,000 dogs annually; the puppies are kept indoors for their entire lives and from 16 weeks old, they're sold to laboratories.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION TO HELP!

Visit the #OperationBeagle website published in support of the Daily Mirror exclusive, where you can tweet the Prime Minister Keir Starmer and ask your MP to sign EDM to ban these experiments: [Operation Beagle | Campaigning to End Animal Experiments](#)

ENDS

NOTES FOR EDITORS

Outdated laws

The outdated Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act and its 3Rs laws – established in 1959 for 'humane experimental technique on animals' – has long been surpassed by the 2003 Human Genome Project, bringing key advances in evolutionary biology and developmental biology, genetics, gene regulation, gene expression, and gene networks - in addition to advances in understanding complex systems – all of which have significantly increased our understanding on why animals are not capable of predicting human responses in medical research and safety testing, and therefore widely reported to be failing the search for human treatments and cures. (5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15).

RESOURCES

Headlining on [GB Breakfast News](#) with Eamonn Holmes, March 20th 2023.

Daily Mirror exclusives [June 21st 2021](#), [September 22nd 2021](#).

Ricky Gervais and Peter Egan's campaign with rescued laboratory dog Betsy Ambassador [Betsy Beagle](#)

[Quotes](#) against animal testing by scientists working in the pharmaceutical industry

Drs. Greek and Shanks' [Trans-Species Modelling Theory](#).

Patients Campaigning for Cures <https://www.patientscampaigningforcures.org>

The science-based campaign For Life On Earth (FLOE) <https://www.forlifeonearth.org>

REFERENCES

1. *BMJ* 2014;348:g3719 available [here](#)
2. FDA Issues Advice to Make Earliest Stages Of Clinical Drug Development More Efficient. FDA, June 2006
3. Gura T: Cancer Models: Systems for identifying new drugs are often faulty. *Science*. 1997, 278 (5340): 1041-1042.
4. Lumley CE, Walker S Lancaster, Quay, editors, 1990, 'Clinical Toxicity – Could it have been predicted? Post-marketing experience', 57–67; Heywood R. *Animal Toxicity Studies: Their Relevance for Man*.
5. *BMJ* 2014;348:g3387
6. Shanks N, Greek R, Greek J. Are animal models predictive for humans? *Philos Ethics Humanit Med*. 2009 Jan 15
7. Pound P, Ebrahim S, Sandercock P, Bracken MB, Roberts I; Where is the evidence that animal research benefits humans? *BMJ* 2004;328:514
8. Greek, R, Rice MJ. Animal models and conserved processes. *Theoretical Biology and Medical Modelling* 2012, 9:40 doi:10.1186/1742-4682- 9-40.
9. Greek, R, Greek, J. Is the use of sentient animals in basic research justifiable? *Philosophy, Ethics, and Humanities in Medicine* 2010, 5:14.
10. Greek, R, Menache, A, Rice M. Animal models in an age of personalized medicine. *Personalized Medicine*. January 2012, Vol. 9, No. 1, Pages 47-64, DOI 10.2217/pme.11.89 (doi:10.2217/pme.1).
11. Greek R, Shanks N. Complex systems, evolution and animal models. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*. 2011 Dec;42(4):542-4 doi:10.1016/j.shpsc.2011.07.001 PMID: 22035727
12. “The value of animal research has been increasingly debated, owing to high failure rates in drug development. A potential contributor to this situation is the lack of predictivity of animal models of disease.” Ferreira, G. S., et al. 2020. Levelling the Translational Gap for Animal to Human Efficacy Data. *Animals (Basel)*, 10(7). Available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/32679706>
13. An editorial in *Nature Reviews Drug Discovery* in 2011 stated: “Unpredicted drug toxicities remain a leading cause of attrition in clinical trials and are a major complication of drug therapy.” Editorial 2011. A stronger role for science. *Nat Rev Drug Discov*, 10(3), 159-159. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/nrd3387>
14. “In fact, for studies using mice, a coin flip would predict toxicity with a similar success rate”. Van Meer, PJK. 20 *The Scientific Value of Non-clinical Animal Studies in Drug Development: Thesis Utrecht University*.
15. “The failure rate of drugs in human clinical trials, which is around 90%”. (Herrmann 2001, Bains 2004, Insel 2012, BIO, Biomedtracker, and Amplion 2016, Lowe 2016, Mohs and Greig 2017, Analysis 2017, Lowe 2018, Wong, Siah, and Lo 2018).