It may seem obvious but a healthy balanced diet with plenty of fibre, fruit and vegetables and less red and processed meat and salt can help cut cancer risk. At the World Cancer Research Fund International charity, the first organisation to create awareness of the link between diet and cancer, they help reiterate this message as well as support and fund leading research into cancer prevention. They have achieved this global success through the high-quality work produced by their leaders, including their President Marilyn Gentry who took the time to speak with us to discuss WCRF in more detail.

We are proud to be the first organisation to prove the link between cancer, diet and nutrition and raise awareness of these links.
Hello Marilyn! What does your role involve as President of World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF)?

As President of World Cancer Research Fund, I provide direction and leadership across our international network of charities to help change people’s attitudes towards preventing cancer through diet, nutrition and physical activity across the world.

Last year the World Cancer Research Fund network was awarded official relations status with the World Health Organization, which means we are acknowledged as a trusted advisor at the highest level of global public health. This was a great achievement for us as it cements our reputation as the world’s leading authority on the link between diet, weight, physical activity and the prevention of cancer.

WCRF are involved in the organisation, running, and support of many cancer-related campaigns. What impact have these had on spreading WCRF’s messages, especially in terms of preventing cancer? Our campaigns demonstrate how people can make changes in their everyday life to reduce their cancer risk. We were the first charity to create awareness of the link between diet and cancer and we continue to share this message as we work towards our mission of living in a world free from preventable cancers.

The WCRF website offers a fantastic blog with news and information on how to prevent cancer. What is the significance of this, and how important is it to keep your members and supporters up to date? When we have an exciting research finding, readers of our blog will be the first to know. The blog allows our supporters to hear directly from our researchers, which allows them to feel connected with the work that they are supporting. Many scientists and policy makers also read our blog to keep up with the latest cancer prevention news. It is important to them that they receive news from a source they can trust, and they know that our blog is always based on the latest robust evidence.

You have dedicated more than 30 years to cancer prevention and have continually provided fantastic strategic direction and leadership to WCRF. What has been your proudest achievement in those 30 years? My proudest achievement thus far is the creation of our Continuous Update Project (CUP), which analyses thousands of studies on the effect of diet and physical activity on cancer risk, and has changed attitudes worldwide on the link between diet and cancer. It has been a huge breakthrough in getting people to finally take notice of how what we eat affects our cancer risk and how important cancer prevention is. The findings from this project will form our Third Expert Report, a new publication that we are looking forward to launching in January 2018.

Where would you like to see cancer research go from here? While we are rapidly putting the pieces of the cancer prevention puzzle together, there is still a huge gap in our knowledge about how diet, nutrition and physical activity affect cancer survival. This needs to become the next priority if we are to see cancer survival rates improve.

• For more information about World Cancer Research Fund’s work and cancer prevention, please visit their website at www.wcrf.org.