Professor Sir Rory Collins FRS FMedSci

Professor Collins is a cardiovascular epidemiologist and clinical trialist. He studied Medicine at St Thomas’s Hospital Medical School in London, and Statistics at George Washington University in Washington DC and at the University of Oxford.

He came to Oxford in 1981 to work with Richard Peto, Peter Sleight and Salim Yusuf running the ISIS “mega-trials” of the emergency treatment for heart attacks. Those trials showed that clot-dissolving and clot-preventing treatment could more than halve mortality, and these treatments rapidly became part of routine care. In addition, the ISIS trials encouraged the use of much larger trials than had been customary in order to obtain reliable evidence about the effects of cardiovascular treatments.

Since the early 1990s, Professor Collins has been conducting large randomized trials of the effects of modifying blood levels of cholesterol. Those trials have contributed to showing that lowering LDL-cholesterol intensively with statin therapy safely reduces the risk of heart attacks and strokes among a very wide range of individuals. As a consequence, statins are used extensively worldwide.

He became Principal Investigator of the UK Biobank study in September 2005. Involving 500,000 participants, it is the largest deeply characterized prospective epidemiological study of disease in the world, and is being made available for any type of health-related research by researchers worldwide.

In 2013, Professor Collins set up the Nuffield Department of Population Health at Oxford University, which he leads. He was elected to the Fellowship of the UK Academy of Medical Science in 2004 and of the Royal Society in 2015, and was knighted by the Queen for services to Science in 2011.