

Seminar on Huntington's trial

A seminar at UWA next Wednesday will give a progress report on a drug study offering new hope for people with Huntington's disease and their families.

Known as PBT2, the drug has been tested on mice and has been shown to improve motor function and control, increase the life span and reduce the amount of brain cell degeneration.

It's yet to be seen if PBT2 will yield the same dramatic results in humans.

Clinical research organisation Neurodegenerative Disorders Research Pty Ltd is embarking on a new study to assess the effect of PBT2 on patients with early to mid-stage Huntington's disease.

The symptoms of Huntington's disease range from movement, psychiatric and cognitive disorders – including involuntary

jerking, difficulty swallowing, depression, memory loss, irritability, speech changes and personality changes.

Ann Jones, president of the International Huntington's Association, lost her husband Llewelyn three years ago to the genetically inherited condition. Both her daughters, Tracey and Julie, are now in the early stages of the disease.

Ann said: "The day-to-day challenges of living with the disease are enormous, not only for the person with Huntington's disease, but also their families and the community in which they live."

An international clinical trial assessing the impact of PBT2 on patients with early to mid-stage HD is under way in Perth and the seminar at UWA on July 18 will give an update of the study and its implications.

For more information, call Lien Sargent on 6380 2055.