

Buzz Bulletin

August 2023
Edition 8 Vol. 8

Newsletter of the
North Hampshire Prostate
Cancer Support Group



Welcome to the Buzz Bulletin

Chairman's Chat



Keith Jones

the Kwells work. At least we will hopefully have some better weather than we have had in August.

According to The Times newspaper, we are currently in a golden age for medical research where the chance of dying from cancer has fallen by a quarter since the 1980's. Although this is not specific to prostate cancer, we have certainly seen advances in our area of interest.

I mentioned at our last meeting, the news related to the potential for changes to screening for prostate cancer. The points below come from a BBC report on these findings.

A 10-minute MRI scan could be used to screen men for prostate cancer, according to a new study.

- The scans proved far more accurate at diagnosing cancer than PSA blood tests.
- MRI picked up some serious cancers that would have been missed by PSA alone.
- At present there is no national screening programme because PSA is considered too unreliable, although men over 50 can request a PSA test.
- The authors of this new study suggest that prostate MRI could be used for screening, though they say a larger study would be needed to assess this.
- Source BBC News

DIARY DATES

Thursday 7th September
Red Lion Hotel, Basingstoke
Pub Pint and Chat

Thursday 28th September
Group meeting
Presentation by Tony Cross
on Pillar Boxes

Thursday 5th October
Red Lion Hotel, Basingstoke
Pub Pint and Chat

October
Group Outing
Cruise on the Basingstoke Canal.
Approximately £20.
Contact Budd on
info@NHPCSG.org.uk.

Thursday 26th October
Group meeting
Speaker TBA

Saturday 28th October
Awareness Event at The Malls
Volunteers, please contact
Keith Bunker at
info@NHPCSG.org.uk

Thursday 2nd November
Red Lion Hotel, Basingstoke
Pub Pint and Chat

Thursday 30th November
Group meeting
Speaker Sarah Gray
National Support and
Development Manager
Tackle

Whilst the reports states that further research is needed, it is positive news for the 1 in 8 men and specifically 1 in 4 black men who currently get diagnosed with prostate cancer.

It was also reported that it was the first anniversary of the death of Bill Turnbull, the BBC presenter and since his death, there has been a 17% increase in men testing for PC.

Recently, Richard delivered a batch of our support group leaflets to the urology department at the Royal Hampshire County Hospital in Winchester and since then we have been contacted by several recently diagnosed men from the hospital. Whilst this contact is not a good thing in so far as each contact represents another PC diagnosis, it does mean that we are able to provide support to these men and their families which is the whole purpose of our support group. We are trying to spread this message to other hospitals and GP surgeries with Andover War Memorial Hospital and the GP surgeries in Winchester being targeted. If anyone thinks there is somewhere local to them that could use our leaflets, let us know and we can provide a supply. We also have A4 size posters that we are looking to put up in local supermarkets.

Finally, did anyone spot our new roll-up banner? After many versions, nine in total, I think, the committee finally settled on a design and this was displayed at our recent group meeting. A big thank you to Richard for his efforts and particularly his patience in producing the banner.

Keith



Would anybody like to volunteer for the role of Social Scretary
This will allow someone to organise events such as the Summer Ball



Complementary therapies available at The Ark centre at Basingstoke Hospital. This is the web link to follow for more information on what's available and how to get a referral. <https://arkcancercharity.org.uk/wellbeing-centre/>
Julie Walsh, the lead therapist who gave a talk at our group meeting, did confirm that cancer patients that were diagnosed in Basingstoke but are currently having treatment in Guildford or Southampton hospitals are still eligible for these therapies as long as they live within the HHFT catchment area. They still need to be referred by their clinical team or G.P.

Cakes Galore

What a way to celebrate the 8th anniversary of the founding of our group, so very well done to Virginia Budd and her band of cake makers for such an extensive and delicious array of cakes, not to leave out of course mention of those helping in the kitchen with plentiful mugs of tea and coffee!

Our group which continues to grow - this month with two new members joining us, is now one of the largest and most active in the country, and it has become a tradition to have an informal meet each anniversary with cakes, often a quiz, the usual raffle, and more time to gather for informal chat between members.

The quiz, ably conducted by our chairman Keith Jones, soon highlighted his taste in films and music, showing up those who had spent their youth studying. It was narrowly won by the smallest team, who promptly donated their prizes back into the raffle, which was already decked out with more prizes than ever before. As a result this time many walked away with a win!

Keith took the opportunity to highlight some of the latest news, including the potential of an MRI screening programme for men to catch tumours early, as this is known to be more reliable in identifying them at a much earlier stage and has thus been proven to be more effective than PSA tests. He also took the opportunity to formally introduce Charlotte Hollands, a PhD student from Winchester University, who is working on improving men's urology pathway, with a particular emphasis on those with prostate cancer. In particular Charlotte is very conscious of the need for clinicians to improve communications with their patients, especially with the use of everyday language.

Keith Jones also drew members' attention to the date and location of this year's Christmas lunch on Thursday 7th December, where we have booked again at BCoT, following last year's great success. Once full details have been established in the next few days, members will be notified how to book, and again with limited places it will be on a 'first come first serve basis'.

The benefits of becoming a member of the hospital trust were again highlighted. We are entering into a crucial stage with major changes to local healthcare along with the creation of a new hospital. This also involves changes being considered to the location of how care and hospital treatments will be carried out. Members get regular updates on potential changes, as well as having the chance to vote for the hospital governors, who are their local patient representatives with the hospital trust. Keith Bunker, a former governor, highlighted that whilst most governors come from a medical background, most patient complaints arise from admin issues, and how in the past he had been able to get matters quickly resolved for several group members. So to become a member go to <https://www.hampshirehospitalsnhs.uk/membership>; note that men and their partners can both become members separately, and thus vote individually for new governors.

Keith Bunker