



# Torbay Prostate Support Association

Serving men of all ages, and their partners, through a programme of support before, during and after diagnosis

**E Newsletter Winter** / Newsletter Issue **No.E2**

## A note from the Chairman

Firstly on behalf of the trustees we would like to wish you a very Happy New Year and hope that your Christmas was a good one.

## Breaking News

2021  
HONOURS

Congratulations to our President Peter Hosking, who, in the New Years Honours List has been awarded the Order of the British Empire (BEM) for services to people with Prostate Cancer. Peter was one of the founders of TPSA back in 1999 and has since then worked tirelessly to promote awareness of Prostate Cancer, raise funds to be able to donate "Game changing" equipment to the Torbay hospital, and support Men and their partners who have been diagnosed with the disease. Well done Peter

## Meetings



Whilst the Trustees have been meeting via Zoom for some time in October we entered uncharted territory by holding our first ever Members meeting. The technology didn't fail and we had a very interesting session, exchanging ideas and outlining what we have as an organisation been involved in. The second in early December had a very entertaining presentation by Dr Stephen Allen who spoke about his journey and developments in the diagnosis and treatments since he received his initial treatment some 12 years ago. The meeting was attended by approximately 20 people

## Ultrasound Scanner for Torbay Hospital

Since the association was formed in 1999 we have supported Torbay Hospital. In November 2020 we donated £65000 to the Urology Department at Torbay Hospital which purchased a new BK3000 Ultra High Resolution Ultrasound System. The funds have been raised by a truly magnificent Community effort over two years with the excellent help of so many parts of Torbay and surrounding areas. These substantial contributors include The Chestnut Appeal in Plymouth, the collaboration of the local Rotary Clubs, Churston Golf Club Senior Section, both Dainton and Teignmouth Golf Clubs. Babbacombe Lions Club and Masons Clubs in Teignmouth. In addition there have been many excellent fantastic donations from individual members of the public as well as Davys House, Torquay Boys Grammar School. Thank you all for your support in helping us to achieve this Target. Hospital Staff have

been trained to use the equipment and it is so pleasing to advise you that many men are already benefiting from this new addition to the Urology Department in Torbay Hospital. The results are proving to be highly satisfactory. The new apparatus has already been described as the difference between black and white television and a sophisticated version of a new smart TV. The fund raising has been led by the President Peter Hosking ably supported by his treasurer Darrell Fulford as well as the Trustees and has now been successfully concluded. We have now embarked on another venture and that is to provide a specialist chair costing approximately £17000 as soon as a permanent site is completed for the new items. Any additional donations to assist the purchase would be very welcome and most acceptable those donations should be sent to Darrell Fulford at Corbyns, Ridgeway Road, Torquay Road, TQ1 2HE.

## Connecting with more members during the pandemic

Due to the lack of connectivity with the internet, some members have been unable to join the zoom meetings. In December we made an application to Tackle Prostate Cancer for a COVID 19 grant to enable use to fund a small number of tablets and wifi hotspots (including pre paid internet access). Just before Christmas we were notified that this has been successful. As such we are now in a position to purchase these and begin distribution. The qualifying criteria for recipients will be:-

- 1) Should ideally have been a member of TPSA for 6 months minimum
- 2) You do not have either the correct hardware or internet access
- 3) Requests made from the hospital

Allocation will be on a first come first served basis We would also appreciate support from any of you that are technically minded to support new users with getting to grips with the devices.

**Updated Membership list** we are keen to make sure that we only contact people who want us to. If you no longer want to receive information from TPSA. Please contact use, contact details below.

## Members Reflections

I CONSIDER myself rather fortunate because one mid-morning, in 2008, I experienced an ominous ache deep in my crutch when I attempted to pee. Something told me not to ignore the discomfort, so I sought an appointment with my GP whose examination revealed an abnormally enlarged prostate. However, he assured me he couldn't detect any signs of cancer. A number of tests at Torbay and Newton Abbott hospitals followed and, thankfully, they confirmed my GP's diagnosis. Following the results of the tests, the Torbay hospital specialist placed me on a daily Finasteride pill, and they've kept things in check ever since, despite a couple of - apparently well documented - side effects.

Needless to say, from the diagnosis onwards, my work as a journalist and radio host encouraged me to keep a close watch on prostate issues and, as time passed, I became more and more puzzled over why prostate cancer was getting so little media attention when compared with breast cancer. Back in 2008, I was making two weekly shows for BBC Regional Radio, based with BBC Radio Devon, and I was also authoring a weekly music and showbiz column called The LoweDown for Torbay's Herald Express newspaper. Unfortunately, my remit for both of those activities didn't allow me to 'go public' with my prostate puzzlement, but I continued to take an interest in prostate coverage in general. After nearly 25 years at the Herald Express, and just before my 65th birthday in 2011, my LoweDown column was laid to rest. Three years later, I parted company with the BBC after 32 years. Then, in 2017, I decided to return to radio, and was offered a weekly slot on Torbay's community station Riviera FM, now broadcasting on 107.9FM and worldwide on-line. At last, I was back making radio programmes again, but now I was doing it for fun and for free. Not long after that, I became aware of the existence of the Torbay Prostate Support Association and, for the first time in my media career, I was able to include purely local information in my programmes. So, I began keeping a particularly keen eye open for TPSA announcements, and whenever I saw news of a forthcoming TPSA meeting, I'd give it a mention on-air ... a 'talk-up' as they're called in radio. Indeed, I plan to carry-on doing so because Clive Richoux keeps me up to date via email. By the way, currently, my Riviera FM programmes are 'Back Tracking', a mid-20th Century easy-on-the-ear, musical nostalgia show on Sundays (3-5pm), and 'Laid Back Love Songs' spanning the 1950s to date on Mondays (11pm to midnight). Both programmes are available on a 24/7 catch-up service, so, if you'd like me to send you a catch-up link, just drop me a line at [studio@riviera.fm](mailto:studio@riviera.fm) and I'll do the rest. In the meantime, please stay safe and well.

David Lowe

## Future Meetings

We are sure the overwhelming desire is to get back to face to face meetings (and with the roll out of COVID 19 vaccines hopefully this will not be too long), but for the foreseeable future we will continue to meet via zoom meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 2nd February 2021, commencing at 7.30pm. At this meeting we hope to have a Specialist Nurse from Prostate Cancer UK as the main speaker. Thereafter we will hold monthly meeting on the first Tuesday of the month.

## A Post New Year Resolution

As the New Year approached I'm sure you all made some form of resolution. Hopefully you have managed so far to keep these. The main reason resolutions never seem to last is that they can be too ambitious. Can we ask you to consider making a Post New Year resolution to speak to all you male friends and family over 50 (or over 40 if there is a strong history of Prostate cancer). Early diagnosis offers the opportunity of a greater survival rate and also a wider range of treatments. Remember many men may not present any noticeable symptoms and are generally reluctant to visit the GP (particularly in the current climate).

## Trustees

## Email Address

## Contact telephone numbers

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## Disclaimer

From time to time in our newsletters we provide information about developments in the diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer, research articles, documents, presentations and other interesting materials. However, the TPSA Trustees and the editor of this newsletter do not have the medical expertise required to make an informed evaluation of the conclusions and recommendations presented in such materials, and we have not verified such conclusions and recommendations through appropriately qualified medical professionals. The information presented in this newsletter must not be interpreted as being endorsed or recommended by the Trustees or the editor. Any recommendations made in such materials may not be applicable in your particular case. Before implementing any recommendations made in the materials that are reported, it is essential that you obtain advice from appropriately qualified medical professionals. The view of the TPSA Trustees is that no two prostate cancer cases are alike and that no single treatment option is better than any other in all cases. While the information in this newsletter should be of interest, there is no substitute for getting informed medical advice from your own GP, specialists and other medical professionals.