

MINUTES OF MEETING No 29, Thursday 4th April 2013

VENUE – BURNLEY GENERAL HOSPITAL, MACKENZIE THEATRE/LIBRARY, 2-4pm

33 people were present, apologies for absence were received from Colin Stott owing to the work involved in some of the other meetings he is attending on behalf of Prostate Cancer sufferers. Our local M.P. Gordon Birtwistle was a welcome attendee.

Donations from Jimmy C, Raymond and Ted amounted to £35 – a welcome addition to our meagre funds, many thanks to them.

Dave R (Chairman) opened the meeting by giving a brief outline of the minutes of the last meeting. He then spoke about the “buddies” principal where people that had had treatment could ‘befriend’ a person who had just been diagnosed the already diagnosed patients could then explain their own experiences of the treatment they themselves had received. He spoke about two new courses arranged by Macmillan Cancer Support that are open to all our members, the courses are to inform people of how best to speak in a sensitive way to men who have been newly diagnosed. The first course (Listening & responding) will be running **2nd September in Manchester**. The second course (Buddy befriending) will be on **16th September in Manchester**.

Dave then spoke about the fact that Tony Clarkson of the Sanctuary of Healing (complimentary therapies) had given a talk at the last meeting and that there were brochures on the tables regarding the Sanctuary for anyone who was interested.

After Dave’s visit to Rawtenstall Health Centre earlier in the day he had found out that there is going to be a Prostate Awareness month before the end of April or in May at the Health Centre in Haslingden. He told the meeting that from the age 45/50 where there is a family history of Prostate Cancer you are legally entitled to a PSA test and that any man over 50 irrespective of family history is similarly entitled and he has leaflets to show the Doctor or Nurse that this information is accurate!! Gordon Birtwistle also confirmed this.

Stuart talked about **the new Prostate Cancer UK Quality Check list** which Prostate Cancer UK has set up to help patients understand their rights and to lobby the National Health Service and the Government. The checklist outlines the quality of care and support men with Prostate Cancer should expect to receive and not be based on a ‘postcode lottery’. He read out one or two of the pointers from the check list and if anyone would like more information they can visit the Website: www.prostatecanceruk.org/qualitychecklist The quality checklist is being launched for our area on **17th April in Manchester**, this conference should be a very informative one to attend because it is an excellent opportunity to gain information about how we can assure our voices are heard!

Stuart also informed members that he had spoken with Blackburn shopping centre management and they have offered our Prostate S. Group a day free of charge in the main Blackburn shopping mall to promote and make people in the Blackburn area aware of our Group. He asked if anyone would be prepared to offer about two or three hours of their time. Eddie & Moira, Hazel & John, Dave R and Stuart volunteered and Gordon Birtwistle also said he could be interested in helping us! dependant on the date, which we will arrange later.

At this point Leon showed a short film about a Consultant Urology Surgeon (one of three) who found out he had Prostate Cancer and how he coped with the diagnosis. He had been a fit and healthy individual when he received the news and he had not had any symptoms! It was a very informative and a thought provoking film showing how any man can be affected.

BREAK FOR COFFEE

Dave introduced Gordon Birtwistle the Member of Parliament for Burnley who gave a short talk about his involvement with Prostate Cancer. He reiterated that he had raised £65,000 for a new scanner at Burnley General Hospital to detect Prostate Cancer in memory of his father. He spoke movingly about this and gave a very good and informative speech. He said that the scanner had saved over 1000 lives and that it had also helped to save lives in the detection of Leukaemia. He is embarking on another fund raising project to raise £40,000 for a new scanner for Prostate Cancer and he would be very pleased if we as a group could in some way be involved. Hazel wondered how we as a group could help his cause. It was decided that we would discuss it and see if we could think of ways to help. Gordon also said that there is a building in Burnley town centre where we could promote our Support Group free of charge and that he would assist us with it on the day – this is something for us to consider and hopefully pursue.

He then informed us about the new legislation which started on the first of April, i.e. Gp's now hold and are totally responsible for their individual patient's budgets meaning that each patient should now be able to receive the treatment & medication they need.

Dave was about to tell one of his legendary jokes to close the meeting, but unfortunately he was unable to tell us as it was decided to ask Gordon Birtwistle if he would draw the raffle at this point, this he did and the raffle made £52. We look forward to hearing Dave's joke at the next meeting.

Next meeting: Thursday, 2nd May 2013 at the same venue.

