

# East Lancashire Prostate Cancer Support Group Newsletter



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## Prostate cancer study may lead to new diagnostic tests and treatments

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Next Meeting 5th Sept 2019

A presentation by the Prostate Cancer Research Centre with their Patient Voice Project

Prostate cancer patients have been offered hope after scientists at Newcastle University have identified a new group of molecules that could be targeted to slow tumour growth.

group of molecules in prostate cancer which could be targeted therapeutically.

Dr Jennifer Munkley

Experts used an advanced screening technique which found hundreds of genes were affected by the male hormone testosterone. It is believed this could lead to new

diagnostic tests and treatments.

Among the 700 genes identified was an important set that add sugar groups – known as glycans - to the surface of prostate cancer cells. This group has never been investigated before.

Our findings are very significant for future treatments as they identify a new



## Targeting glycans

Treatments targeting glycan sugar groups have been developed for other types of the illness, such as breast cancer. It is hoped these treatments could also be used for prostate cancer.

Results of the research, published in [\*EBioMedicine\*](#), suggest that testosterone changes glycans to make cancer cells more likely to survive, grow and spread to other parts of the body.

Scientists say there is the potential to target these glycans which could stop the growth and spread of tumours and save lives.

[\*\*Dr Jennifer Munkley\*\*](#), Research Associate at the [\*\*Institute of Genetic Medicine\*\*](#), Newcastle University, co-led the three-year research project with [\*\*Professor David Elliott\*\*](#).

She said: “Our findings are very significant for future treatments as they identify a new group of molecules in prostate cancer which could be targeted therapeutically.

“Now we have identified these glycans we will be able to develop strategies to inhibit them and help patients with this condition.

“Treatments targeting glycan sugar groups have been developed for other types of the illness, such as breast cancer. Our results mean these treatments could also be used for prostate cancer.”

Glycans have the potential to be used as part of a diagnostic test to help doctors decide which prostate cancers need treatment.

## Most common cancer for males in UK

One in eight will be diagnosed with the condition. It is the most common cancer in UK males, and there is a need to identify how the disease progresses and for treatment options to be established.

Researchers at [\*\*Newcastle University\*\*](#) used a technique, called RNA-sequencing, to identify the new set of genes that are important.

The genes identified may provide novel ways the disease can be monitored in patients to predict the most aggressive prostate cancers that need to be treated.

The research was funded in partnership between Prostate Cancer UK and the Movember Foundation.

Simon Grieveson, Head of Research Funding at [Prostate Cancer UK](#), said: “There’s a desperate need for more treatments for men with advanced prostate cancer, who currently have too few options available to them.

“However, in order to develop new, effective treatments, we need to understand more about the genetic makeup of aggressive prostate cancers and identify what makes them tick.

“This promising research has unearthed a new group of genes which could play a part in cancer cell survival and development, and could pave the way for new treatments in the future.

“Although this work is still in its infancy, and there is a long way to go before we could have a potential new treatment, we will be watching its progression with great interest.”

Dr Munkley has been awarded a Newcastle University [Faculty of Medical Sciences Fellowship](#) to continue her research.

As each prostate tumour is unique, future studies will look at how to use glycans as therapeutic targets in personalised treatment.

## Case study

David Forrester

One man who knows first-hand the importance of this research is David Forrester, who was diagnosed with prostate cancer four years ago.

The 62-year-old experienced some episodes of what he thought to be urinary infections. His brother had been diagnosed with the illness in 2004 and, therefore, Mr Forrester was monitored by doctors.

He had annual PSA tests – a blood test that can detect the early signs of an

enlarged prostate – and his PAS doubled in a short space of time. Mr Forrester was referred to a urologist and underwent a biopsy which confirmed he had prostate cancer.

As a former operating theatre manager, the grandfather-of-three decided to have surgery to remove his prostate. Although he did experience side-effects, he has recovered well and is enjoying life.

Mr Forrester, of West Denton, Newcastle, said: “It is absolutely vital that research is done into prostate cancer and experts gain as good an understanding of the condition as possible.

“With two sons and two grandsons, who are at higher risk of developing the disease, I am especially interested in this research.

“The results of this study offers hope to patients affected by prostate cancer and their families that improved diagnostics and treatment options will be developed in the years ahead.

“It is exciting that Newcastle University is leading the way and it shows what world-class research is going on.”

## Reference

Glycosylation is an androgen-regulated process essential for prostate cancer cell viability

Jennifer Munkley, Daniel Vodak, Karen E. Livermore, Katherine James, Brian T. Wilson, Bridget Knight, Paul McCullagh, John McGrath, Malcolm Crundwell, Lorna W. Harries, Hing Y. Leung, Craig N. Robson, Ian G. Mills, Prabhakar Rajan, and David J. Elliott.

EBioMedicine: doi:[10.1016/j.ebiom.2016.04.018](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ebiom.2016.04.018)

# PATIENT VOICE: FUNDING RESEARCH THAT MATTERS TO YOU



We are working with Tackle Prostate Cancer to find out more about the experiences of men with prostate cancer and improve the treatment development that PCRC funds.

Our new Patient Voice project is being developed in collaboration with men affected by prostate cancer and designed to remove barriers and make medical research accessible, highlighting the importance of lived experiences to treatment development.

With your help, we aim to develop and deliver innovative and empowering activities that provide men with a platform and enable men to feel comfortable giving their opinions on medical research projects and become more involved in decisions that affect prostate cancer-related health research.

Please help us to ensure that the new treatments we fund is people-centred and meets the needs of men affected by prostate cancer.

# *Patient Voice Project*

Around 9 months ago I went to a fundraising event for the Prostate Cancer Research Centre, met some of their staff and discussed how they worked and funded research. I was very impressed by their staff and their method of working and later in the year our Chairman, Roger Wotton met them and agreed we would work together on some projects.

Tackle Prostate Cancer is supporting the Prostate Cancer Research Centre with their Patient Voice project which aims to engage and empower men to provide their views and opinions on the treatment development they fund. Later in the year we will assist them with a project to raise awareness of Prostate Cancer at various companies in the North West.

I have attached a poster explaining their work and this project, which will benefit our members in the future.

I have agreed with them that they will visit ELPCSG and Droylsden Prostate Cancer support groups at their next monthly meetings on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019. I have discussed and arranged this with Colin Stott and Steve Wilson.

Please will you get your group secretaries to distribute this poster to your members in order to get as many attendees as possible to each meeting.

Regards,

John Coleman

Trustee and North West Regional Co-ordinator

Tackle Prostate Cancer

*The New Home From  
Home for ELPCSG  
Inflatable Gazebo  
For Awareness  
Events*





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From Left to Right Hazel Goulding (Treasurer) Leon D Wright (IT Admin) Stuart Marshall (Secretary) Steve Laird (Vice Chairman) Dave Riley (Chairman)

We are a group of local people who know about prostate cancer. We are a friendly organisation dedicated to offering support to men who have had or who are experiencing the effects of this potentially life threatening disease.

The East Lanc's Prostate Cancer Support Group offers a place for free exchange of information and help for local men and their supporters (family and friends) who may be affected by this increasingly common form of male cancer.

At each meeting we strive to be a happy, supportive and upbeat group of people; encouraging open discussion on what can be a very difficult and perhaps for some an embarrassing subject. We have lively, informative, interactive, sharing and above all supportive meetings.

# Obituary David Jeffers

***Sadly we have lost another member, Dave 's Funeral is at St Joseph's in Darwen at 11am with a cremation at Pleasington at 12.20 on Friday Sept 6. The wake is at Cherry Tree cricket club at 1.30.***

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