

# VICTORIA MEDICAL CENTRE

## Patient Participation Group Event

### "Don't Suffer in Silence"

Report of the PPG event held on Tuesday 21 January 2025 in the Group Room at VMC. Two Consultant Urologists discussed prostate, bladder and incontinence problems. The panellists were from a team of speakers from HCA Healthcare UK who regularly give talks to healthcare professionals at GP practices covering the latest developments in diagnosis and treatments. HCA has a dual NHS and private role. Their educational talks aimed at patients are open to all without any obligation to opt for private healthcare. Patients would need a GP referral prior to being seen by one of the consultants.

Ms POONAM VAGHELA HCA Healthcare UK administrator

Mr WISSAM ABOU-CHEDID Royal Surrey Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Private at the Lister Hospital. Specialist in prostate and bladder cancers, benign prostate hyperplasia (BPH), prostatitis (swelling), urinary retention etc.

Mr DIMITRIOS MOSCHONAS Royal Surrey Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Private at the Lister Hospital. Specialist in bladder disorders, urinary tract infections, testicular lumps and swellings, incontinence, etc.

Ms ANNA-KAY HENRY VMC administrator.

Mr Abou-Chedid opened the event by telling us that prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer in men. 1 in 8 men in the UK – and 1 in 4 Afro-Caribbeans – will get prostate cancer. It is a silent disease, symptoms only appear when the cancer is advanced. Men over 50 can ask for a PSA (Prostate-Specific Antigen) blood test for free on the NHS, but if you have a family history of prostate cancer, a father or brother, you should request a PSA blood test, whatever your age. A high PSA test result might indicate an abnormality and you will need to have an MRI scan possibly followed by a biopsy. You will also need to have a PSA test every year to check whether there are any changes, although people tend to have a higher PSA as they get older. Anna-Kay confirmed that at VMC once you have had a PSA test you will automatically be invited to have another one every year. If prostate cancer is diagnosed, then you will need to have surgery or a minimal invasive keyhole procedure by radiation. Surgery will reveal how aggressive the cancer is. Benign enlargement of the prostate (BPH) is not cancerous and can be treated.

In answer to questions, the panellists explained that the function of the prostate is to provide nourishment for the semen, acting as an internal sperm bank. After surgery a patient could expect to return to having normal erections after a year. Concerning false positives and false negatives, PSA levels can be raised by a number of things including vigorous exercise.

Mr Moschonas said quite simply that bladder cancer, which mostly affects men, is caused by smoking and occupations that expose men to chemicals, such as hairdressing. The main symptoms are blood in the urine, frequent urination and pain. A biopsy will reveal its aggressiveness and what treatment is needed. Urinary infections can be mild and treatable, others can be nasty and cause organs to shut down and even affect mental health. A normal bladder can store a pint of liquid but symptoms such as frequent urination, at night or in a rush all increase with age. These can be alleviated by lifestyle management such as reducing diuretics such as coffee, alcohol and fizzy drinks and for women by glute exercises to strengthen the pelvic floor. Prescription medicines and surgery can alleviate the problem, but do not expect miracles.

There were about 30 attendees. The meeting ended at 7.00 with a warm round of applause. A number of patients queued up to ask more questions.