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What does the future hold for prostate cancer?

Date:

02 April 2019

In March 2019, over 180 people attended our patient open evening to find out more about the latest clinical innovations in prostate cancer research and the impact that this has for care and treatment.

We brought together a line-up of our world-leading clinicians and researchers from The Royal Marsden and The Institute of Cancer Research, who discussed a wide range of key research topics, from screening and early diagnosis to ground-breaking robotic surgery and the importance of improving quality of life.

The challenges of prostate cancer

Professor Ros Eeles, the BRC Prostate Cancer Theme Lead, set out the challenges that prostate cancer researchers are working hard to overcome, including identifying causes of the disease, uncovering new treatments and making existing methods safer and more effective.

What's new in research?

As we know, understanding the causes of prostate cancer is essential in order to diagnose the disease early and develop new and more effective treatments. Dr Holly Ni Raghallaigh explained how researchers have identified 130 to 150 small changes in our genetic code, known as 'SNPs' which are associated with prostate cancer risk. The PROFILE study ^[9] is investigating whether screening men in 'high risk' groups for these 'SNPs' can make predicting the risk of prostate cancer more accurate. Dr Alison Reid discussed the latest treatments, including drugs called 'PARP inhibitors' which are currently being investigated in the TOPARP trial. ^[10]

The progression of new technology is also having a major impact on the way patients can be treated. Dr Angela Pathmanathan explained how radiotherapy can now be delivered more precisely via the MR-Linac ^[11], a machine which combines MR-imaging and radiotherapy as a means to combat the day-to-day variation in the position of the prostate. Robotics is another key area of development for treating prostate cancer.

Consultant surgeon Mr Pardeep Kumar discussed how the da Vinci robot ^[12] can improve surgical outcomes and reduce recovery time for patients and how 'Fusion Biopsy' robotic tools have been developed which incorporate an imaging system in order to select the most accurate biopsy sites.

Survivorship and shaping research

In addition to developing new treatments, it's also essential to ensure patients have a good quality of life. Consultant nurse Netty Kinsella discussed the importance of 'Pre-habilitation', where patients are assessed for factors such as diet, exercise and mental health before starting treatment. This provision of information, advice, support and expertise helps patients manage their expectations and self-care.

Patient representative, Chris Cottrell, also shared his experiences of prostate cancer, the active approach he took following his diagnosis and how starting an exercise regime helped him regain some control.

Involving patients in all stages of research is crucial, from identifying and prioritising key issues to helping interpret and share findings. If you're interested in finding out more or getting involved in shaping research, please contact patientsinresearch@rmh.nhs.uk [13].

Our research: prostate cancer [14]

We are supporting research to improve treatment selection and outcomes for prostate cancer patients, using advances in molecular diagnostic techniques

Source URL: <https://www.cancerbrc.org/news-events/news/what-does-future-hold-prostate-cancer>

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[5] https://shared-d7-royalmarsden-publicne-live.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/files_brc/s3fs-public/Prostate%20Cancer%20Patient%20Event%20Feedback%20Infographic.pdf

[6] https://www.cancerbrc.org/melanoma_and_urological_cancers_event

[7] <https://www.cancerbrc.org/news-events/news/what-does-future-hold-large-granular-lymphocytic-leukaemia>

[8] <https://www.cancerbrc.org/public-patient-involvement/public-and-patient-engagement/public-event-what-does-future-hold>

[9] <http://www.icr.ac.uk/our-research/research-divisions/division-of-genetics-and-epidemiology/oncogenetics/research-projects/profile>

[10] <https://www.icr.ac.uk/our-research/centres-and-collaborations/centres-at-the-icr/clinical-trials-and-statistics-unit/clinical-trials/toparp>

[11] <https://www.royalmarsden.nhs.uk/mr-linac-first-ever-treatment>

[12] <https://www.royalmarsden.nhs.uk/private-care-magazine/robotic-future-surgery-today>

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