

PHAROS

A beacon of hope in the darkness

Newsletter of the Reading Prostate Cancer Support Group (RPCSG)

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THE MAY MEETING

The May meeting was quite well attended by 46 people, including one new member. The guest speaker was Mandy Holdstock, who gave a talk on managing incontinence by the use of the 'Conveen', which is a type of urinary sheath, sometimes referred to as an external catheter.

Mandy said that she is with Coloplast, who work closely with Charter Health Care. She introduced the Conveen Optima, and talked about Charter Healthcare..

She first showed a video of a man relating his experience of using the Conveen.

An audience member said that he uses the Conveen and is pleased with it.

Mandy demonstrated the application of a Conveen, using the finger of an audience member. This demonstrated the technique and showed the effectiveness of the adhesive coating. Trimming of pubic hair is advised, and soap and water can be used if needed to remove the Conveen. A Conveen should be worn for no longer than 24 hours before being removed and disposed of.

Mandy said that the Conveen can be used whether a man is circumcised or not, and if not, the foreskin should be left in place and not retracted.

Various sizes of thigh bags were passed around for inspection. They are available in capacities of 250, 500 and 750 ml.

Leaflets were available to give information on how to join Charter Healthcare at no cost. Leaflets on Conveens and the process are available, as is a DVD on the subject.

Mandy advised that to obtain the products, one can go through a nurse at the hospital, request a sample from Charter, or for people living in West Berkshire, go through the NHS via the Continence Service in Wokingham, where products will be free on prescription.

Conveens are available in differing diameters and length, and after applying for Conveens, your penile diameter will be measured using a cardboard wheel with various sized semicircular cut-outs, to identify the diameter most suitable.

Mandy was thanked for her very informative talk, and was presented with a gift of appreciation.

You can see the video again at this web page:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n8MOL8sFYA8>

Editor's note: There are several Youtube videos concerning Conveens. The following video is a useful animation of the fitting of both the Conveen and thigh bag:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3w-SsLPkmhw>

You can also see another story of success with the Conveen, at this web page:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnrfsDIYwyc>



Photograph taken during Mandy's talk to the RPCSG



Mandy demonstrated the technique of applying a Conveen, using the finger of a volunteer!

EASIER ACCESS TO PSA TESTING FOR YOUNGER MEN

The body Public Health England (PHE) has a rule that any man over the age of 50 has a right to a PSA test if he requests a test after considering the implications with his GP.

The charity Prostate Cancer UK has set an ambitious target of reducing deaths from prostate cancer by one half over the next decade. It has said that we need to dramatically improve diagnosis if this is to be achieved, and has hopes for more accurate diagnostic tests to be available in the future. In the meantime it wants to go beyond the current PHE rules, and make the PSA tests

more freely available and thus help to detect prostate cancer earlier.

Prostate Cancer UK convened a powerful group of doctors, nurses, consultants and professional bodies to agree recommendations for using the PSA test more effectively. Based on the outcome of the group, they have released 13 'consensus statements', which build on the advice from PHE but go much further in advising GPs, as they are based on clinical consensus. The main recommendations of the group are that health care professionals should discuss the PSA test with men without symptoms from the age of 45 who are at higher than average risk of the disease. Also GPs should explore the use of the PSA test for men in their 40s who are concerned about prostate cancer, to establish a baseline that should help in the detection of a change in PSA levels.

Prostate Cancer UK has stated that: "We will be sharing the consensus statements with primary health care professionals and encouraging them to use them as an additional support alongside the guidance from Public Health England, to help men make the best decisions for their own individual situation."

You can read more detail of this initiative at this web page:

http://prostatecanceruk.org/about-us/news-and-views/2016/3/younger-men-should-now-consider-prostate-cancer-test-say-clinicians?utm_source=Insights+email+newsletter&utm_campaign=174089854e-Mar_2016_Progress_Insights_enewsletter_3_1_03_16&utm_medium=email&utm

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

3rd June 2016

The June meeting will have a return of Dr Fawaz Musa, a histopathologist at the RBH, who will explain the work that his unit carries out.

25th June 2016

We will be running an awareness stand at the Woodley Pagoda on Saturday 25th June. Volunteers will be very much appreciated to man this stand on a rota basis.

1st July 2016

This will be the July meeting of the RPCSG group. Details will be available later.

24th July 2016

This is the 'Boys Beating Cancer' fun run at the Newbury showground, at which we will hold an awareness stand. Everyone is invited to attend this event and if desired, to take part in the 'run' aspect of it. We would appreciate any volunteers to help to man our stand at this event.

DISCLAIMER

This newsletter does not offer medical advice. Nothing contained in the newsletter is intended to constitute professional advice for medical diagnosis or treatment or to advocate or recommend the purchase of any product or use of any service or guarantee the credentials or appropriateness of any health care provider. Members are strongly advised to consult with an appropriate professional for specific advice tailored to their situation.

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