

PHAROS

A beacon of hope in the darkness

Newsletter of the Reading Prostate Cancer Support Group (RPCSG)

Issue 55: December 2015

Website: www.rpcsg.org.uk

THE DECEMBER MEETING

The December meeting was our annual Christmas Social event with a hot buffet served in the St. Andrews Church hall. 72 people including two new members, attended this event, which was most enjoyable and entertaining. The meal was prepared and served by external caterers, and was very delicious and expertly made and served by their staff.

Thanks to Graham Cook for hosting the evening, and arranging both of the quizzes. Particular thanks also to Carmel Howard, who made all the arrangements with the caterers, and helped with the laying out of the tables.

Here are a couple of photographs taken during the event:



Left to right: Me, David Priest and Graham Cook attempting to organise the proceedings



Former committee member Paul Sefcick thanking the committee for arranging the evening

SIMULTANEOUS HORMONE THERAPY AND CHEMOTHERAPY

On the 4th October 2015, the BBC TV news had a headline story about the use of hormone therapy and chemotherapy at the same time. Professor Nick James of the Queen Elizabeth Birmingham hospital was featured in an interview, in which he said that these two therapies given simultaneously, are more effective than hormone treatment followed by chemotherapy. He did say, however, that there is some confusion in some hospitals about the licensed position of the simultaneous treatment. He said that all of the hospitals in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are providing the simultaneous treatment. However about

one half of English hospitals are refusing this simultaneous treatment. He said that these hospitals are under the interpretation that whilst NHS England say that chemotherapy is licensed after hormone treatment, it does not explicitly say that chemotherapy is licensed for treatment alongside hormone therapy, and they are therefore afraid that they will not be paid by NHS England for the simultaneous treatment.

Professor James said that his Birmingham hospital is treating patients who have been referred to the Birmingham hospital from neighbouring hospitals such as Nottingham, Leicester and Wolverhampton, due to the fear at these hospitals of such treatment not being paid for by NHS England.

You can read a BBC article about this concurrent treatment on this web page: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-32723937>

THE JANUARY 2016 GROUP MEETING

The January meetings are usually held as an informal gathering without any guest speaker. This is because attendance may be reduced due to the holiday season, and the meetings are held also for any new members that may want to attend. In 2016 we have the misfortune of the meeting being on New Year's Day. A deferral to another date was considered, but it was decided that we would hold the meeting as planned, in particular because any men newly diagnosed during December would expect there to be a meeting for them to attend. The January meeting will take place as planned on the 1st January 2016 from 18:30 and I hope that any member able to come to the church hall will do so.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

THE JANUARY 2016 GROUP MEETING

The January meeting will be on the 1st January 2016 at 6:30 p.m. in St. Andrews church hall. The meeting will be informal with no guest speaker, and a good chance to chat with other members. Refreshments will be available as usual. I hope that you will be able to come along if at all possible.

THE FEBRUARY 2016 GROUP MEETING

This meeting will take place on the 5th February 2016 at 6:30 p.m. in St. Andrews church hall. A speaker has been arranged - more detail later.

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DISCLAIMER

The 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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