

Proposal for a PSA Testing Event to be held at Fletcher's Lea on Saturday 25th May

Proposal by Cllr Thomas Day, for consideration at Full Council on Monday 25th March 2024.

Summary

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men but can easily go undiagnosed until it's too late. Ignorance about the cancer and its symptoms, an embarrassment and unwillingness to discuss 'personal problems' and a lack of national screening programme mean that many men, particularly those from marginalised groups, are suffering or dying unnecessarily from a disease that can be easily treated if caught early enough.

PSA testing is a non-intrusive way of detecting some of the early indicators of the cancer and can help those with higher risk monitor their health more closely, and those with the disease to seek treatment at a much earlier stage.

The Graham Fulford Charitable Trust (GFCT) is a charity that undertakes PSA testing and can run specialised testing events on behalf of partners such as Ware Town Council (WTC). This proposition seeks Council support to run a pilot event on Saturday 25th May at Fletcher's Lea, with a view to potentially making it a recurring event in the future if there is a successful uptake.

Background

About Prostate Cancer

- Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men.
- More than 52,000 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer every year on average – that's 144 men every day.
- Every 45 minutes one man dies from prostate cancer – that's more than 12,000 men every year.
- 1 in 8 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime.
- Around 490,000 men are living with and after prostate cancer.

About the Graham Fulford Charitable Trust

The GFCT was set up by Graham Fulford to promote awareness of Prostate Cancer following the diagnosis of a close friend who died at the age of 58 and a close family member who died in 2007 with prostate cancer after a valiant fight.

Since 2004, together with its partners, GFCT has been involved in testing over 150,984 men and conducting nearly 260,680 tests as of 17th August 2023. Consequently, there has been over 1,820 known cancers identified that otherwise may not have been discovered.

What is a PSA Test?

The PSA Test is a blood test which can detect the early signs of prostate cancer.

The test, which can be done at a GP surgery, measures the level of PSA (prostate-specific antigen) in a man's blood. PSA is made by the prostate gland and some of it leaks into the blood. The amount present in the blood depends on the man's age and the health of his prostate.

The amount of PSA in the blood is measured in nanograms of PSA per millilitre of blood (ng/ml). PSA levels can range from 1 ng/ml to hundreds of ng/ml.

*For those aged 50–59, the PSA level is considered raised if it's **3.50 ng/ml** or higher.*

*For those aged 60–69, the PSA level is considered raised if it's **4.50 ng/ml** or higher.*

*For those aged 70 or over, the PSA level is considered raised if it's **6.50 ng/ml** or higher.*

A raised PSA level in a man's blood may show that he has a problem with his prostate. However, this may not be prostate cancer. Other conditions, such as an enlarged prostate, prostatitis or a urinary infection, can also cause a raised PSA level.

All men over 40 are able to visit one the PSA testing sessions, as long as they have made an informed choice based on the benefits, limitations and risks of having the test.

Key Statistics

- About 15% of all men with a 'normal' PSA level (under 4 ng/ml) may have prostate cancer.
- Two out of three men with a raised PSA level don't have prostate cancer.
- One out of three men with a raised PSA level will have cancer.
- Two out of three men who have a biopsy don't have cancer.
- Biopsies in one in five men fail to spot prostate cancer.

The Test Itself

Men wishing to have a test must book an appointment through the GFCT booking website. They do not operate a walk-in service, so all tests must be booked in advance.

On the day of the test, a simple blood test taken from a vein in the arm, with the results being emailed to the patient approximately 24-36 hours later.

The test results are listed as Green (no further testing), Amber (test again in 1-2 years) or Red (make an appointment to see their GP for further tests) and the GFCT will send out the relevant letter advising this.

The Proposal

The GFCT will run a testing event for WTC for a minimum charge of £1,800. This charge includes tests for 60 men over 40 years of age and also covers the cost of all their supplies,

use of their booking site, administrative support, NHS-trained phlebotomists, laboratory tests and couriers. Additional testing can be requested at a cost of £30 per test.

Although the GFCT will run the event itself, additional officer resource will be required to help promote the event. On the day of the event, assistance will also be needed to man a register at the door and hand out blood forms for the phlebotomist/s – this could be done by one or more volunteer councillors...

The event is expected to last around 4 hours, based on 60 tests being carried out.

If Councillors are minded to support this proposal, it is suggested that the funding be taken from the 2024/25 budget allocation for promoting health and wellbeing (which totals £10,000, leaving a remainder of £8,200 for other projects).

Recommendation

To run a pilot PSA testing event for 60 persons, to be held at Fletcher's Lea on Saturday 25th May 2024.