



## **In this issue:**

- Man to Man History
- Looking Back - Thoughts From Three Health Care Providers
- Father and Daughter Reflections on the Journey
- What PCS Toronto Has Meant To Me
- New Saliva and Urine Tests Promise to Improve Prostate Cancer Detection
- Movember's 2024 Toronto Distinguished Gentlemen's Ride Raises More than \$175K
- Please Support the 2024 Father's Day Walk-Run!

**Spring 2024**

# **AWARENESS**

## **Prostate Cancer Support Toronto 30th Anniversary Edition**

### **MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS**

It has been 17 months since we took over the co-chair position of PCS Toronto from John Roth and Keith Braganza.

What have we accomplished? We are proud that our support group has secured a location for a monthly, in person, prostate cancer patients and survivors support session at a neighbourhood church, as well as continuing to have Zoom meetings. We may be the only Ontario prostate support group to sustain this.

We have continued to reach out and have distributed our brochures in 10 Toronto and area hospitals, as well as Wellspring Westerkirk House at Sunnybrook Hospital. We continue to have volunteers peer navigating men and their families at two hospital locations, Sunnybrook and North York General Hospital's Consumers Road site.

*Continued on Page 2*

**PCS Toronto Support Line:  
(416) 932 - 8820**

**or, contact us at:  
info@pcstoronto.ca**

**For more information,  
go to:  
<https://pcstoronto.ca>**

## **MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS - (continued)**

**In a Zoom meeting last year, we connected with other support groups in Ontario to gain knowledge about their particular situations and assist when we are able.**

**We are also listed on the UHN website – that is Princess Margaret, Toronto General and Toronto Western Hospitals – under Prostate Support Groups, where a link to our website can be found.**

**We have maintained a working relationship with B.C.-based Prostate Cancer Foundation Canada. Last year, our support group raised \$8,288 in the Father's Day Walk / Run for Prostate Cancer. We plan on surpassing that this year.**

**Our support group is now linked into the Ottawa-based Canadian Cancer Survivor Network so that men and their families are able to reach beyond their own communities to our support group, where we can peer navigate.**

**We are also in the beginning stages of becoming a registered charity.**

**There is much more work to be done! And with your continued support, we have much to look forward to.**

**Many thanks,  
Denis Farbstein and Ari Katz  
Co-Chairs**



**Ari Katz**



**Denis Farbstein**

## MAN TO MAN HISTORY

### EXECUTIVE:

**CHAIRMAN**, Wally Hamilton (416-221-1507)  
**VICE CHAIRMAN**, Peter Gow (416-241-0818)  
**VICE CHAIRMAN**, Al Philbrook, (416-283-5152)  
**SECRETARY - TREASURER**, Joe Feldman, (416-222-5958)  
**DIRECTORS**, Tom Keys (416-423-0599)  
                   Morris Wagman, (416-633-9232)  
                   Sol Dennis, (416-449-9790)

**HONORARY ADVISORS** Patrick Vernon (416-601-7579)  
                               Bill Mandel (416-226-0660)

### MEDICAL ADVISORS:

Andrew Bruce, M.D., M.D. Ch.B. FRCS(C)  
 Leonard J. Goldsmith, Ph.D., C.Psch.  
 Neill Iscoe, M.D., FRCS(C)  
 Lawrence H. Klotz, M.D., FRCS(C)  
 James S. Rodgeron, M.D.  
 John Trachtenberg, M.D., FRCS(C)  
 Mary L.S. Vachon, R.N., PH.D.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TORONTO CHAPTER

Man to Man started in Toronto with a meeting of interested people at the old board room of the Toronto Hospital on May 26, 1994. We can never thank Dr. John Trachtenberg enough. He gave us his time and arranged rooms and encouraged us.

There being no patient operated support group in Toronto to act for men in bringing information and awareness of this disease to the general public. The group set out their goals and mission. (see attached)

We now have over 700 subscribers, many volunteers and the dream to help people "Live Longer & Live Better", because of "Awareness & Support".

The original MAN TO MAN group was founded in the USA in 1990. The Founder assisted us with organizational advice, written materials and hard earned knowledge which saved a lot of time in getting our support group started.

We would like to thank the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario Division and Metropolitan Toronto Region for all their support that has made this growth possible.

**A brief history of what is now PCS Toronto was summarized on original Man to Man stationery some years after the group began in 1994, complete with a listing of board members and medical advisors.**



## LOOKING BACK - THOUGHTS FROM THREE HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

By Ron Benson

I am delighted to introduce Drs. Sharon Sharir and Michael Jewett, with a special welcome to Dr. John Trachtenberg, our “founding father.”

When I put out the invitation to contribute to this special edition of the newsletter, it was immediately accepted by Drs. Sharir and Jewett. It was they who thought that Dr. Trachtenberg might want to be a part of the celebration. Their contact met with a positive response.

How fortunate we are to have all three as contributors to the reflection that follows!

Drs. Sharir, Trachtenberg and Jewett are current and past members of the Department of Surgery at the University of Toronto, where Dr. Jewett was also chair of the Division of Urology. Drs. Trachtenberg and Jewett worked at University Health Network (which includes Toronto General Hospital and Princess Margaret Cancer Centre – formerly PMH), where Dr. Trachtenberg was also director of the Prostate Centre. Dr. Sharir works at Humber River Hospital.



Dr. Michael Jewett



Dr. Sharon Sharir



Dr. John Trachtenberg

## **FROM THE PHYSICIANS' PERSPECTIVE: REFLECTING ON 30 YEARS OF PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT - TORONTO**

**By Dr. Sharon Sharir**

I have been involved with Prostate Cancer Support-Toronto in various capacities for many years and have, on occasion, reflected on how my career developed in parallel with the evolution of this organization. I began my urology residency in 1995, and shortly thereafter became acquainted with the dedicated and very enthusiastic volunteers from what was then known as Man to Man, which had been formed shortly before that. They were an important part of patients' prostate cancer care when I was doing rotations at Princess Margaret Hospital, first as a resident and then later when I became a Urologic Oncology Fellow. I enjoyed getting to know the different individuals involved in this group. I remember at least one person that I was taking care of when he was a patient having prostate cancer surgery, and then later getting to know him better when he became a volunteer himself. After I became a urologist, I had the pleasure of sharing some of my knowledge and meeting more members when giving talks at Awareness Nights. I was honoured when I was asked to be a medical advisor for the group, and over the years I have provided written education to members through the newsletter from time to time.

On the occasion of this organization's 30th anniversary, I delved into its history by speaking with two people who were there at the very beginning. Dr. John Trachtenberg was instrumental in getting the group started, and Dr. Michael Jewett was involved from the first days of the group's existence. They shared their memories with me of those early days.

*Continued on Page 6*

## **FROM THE PHYSICIANS' PERSPECTIVE: REFLECTING ON 30 YEARS OF PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT - TORONTO**

**By Dr. Sharon Sharir - (continued)**

In the early 1990s, comprehensive, multidisciplinary care of patients with prostate cancer, as we now know it, did not exist. Furthermore, medical management was often dictated by the physician's recommendations, rather than constituting patient-centered care, whereby the patient's preferences are incorporated into the decision-making. There were other challenges, too. For example, Dr. Trachtenberg remembers being disheartened by the way patients undergoing prostate biopsies in the X-ray department waited on stretchers in an undignified manner. He wanted to do something to change that.

Around that time, organized patient advocacy was evolving in the United States in the areas of breast cancer research funding and care. Given the parallels between breast and prostate cancers (as hormonally driven, common cancers that primarily affect one gender), this led to the development of similar patient advocacy efforts to fund prostate cancer research. In addition, patients founded prostate cancer support groups in the USA, including Man to Man for prostate cancer patients and Side by Side for their partners. In Canada, no such groups yet existed to our knowledge.

Dr. Trachtenberg's vision was that a dedicated prostate cancer clinic would bring together health care professionals from the fields of nursing, medicine and psychology to provide the most up-to-date treatments and to encourage excellence in prostate cancer care. He further believed that a patient support group would be a critical component. Although there was some initial difficulty achieving buy-in from the hospital administration for such a clinic, it was eventually established, in no small part with the help of patient donors. It was first located at the Toronto General Hospital, and then moved to the new Princess Margaret Hospital that had relocated across the street.

*Continued on Page 7*

## **FROM THE PHYSICIANS' PERSPECTIVE: REFLECTING ON 30 YEARS OF PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT - TORONTO**

**By Dr. Sharon Sharir - (continued)**

Regarding the establishment of the patient support group – several outspoken prostate cancer patients, who were already in contact with one another, met with Dr. Trachtenberg in the boardroom of the Toronto General Hospital. These men were looking for something more than what was being offered to prostate cancer patients at that time. They felt that, as patients, they had inadequate input into their own medical management and they wanted to change that. They also felt a need for a more holistic approach to care. One example was the promotion of good diet and exercise to provide both psychosocial and physical benefits, and hopefully impact positively both the patient's cancer diagnosis and general well-being. The men involved were aware of the Man to Man support groups that had been established in the U.S. and decided to similarly organize themselves into a group where they could work on these issues. This initial meeting took place on May 26, 1994, and marks the inception of the Toronto Man to Man Prostate Cancer Support Group.

Volunteers from Man to Man attended the prostate clinic to provide support and information at the time of patients' appointments to any patient who wanted it. Often, patients would have their appointments with the MDs, such as Dr. Jewett and Dr. Trachtenberg, as well as the prostate clinic nurses, and after their appointments would talk with the Man to Man volunteers for as long as they wished. They could also choose to be contacted at a later date by someone who, for example, had undergone the same type of prostate cancer management as they were contemplating. Patients who had undergone surgery could elect to have visits by a Man to Man volunteer while they recovered in hospital. A Side by Side support group for the partners of men with prostate cancer was also founded, and met at the same time that Man to Man meetings took place.

*Continued on Page 8*

**FROM THE PHYSICIANS' PERSPECTIVE:  
REFLECTING ON 30 YEARS OF  
PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT - TORONTO**

**By Dr. Sharon Sharir - (continued)**

**Man to Man also organized various educational initiatives, including the monthly Awareness Night events that continue to this day. In fact, Dr. Trachtenberg was the speaker at the very first Awareness Night, on Nov. 28, 1994. Dr. Jewett gave talks, as well, as did many other health care professionals over the years.**

**Three decades later, the three of us look back with admiration at what Prostate Cancer Support-Toronto has accomplished. From its establishment until today, it has provided immense support, advocacy and education to countless patients with prostate cancer and their families. Congratulations on this milestone. We salute you!**



## **FATHER AND DAUGHTER REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY**

### **By Ron Benson**

I am pleased to introduce you to William (Bill) Mandel, who was an honorary advisor to the first executive when Man to Man Toronto was formed back in 1994. I reached out to Bill for his words of remembrance of that time.

“Man To Man came into existence thanks to a meeting called by Dr. John Trachtenberg at TGH (Toronto General Hospital),” Bill told me in an email.

“He felt that there was no men’s support group similar to what women had had for many years,” he added. “We had about eight men invited and, from that nucleus, the idea of a support group grew. Dr John was the driving force and through his efforts and others, not only did Man To Man grow, but in December 1998 the Prostate Centre at Princess Margaret Hospital opened and the rest is history.”

Just four years later, in 1998, Bill’s daughter, Michele, a Toronto Sun columnist, wrote an article focusing on prostate cancer and that featured her father, as well as Dr. John Trachtenberg and former premier of Ontario David Peterson.

The article serves to give us an historical perspective on prostate cancer as we think about the many advances in treatment, perspectives and prognosis over the past 30 years.

# FATHER AND DAUGHTER REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY

## By Ron Benson - (continued)

Toronto Sun Columnist: Michele Mandel

Page 1 of 2



September 27, 1998

## Prostate cancer modern scourge

By MICHELE MANDEL

Toronto Sun



There is no diplomatic immunity to cancer, not even for a former premier of Ontario.

And so it was in the summer of '97 that David Peterson went into his doctor's office for a routine checkup and one week later underwent successful surgery for prostate cancer.

He was 53 years old. Just as my father was.

"It's not something most people even think about," Peterson says, speaking publicly of his battle with cancer for the first time. "It was the farthest thing from my mind."

He had gone from his devastating loss of the premier's job in 1990 to a successful corporate career as a member of countless boards of directors and as senior partner at the law firm of Cassels Brock & Blackwell. Life was good. Prostate cancer was not supposed to be in the game plan. But then cancer enjoys preying on the unsuspecting.

As we were. For us, it was the summer of 1990 and we were all busy welcoming my new baby to the family, my parents' first grandchild. I remember the euphoria of those days, the sweetness of gazing at the soft skin of such new life and thinking that nothing could shatter that blissful happiness.

And then my father was diagnosed with prostate cancer.

It was incomprehensible. Unacceptable. I'd always thought cancer of the prostate was an old man's disease. My dad was only 53. And what's more, he was my father, my strong, invincible father. I don't think I really grew up until I saw that shadow of fear in my father's eyes.

At the time of my dad's diagnosis, much was different. There was no support group for men with prostate cancer and virtually no information about the disease. It was the silent killer, the cancer men are loathe to think or talk about.

"It makes men nervous," explains Malcolm Burrows, director of gift planning at the Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation. "It makes them cross their legs."

Too many avoided at all costs the digital rectal exam that is often the first indicator of any problem. The PSA test, a blood test that can indicate a likelihood of prostate cancer, was controversial and not widely offered by doctors.

For Peterson, it was the physical examination and a subsequent PSA test that led to such an early detection of his cancer.

"There were absolutely no symptoms whatsoever," Peterson, 54, recalls from his downtown law office.

"It's one of those things that if they catch it, life's fine. If they don't, it's terrible. But," he emphasizes strongly, "it is detectable."

That message is finally being heard, especially after a number of high-profile men in recent years have gone public about the disease, from Michael Milken and Norman Schwarzkopf to Allan Fotheringham and Eddie Shack.

Much more has changed. Survivors like my father founded Man-to-Man, the first support group for prostate cancer patients. They've also learned some crucial lessons



## FATHER AND DAUGHTER REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY By Ron Benson - (continued)

Toronto Sun Columnist: Michele Mandel

Page 2 of 2

from the powerful breast cancer lobby and are emulating their approach to raising awareness and money. And in December, the Prostate Centre at Princess Margaret Hospital will open, Canada's first combined research and supportive-care facility. With Peterson as honorary chairman of the campaign, they need \$12.3 million to make the centre a reality.

For while awareness has grown, some things haven't changed.

The amount of research dollars going towards a cancer that will strike one in eight men, the most common male cancer, was -- and still is -- pitifully low. There are no definitive numbers in Canada, but it's estimated a mere \$1 million is spent on prostate cancer research compared with the \$15 million for breast cancer. Meanwhile, 16,100 of our fathers, brothers or sons will develop prostate cancer in 1998 and 4,300 will die.

Like Peterson, my father was one of the lucky ones. Early detection enabled him to walk my sisters down the aisle and hold three more grandsons in his arms and be the shoulder I still lean on.

For Peterson, it's been a challenge he's taken in stride. "I wasn't very happy about it, but what the hell, I've been through enough ups and downs in life. You have to deal with what you're dealt. But I couldn't believe how many phone calls I got from others who had it. It is the modern scourge."

Late at night in hospital after his surgery, when his visitors were gone and even one of Allan Slaight's daily obscene cards couldn't make him smile, he'd read Angela's Ashes, the sad tale of abject poverty in Ireland.

That book and the support of his "incredible" wife kept his perspective, he says, and stopped self-pity from slipping in his door.

He's long been back at work, grateful to his doctor's early detection, and armed with a simple message: "Get checked. This is preventable. Some things in life aren't."

And you have someone like me who still needs you.

**Michele can be reached by e-mail at [mmandel@sunpub.com](mailto:mmandel@sunpub.com).**

Letters to the editor should be sent to [editor@sunpub.com](mailto:editor@sunpub.com).

[CANOE home](#) [Columnists](#) [CNEWS](#) / [SLAM! Sports](#) / [Jam! Showbiz](#) / [Money](#) / [Search](#) / [Help](#)

Sun Media: [Calgary Sun](#) / [Edmonton Sun](#) / [Ottawa Sun](#) / [Toronto Sun](#) / [London Free Press](#) / [Financial Post](#)

• SLAM! SPORTS • JAM! SHOWBIZ • CNEWS • MONEY • NEWSSTAND

• CANOE

CANOE home | We welcome your feedback.  
Copyright © 1998, Canoe Limited Partnership.

All rights reserved. Please click [here](#) for full copyright terms and restrictions.

## **WHAT PCS TORONTO HAS MEANT TO ME**

### **Phil Segal (Survivor, Past Chairman and Treasurer)**

When I was diagnosed in 2007, I really knew nothing about prostate cancer. Man to Man, as it was then known, was recommended to me by a friend and I attended a meeting on Holly Street. I was warmly received by the group and got to tell my story. I felt really comfortable with the group and decided to keep attending, which I have since then. The group's name has morphed from Man to Man to PCCN Toronto, and now to PCS Toronto. What hasn't changed is the great work done to make men feel comfortable about discussing either their initial diagnosis or the issues sometimes arising from treatment. PCS Toronto is a truly invaluable resource for prostate cancer support and awareness.

### **Robert Abelson (Survivor, Past Board Member and Hospital Volunteer)**

When I was diagnosed with prostate cancer in mid-July 2007, I was overwhelmed. I discovered this group on the Princess Margaret website and attended my first Man to Man meeting the first Tuesday in August that year. It was the fact that there were more than 25 men at the meeting and that they, for most part, offered good advice that helped change my attitude about my diagnosis.

When I left the doctor's office after my diagnosis, I presumed that I would be dead in a year. I HAD CANCER! What I learned that first night at Man to Man was that there were men who had had a similar diagnosis with the same Gleason score as me, at that meeting, and they had had treatment many years before.

## **WHAT PCS TORONTO HAS MEANT TO ME - (continued)**

### **Robert Abelson (Survivor, Past Board Member and Hospital Volunteer) - (continued)**

The experience of that meeting changed my whole attitude. In turn, I learned everything I could about the disease. I became very active in the group, serving on the board and, more importantly, volunteering at various hospitals with PCS Toronto.

This past fall, my wife Wendy and I moved to Hamilton and I had to give up volunteering at North York General's prostate clinic. But if there is one message I can bring it is to become involved with PCS. Attend meetings when possible and take your knowledge and share it with others, especially newly diagnosed men, by volunteering with the group. I congratulate the board for their hard work.

### **Bill Barclay (Survivor, Volunteer Attendee)**

I was pointed to PCCN Toronto by a close friend way back in time: 2016. My first meeting with the group was on Dec. 20, 2016. I remember that I showed up alone at a scheduled meeting, terrified "absolutely shitless." I knew nothing about prostate cancer then – only that I had had elevated PSA results over several years and that I had been diagnosed by my urologist and my GP as likely having prostate cancer. "Cancer" was a very scary word to me then.

I remember being warmly welcomed into the group of 30 or so men, many my age, and, as per the usual protocol, being asked to introduce myself and my situation. I met some wonderful men there and came away with more insights and advice than I knew what to do with. How many cores from your biopsy were taken? (I had no idea; my urologist didn't bother to let me know!). They asked about my PSA scores, Gleason score (again, I had no idea). They suggested getting print copies of all my test results and especially of my biopsy results.

*Continued on Page 14*



## **WHAT PCS TORONTO HAS MEANT TO ME - (continued)**

### **Bill Barclay (Survivor, Volunteer Attendee) - (continued)**

And there was a general discussion about various options for prostate cancer treatment – from a radical prostatectomy to targeted radiation, to hormone therapy, and others I have long forgotten. There was some back and forth about recommended doctors, but nothing negative at the meeting. It turned out that I was in the hands of a cancer oncologist who was well-regarded by the group, which was definitely reassuring.

Long story short, I had an MRI done at Sunnybrook Hospital, which confirmed the cancer diagnosis in my prostate. It turned out that my Gleason score was 3+3=6. This meant that I was eligible for brachytherapy and that the cancer was at an early stage. With advice from my main doc there, I shortly later underwent high-dose-rate (HDR) brachytherapy, plus some minor external beam radiation in case any cancer cells had escaped my prostate gland. The MRI had suggested that possibility. My tumour measured 22 by 14 millimetres, and was on screen during a painless biopsy using TRUS (trans-rectal ultrasound) at Sunnybrook. I can still vividly see the image on the screen!

In the end, all was successful. My PSA has dropped steadily now from 12.8 in December 2016 to 0.21 as of April 2023. My oncologist at Sunnybrook says that I am now clear of any possible recurrence. But I still monitor my PSA every year, for my own assurance, as anyone who has been through this logically would.

The guys at PCS Toronto know what you are dealing with. Many are dealing with the long-term effects from their treatments decades ago, when options were far more limited than they are now. Make a point to attend some peer meetings. You will get lots of support from guys who know what you are dealing with.

## **WHAT PCS TORONTO HAS MEANT TO ME - (continued)**

### **Ron Benson (Survivor, Past Chair and Current Board Member, Past Hospital Volunteer)**

I first became acquainted with Man to Man when, early in my making-a-treatment-decision process, I was waiting for my appointment to see radiation oncologist, Dr. Charles Catton at the (then) Princess Margaret Hospital. His nurse, Susan, suggested to me that after my appointment I might want to go up to the 4th floor and meet with volunteers from a prostate cancer support group to seek their input in helping me to decide on a treatment.

I followed her suggestion, and it was then that I first met several volunteers in the Man to Man support room that included Moe Wagman, Ray St. Sauveur and Jim Moran.

I told them my story and the struggle I was having deciding between a radical prostatectomy and external beam radiation treatment.

And although I have no remembrance of what they said to me, what I DO remember is that when I was leaving, one of the gentlemen followed me to the door (it turned out to be Moe Wagman) and said that when I was on the other side of making my decision and having my treatment, he thought I might like to consider becoming a Man to Man volunteer. He gave me his contact information and I left.

A year after my surgery, I found his card and got in touch with him. That was 2001. And here we are in 2024. It's been an interesting ride.

## **WHAT PCS TORONTO HAS MEANT TO ME - (continued)**

### **Ron Benson (Survivor, Past Chair and Current Board Member, Past Hospital Volunteer) - (continued)**

**A year after my surgery, I attended my first peer support meeting at the Holly Street location and told my story. I then continued by attending the peer support meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of every month. And I became a registered volunteer at the Princess Margaret, Toronto General and Sunnybrook hospitals.**

**After one of the Holly Street PSG meetings, Ray St. Sauveur (a board member) approached me about joining the board. I accepted the invitation. A year or two after that, it was Moe Wagman who, at a board meeting, nominated me to become a vice chair. My next step was to succeed Aaron Bacher as chair – a position I took on for three years beginning in 2011.**

**Through the years, I've had many responsibilities and have tried to make a helpful contribution to the organization.**

**That's the background. But what about the significance of Man to Man/PCCN Toronto/PCS Toronto in my life?**

**I don't have to give one moment's thought to what the standout significance is regarding my association with the group through the Man to Man, PCCN Toronto and PCS Toronto years. As I've told MANY people, the upside of having been diagnosed with prostate cancer has been the wonderful people I've met and the incredible friendships that have resulted.**

## **WHAT PCS TORONTO HAS MEANT TO ME - (continued)**

**Ron Benson (Survivor, Past Chair and Current Board Member, Past Hospital Volunteer) - (continued)**

When I joined the group, I knew I would meet a lot of people – and most certainly I have. But the lasting friendships that have happened and continue to happen never crossed my mind. For all the connections, I'm forever grateful.

Of course, I've learned a lot about prostate cancer, the disease. Even the number of words in my vocabulary has increased manifold times because prostate cancer has a language all its own! And of greatest interest and importance to me has been, and is, the opportunity to explore with others the emotional side of a prostate cancer diagnosis, making a decision, and life after treatment.

The organization has always been and continues to be people-centred. I have had the pleasure and privilege of meeting some of the finest people I've met in my lifetime: including attendees at our peer support meetings, board members and the many professional health care providers that I've met.

And so, in closing, I would be remiss if I didn't mention Ray, Jim and Moe again. They became very close friends whose commitment to the purposes for our group were exemplary and contagious and who, unconditionally, shared their wisdom and knowledge with me. I'm appreciative of the support and encouragement they gave me as a fledgling volunteer and then as a board member. As well, it was they who grounded me in the spirit of the group and who gave me a sense of direction and participatory opportunities that have served me well over these many years.

Most of all, I'm grateful for their friendship. I continue to miss them very much.

## **New Saliva and Urine Tests Promise to Improve Prostate Cancer Detection**

**(From University of Michigan Health Rogel Cancer Center and Cancer Research UK)**

Both newly diagnosed prostate cancer patients and survivors alike can take great encouragement from the rapid pace of innovation in the diagnosis and treatment of the disease. Two of the newest diagnostic tests — one based on saliva, another on urine — point to the huge promise of genetic approaches.

The new saliva test, which stemmed from the BARCODE 1 study, funded in part by Cancer Research UK, is designed to identify men at high risk of prostate cancer and is more accurate than the current PSA test, according to a news release by Cancer Research UK. The test could help find more cases of the disease earlier, when doctors have a better chance of treating it successfully.

Instead of measuring the amount of PSA in blood, the new spit test sorts people into groups by looking through the DNA in their saliva samples for a range of small genetic changes linked to prostate cancer. The results of the trial suggest that this approach works better. The men that the new test puts in its highest risk group are more likely to have prostate cancer than men with raised PSA levels. The new test also falsely identified prostate cancer fewer times than the PSA test does, and picked up a higher proportion of aggressive cancers.

*Continued on Page 19*



## **New Saliva and Urine Tests Promise to Improve Prostate Cancer Detection - (continued)**

**“With this test, it could be possible to turn the tide on prostate cancer,” said Ros Eeles, a professor at the Institute of Cancer Research and a consultant at the Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust, which jointly led the research. “We have shown that a simple, cheap spit test to identify men at higher risk due to their genetic makeup is an effective tool to catch the cancer early.”**

**Meanwhile, researchers at the University of Michigan Health Rogel Cancer Center have developed a new urine-based test that also appears superior to the PSA test and addresses the same problem in prostate cancer: how to separate the slow growing form of the disease unlikely to cause harm from more aggressive cancer that needs immediate treatment.**

**The test, called MyProstateScore2.0, orMPS2, looks at 18 different genes linked to high-grade prostate cancer. In multiple tests using urine and tissue samples from men with prostate cancer, it successfully identified cancers classified as Gleason 3+4=7 or Grade Group 2 (GG2), or higher. These cancers are more likely to grow and spread compared to Gleason 6 or Grade Group 1 prostate cancers, which are unlikely to spread or cause other impact. More than one-third of prostate cancer diagnoses are this low grade form.**

**“Our standard (PSA) test is lacking in terms of its ability to clearly pick out those who have significant cancer,” co-senior study author Dr. John T. Wei, the David A. Bloom Professor of Urology at Michigan Medicine, said in a article published by the Rogel Cancer Center. “Twenty years ago, we were looking for any kind of cancer. Now we realize that slow growing cancer doesn’t need to be treated. All of a sudden, the game changed. We went from having to find any cancer to finding only significant cancer.”**

*Continued on Page 20*

## **New Saliva and Urine Tests Promise to Improve Prostate Cancer Detection - (continued)**

**According to the Canadian Cancer Society, prostate cancer is still expected to be the most commonly diagnosed cancer among Canadian men in 2024, with an expected 27,900 new cases. Since its' peak in 1995, prostate cancer deaths rates have declined by 50 per cent, in large part due to investments in research and life-saving treatments.**

**However, Statistics from the American Cancer Society show that the incidence of prostate cancer in the U.S. grew by three per cent each year from 2014 to 2019 –and much of the increase comprised advanced cases. Some experts have linked this to decisions by the United States Preventive Services Task Force in 2012 to recommend against routine PSA screening for men at any age. The Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care later followed suit, saying the harms of routine testing outweighed the benefits.**

**Despite the impact of these decisions, the advent of these new tests promises to help doctors diagnose prostate cancer much earlier and much more accurately.**

## **Movember's 2024 Toronto Distinguished Gentlemen's Ride Raises More than \$175K**

**On Sunday, May 19, more than 500 motorcycle riders gathered in Toronto's Yorkville district to take part in the city's eighth annual Distinguished Gentlemen's Ride (DGR) to raise awareness and funds for prostate cancer research and men's mental health. This year, the Toronto ride raised more than \$175,000.**

**Since 2016, Movember has been the official charity partner of this global initiative. To date, more than \$2 million has been raised to support nine men's health projects in Canada – five of which are in the prostate cancer space.**

**DGR unites classic and vintage-styled motorcycle riders from all over the world to raise funds and awareness for prostate cancer research and men's mental health. The inaugural event began in Australia in 2012 and in 2016, Movember became the official charity partner.**

**Both Movember and DGR share the same goal: to bring people together and to help change the face of men's health. This year, 121 countries around the world participated and 31 rides took place across Canada, from Victoria to Halifax. Other cities included Berwick, N.S., Moncton, N.B., Montreal, Sherbrooke, Ottawa, Toronto, Hamilton, North Bay, Winnipeg, Regina, Edmonton, Calgary, Nelson, B.C., Kamloops and Vancouver.**

**“By joining forces with Distinguished Gentleman's Ride, we can broaden our reach and engage with even more people who are passionate about men's health,” Dan Cooper, director of innovation at Movember, said in a news release. “Together, we aim to challenge the stigma surrounding men's mental health and encourage men to take proactive steps in looking after their well-being.”**

## Movember's 2024 Toronto Distinguished Gentlemen's Ride Raises More than \$175K - (continued)

The collaboration between Movember and DGR aligns with the shared goal of breaking down barriers that prevent men from seeking help and support when they need it most. Through a series of events and fundraising initiatives, the two organizations help to empower individuals across Canada to make a difference in their communities.

Since 2003, Movember has built a global men's health movement, funding more than 1,300 projects around the world. The charity has taken on three of the biggest health issues affecting men: prostate cancer, testicular cancer and mental health and suicide. It encourages men to adopt healthier behaviours, challenging health systems and confronting gender norms to reduce health inequalities and save more lives.

The Distinguished Gentleman's Ride was founded by Mark Hawwa in Sydney, Australia, in 2012. After being inspired by a photograph featuring classic suits and vintage motorcycles, Mark decided that a themed ride would be a great way to combat the often-negative stereotype of motorcyclists by connecting the global motorcycling community and raising funds for a cause important to every rider. It has raised more than U.S. \$45 million for prostate cancer research and men's health since 2012.



## **Please Support the 2024 Father's Day Walk-Run!**

**By John Roth**

As many of you know, PCS Toronto has taken part in the annual Father's Day Walk-Run fundraiser for many years. In the past, it was run by Prostate Cancer Canada, and since 2021 has been organized under the auspices of our new national group, Prostate Cancer Foundation Canada (PCFC).

This was actually an initiative of Prostate Cancer Foundation B.C., which gave the website below a B.C. look, but it is now a true national effort.

While we are still mainly a virtual event, in 2022 some of us actually did walk at Ashbridges Bay on Father's Day morning. We hope to do that again this year with an informal get together there again with some tailgate refreshments.

PCS Toronto is not a fundraising organization, nor do we charge for any of the support sessions, webinars or events that we offer. More of these will now be offered in-person again. But these things do cost money, and the Father's Day Walk-Run is our opportunity to raise the funds that we need to run our organization.

Raising funds for the Father's Day Walk-Run benefits our group because we receive 50 per cent of the funds that we raise to cover the expenses that PCS Toronto incurs throughout the year. The balance of the money is used by Prostate Cancer Foundation Canada to help support the more than 55 prostate cancer support groups across Canada that are part of the PCFC network.



## **Please Support the 2024 Father's Day Walk-Run!**

### **By John Roth - (continued)**

**If you're able to help, the link below leads you to our donations page. Just click on Sponsor Us in orange, near the upper right of the web page and fill in the form:**

**<https://gifttool.com/athon/MyFundraisingPage?ID=1852&AID=4316&PID=773048>**

**You will receive a tax receipt almost immediately from PCFC. Don't forget to check your spam/junk folder if you don't.**

**We hope you will consider supporting our group in this annual fundraising effort. Any amount you may consider donating is greatly appreciated. We humbly suggest \$30 (or more) in honour of our 30th anniversary. Thank you for your consideration!**