

Prostate Cancer Testimony

In October 2007, I was discharged from Aberdeen Royal Infirmary having been treated for myasthenia gravis, a self immune neurological problem. Not long afterwards I went to visit my GP thinking that I had a urinary infection due to frequent nightly visits to the bathroom.

When tests proved negative I was advised by my GP that I might have a prostate problem and before he did any physical tests he took blood samples which were sent for analysis. I saw him again on December 22nd. The results showed that I had a PSA of over over 500 which he said was a sure sign of cancer.

I had an appointment to see the urologist at Raigmore Hospital early in January 2008 and I was told that it was untreatable as with such a high PSA the cancer would have spread all over my body and nothing could be done. When I questioned that, he said that all he could do was give me hormone suppression. So I said, "How about radioactive seeds injected into my testicles?". He replied, "We don't do that here but what I am prepared to do is send you for a bone scan to see exactly how far the cancer has spread".

My next visit was to the Nuclear Engineering Dept., (they have since changed the name) at Raigmore, where I had to swallow a solution of radioactive Technetium 99 and after two hours or more I had the bone scan.

Some time later I was phoned by the specialist nurse who said, "Good news! The scan showed that the cancer has spread but is restricted to the pelvic region and is treatable". My next appointment was for a biopsy and then a visit to the oncologist. The oncologist had a simulation model made of the relevant area. The first one was inaccurate and a second one had to be made.

Eventually, I was called in for radiography treatment which lasted 7 weeks, every day for 5 days, Monday to Friday, beginning in March 2008 and continuing into April 2008, during which time I stayed at the Patient Lodge during the week and returned home each week-end. I received a total of 65 Gray over 35 days comprising; 25 x 1.8 Gray over 25 days and 10 x 2.0 Gray over 10 days.

After a few weeks I had severe bowel problems in the morning. I dare not attempt to go to the hospital dining room and I had breakfast (mainly porridge or toast) in the kitchen attached to my room*, after which I had to spend the next hour in the bathroom which may have inconvenienced others who shared the facilities, however, it was impossible for me to leave until I was completely clear. I would then go down to Maggie's at about 10:00 and spend time on their computer. After lunch in the hospital dining room I would repair to radiography, empty my bladder according to a set routine and drink a measured quantity of water at 14:00 to ensure that the prostate was in the right place for the treatment at 14:20.

On one occasion, one of the nurses told me that I was late for my appointment, which was not true, anyway she made me miss my turn and the result was both catastrophic and embarrassing as I had just got onto the machine when I couldn't hold my water any longer.

There are many other details that I could relate but the outcome is that apart from some bowel problems the treatment appears to have been successful as I am still active.

*Kyle Court has been refurbished since that time and no longer has individual kitchens attached to each suite, which would be a problem for me now.