

Trevor Carter's story

Here is an entertaining little article sent to us by one a member.

Trevor had his HIFU procedure at the end of 2020. He tells us that he was "in and out" on the same day. He was ushered out an hour or so after regaining consciousness although the papers they issued him with said that, as the operation was late afternoon, they would be keeping him in overnight.

He was issued with three types of pain killer and a bottle of laxative, none of which he used. He did however make use of the festive red over socks they gave him.

Trevor is a useful contact - not only does he write poems for all sorts of events but he is also a Bristol-based independent funeral celebrant.

My Big Day Out in London

So, here we are at last, preparing for my big day out in London. Having spent over a decade avoiding a direct medical assault on the cancer in my prostate I have now conceded to having a radical interference. Having had all my pre-op checks, I must present myself at Charing Cross Hospital at 11.30. Sally, who is always highly organised, has the journey mapped out, food for the day prepared, and other items ready, such as a pillow to sit on, on the way back.

We decided to leave around 8.30, which allows for about 40 minutes of slack in the estimated journey time. Having had only a cup of rooibos (herbal tea) for breakfast we set off more or less on time. The journey was thankfully uneventful. On nearing London I recall that the last time I went to London was to do a show. I am sure that this will be much less fun.

We arrive in good time but it takes a while to find the Riverside Wing where I am due to check-in. I am confronted by a gatekeeper who is guarding access to the waiting room. I announce myself and she asks to see my Covid certificate. I explain that I don't have one and that the result of my test was sent to this hospital by Southmead Hospital in Bristol. She insists I must show her a test result.

Meanwhile two young women stagger out of the waiting area and lurch towards the lift, one supporting the other, who seems close to collapse. Oh dear, will this be me in a few hours' time? 'It's not too late to turn back,' says Little Trev. 'Get a grip!' Big Trev replies. 'The decision has been made. The girls flop into the lift, which takes them to the ground floor.

I then see them outside, the sick one is now unable to stand, first leans on a windowsill and then crumples to the ground. Her friend does her best to make her comfortable. For a moment I consider going to help, then I see a passerby go off to alert the staff and a nurse brings a chair for her to sit on. Wow, this is a tough place,' says Little Trev. 'They're throwing out people who can't even walk.'

I return my attention to the task of gaining entry. I ask the gatekeeper to go and check with the receptionists and ask them to sort it out, or call Southmead if necessary. She goes off to talk to them, comes back and says they can't get through to Southmead and reminds me I can't get in without proof of a negative Covid test.

'I want to talk to someone in authority,' I imperiously demand. After a while a doctor appears and explains they are not allowed to let me in without a Covid certificate, but they will accept one if it can be emailed to them immediately. I call Sally, who manages to talk to Southmead, who then helpfully forward the said document to Charing Cross. The day is saved, and after about an hour of arguments I am allowed into the waiting room. Just the kind of experience one needs before surgery.

By this time it is mid-afternoon. But once I gain entry a nurse soon comes to get me to start the preparation process, which includes checking blood pressure, which she noted was 'on the high side' but added that considering the aggravations of the entry process this was perhaps unsurprising.

After a while I get to meet the surgeon, who strikes me as remarkably young. She posits the view that I am the sort of person who is likely, after surgery, to do too much too soon and warns me against this. 'No tennis until next year at the earliest.' I agree to abide with her ruling.

The process unfolds and I am shuffled off to the waiting area. The last thing I see before losing consciousness is the anesthetist looming over me. I fade out and am done unto.

Coming round I am cheered by my return to the world. I am offered food and drink and opt for a tuna sandwich. I am escorted out by a nurse who, on reaching the exit, looks towards the lift. I look towards the stairs and skip down them, feeling remarkably okay. She follows and we have a brief hug before saying goodbye. Meanwhile Sally arrives in the getaway car and we are homeward bound, allegedly cancer free and feeling relieved that it is all over. The end of my big day out...
