

MP on PCa screening

Tackling major conditions that cause ill-health - including prostate cancer - provides an opportunity to improve the lives of millions of people. With this in mind, a Major Conditions Strategy is being developed to outline how outcomes in six major condition areas will be improved, including all cancers. A call for evidence has recently concluded and the strategy will be published in due course.

Raising awareness of prostate cancer is key to driving earlier diagnosis and increasing survival rates, particularly for men at higher risk, such as those with a family history of prostate cancer.

Early detection is crucial to achieving better outcomes and NHS England has published guidance around suspected prostate cancer, setting out how diagnosis can be achieved within 28 days. A financial incentive was introduced in 2022-23 to ensure this guidance is delivered at a local level. I know that NHS England is also funding five pilots in the early detection of prostate cancer, and it is encouraging that they are implementing a best practice pathway for prostate cancer, including the use of MRI scanning prior to biopsy for a faster diagnosis.

Whilst there are no current plans to introduce an NHS screening programme for prostate cancer, I understand that the UK National Screening Programme is due to review the evidence for prostate screening in 2023/24.

On research, I strongly welcome that the Government is partnering with Prostate Cancer UK to fund a £42 million prostate cancer screening trial - TRANSFORM - that will use innovative screening methods like an MRI scan to detect prostate cancer. Hundreds of thousands of men across the country will be participating, and there is the potential to see new screening methods providing more accurate results than the current blood tests.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Best, Liam

The Rt Hon Sir Liam Fox MP
MP for North Somerset