



TIMING FACTORS IN FAVOUR OF THE WIDENING USE OF HIFU AS A PROSTATE CANCER TREATMENT

- Focal therapy using High Intensity Focused Ultrasound is a minimally invasive treatment for prostate cancer that has not spread. Due to its accurate targeting of individual areas of cancer the collateral tissue damage is less than prostatectomy or radiotherapy, which remove or irradiate the whole prostate. In fact, side effects are 5-10-fold lower in terms of urine leakage, erectile dysfunction and back passage symptoms. Cancer control and survival are similar over a 10-year period.
- The procedure is currently only mostly available in the South of England with only 5 NHS centres and many private sector providers. This is leading to a true lack of equitable and fair access for focal HIFU therapy. Many patients who are suitable for focal therapy are not told of it and if they find out about it themselves then they may have to travel large distances or sometimes self-pay to have it carried out.
- Research from Imperial has shown that about 40% of newly diagnosed patients with prostate cancer can have focal therapy. This would amount to about 12,000 cases every year. Currently, no more than 1,000 cases are carried out per year. This is because of numerous factors including lack of local facilities, equipment, expertise and knowledge and a reluctance to change practice.
- Excitingly, Professor Hashim Ahmed of Imperial College the lead on the £42m recently launched TRANSFORM Trial aimed to speed up the early detection of Prostate Cancer recently announced at the BAUS Annual Conference in Birmingham that any hospital wishing to take part in the Trial **HAVE** to offer focal therapy as a possible treatment option for men considered suitable for it.
- We would like your support in improving the dissemination of focal therapy by investing in more centres around the UK through investment in equipment and training of urologists who will be local 'champions' for the procedure.
- We want to ensure that patients get the highest quality focal therapy that they would get in any one of the top centres offering this currently. Consequently, Professor Hashim Ahmed is setting up a "Code of Good Practice" for the procedure, to include high quality mentoring and training of new urologists taking this up, robust follow up



on all patients, and is overseeing the training of any new urologists who wish to be trained to specialize in the treatment.

- Sonablate the manufacturers of the HIFU equipment have agreed to sponsor the training of doctors specializing in the treatment on a Fellowship Scheme...again under the auspices of Professor Ahmed.
- This is a unique opportunity to play a part in helping our NHS Hospitals acquire much needed new equipment to help the "levelling up" process in the Midlands and the North in terms of providing an alternative treatment option for men with Prostate Cancer. We have already identified enthusiastic new centres who we know will champion this and take it forward. We now need to support them so that they can offer this treatment to the thousands of men who will be diagnosed with this disease every year.