

New advanced Prostate and Lung Cancer early detection tests unveiled by HealthScreen UK

HealthScreen UK proudly unveiled their two latest advanced diagnostic tools for the early detection of prostate and lung cancer in the workplace, one of which is exclusively available to HealthScreen UK.

Delegates from leading employers, health insurers and employee benefit consultancies attended the launch of ProstateCheck and LungCheck. The innovative new services were introduced by two of Britain's leading cancer surgeons, describing them as ground breaking detection programmes which could save lives.

Both these tests are supported by thorough symptomatic score and risk assessment tests based on lifestyle, symptoms and family history.

The two eminent surgeons launching the new services were Prof. David Neal, Professor of Surgical Oncology at the University of Cambridge and Clinical Director for ProstateHealth UK, and Francis Wells, Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon at Papworth Hospital and Clinical Director for LungHealth UK; they are both listed by The Times as being among the top surgeons in their field in the UK.

Prof. Neal said that the present PSA testing method did not provide accurate results, and this meant that six out of ten biopsies were unnecessary, but had to be carried out if they indicated the patient could be at risk. At the same time, there was a chance that using the PSA measurement alone for detecting prostate cancer resulted in missing some cancers, as well as diagnosing other low risk tumours which posed little threat to life. And this is what is really exciting about ProstateCheck Prof. Neal told the audience.

ProstateCheck can first the first time ever guide client and urologist as to which clients need biopsy and which do not.

The present CT checks for lung cancer also fail to diagnose some early stage cancer, but Mr Wells described how the advanced LungCheck blood test offers significantly improved diagnosis as it is based on a panel of seven biomarkers which can detect early stage lung cancer. This is of key importance as if symptom free lung cancers (as most are) are left untreated too long the outlook for these patients is bleak.

Prof Gordon Wishart, an expert on cancer in the workplace, as well as a consultant breast and endocrine surgeon and Medical Director for HealthScreen UK, spoke about occupational cancer in Britain.

He stunned the audience with revelations that female night shift workers faced an increased risk of breast cancer.



Photograph by Ellee Seymour

Photo from left to right:
John Picken,
Francis Wells,
Prof. Gordon Wishart,
Prof. David Neal,
Troels Jordansen

ProstateCheck, available for the first time globally and exclusively to HealthScreen UK, uses two new cancer specific biomarkers known as hK2 and iPSA as a way to limit the numbers of unnecessary biopsies following PSA testing which is also measured. Studies have shown that the latest advanced detection programmes using ProstateCheck eliminates the need for unnecessary biopsies by up to 50%, saving men needless anxiety, discomfort and risk of infection from the procedure.

The new LungCheck blood test for detection of lung cancer has also provided outstanding results and is seven times more likely to accurately identify lung cancer than the low dose CT scans which are currently used. Early diagnosis is vital as only 3-5% of lung cancer patients have stage 1 when it is discovered, giving them the best chance of recovery. More than 40,000 new cases of prostate and lung cancer are diagnosed each year in the UK. One in seven lung cancers are diagnosed in people that have never smoked.

A recent report published in the British Journal of Cancer highlighted the findings of a study which showed that 1 in 20 breast cancers are diagnosed in women who work shifts throughout the night.

This is because being exposed to light at night when the body isn't used to it upsets the body's biological rhythms which can have an impact on certain cancers.

While legal cases have not yet been tested in the British courts from workers whose cancer was shown to have been attributed to their work, the delegates were told this is beginning to happen in other parts of the world.

With more than 10,000 cancers in the UK being thought to be work related companies have a huge task ahead of them to provide awareness and early detection services and in other ways try and limit the liability. In Australia and Scandinavia, nurses and female air crews have already successfully claimed compensation for their skin and breast cancer diagnoses.

Afterwards, the guests who gathered at Home House, London for the launch, shared their thoughts about the event, expressing how impressed they were at the detection tests, recognising their importance for clinical governance if workers might be more at risk of cancer in their workplace. This is what they said:

■ Colin Bullen, Head of Global Wellness, Aon Hewitt:

“ I was impressed by the high quality presentations. The content was pitched at the right pace and didn't labour points. There was a lot of information in a short space of time.

“ I believe this kind of cancer screening will be beneficial as part of a company's health management strategy, and we need some progressive employers to adopt it to demonstrate its value. I will be raising this with our clients.

“ In the past there was resistance from clients I have spoken to due to the problem associated with the number of false-positive diagnoses. As both of these tests will significantly reduce the number of false-positives, this is a major step forward for the usability of cancer screening in the workplace. ”

■ Mark Osborn, UK&I Total Rewards, Hewlett-Packard

“ Hewlett-Packard have used HealthScreenUK's services for the last 12 months on a number of campaigns which have been extremely successful and we've had positive feedback from our employees. The presentations today reinforced the reasons why we undertook those campaigns and how cancer awareness and screening can be used within a company.

“ We have had over 3,000 people undertake ProstateCheck and 3,000 people also undertook SkinCheck and from there a number of cancer cases were confirmed, so this screening was a real health benefit to our employees. Even those who didn't have a cancer confirmed felt that learning more about it was of real benefit. ”

■ Claire Savage, Eggborough Power:

“ I came because of the expertise of the speakers and was interested in the cutting edge technology they are applying. I learned much about the benefits of early intervention and will definitely be exploring it further to see how the latest diagnostic tests might benefit to our organisation. ”

■ Dr Bridget Juniper, Director, Work and Well-Being:

“ It was a very helpful overview about the risks of cancer in the workplace. The summary on the impact of shift work of people's health was quite an eye opener.

“ I work with clients who do shift work - police, call centres and airlines and this has clear implications. It would be of value to introduce HealthScreen UK to meet some of my clients for a balanced conversation. ”

■ Tricia O'Neill, Director, Apple Porch Consultancy:

“ It was a great opportunity to understand what is out there, what is current in terms of screening and what companies might want to consider. It was reassuring to learn about the science behind what is being propositioned and its value proposition for clients is very credible and underpins clinical governance. It's an option I will be recommending to certain clients, either as a salary sacrifice or as a benefit.

“ After listening to the speakers, I thought how easy, how simple it is to save lives and I wonder why the NHS do not consider, if you look at the benefits in terms of reducing surgery, medication, all the direct and periphery cost of someone having cancer. It has to offset the cost of what is being offered today. It would very interesting to look at the financial benefits. ”

■ Joanne Anderson, Senior Consultant, Towers Watson:

“ I was keen to come as I wanted to hear more about the latest cancer screening developments and the governance behind it. I advise clients on their integrated healthcare solutions and now I can decide how to take cancer screening options to a client. For example, a lady here was asking about litigation, that's the kind of thing employers need to be aware of today. I have been to previous presentations for BreastCheck and SkinCheck, which were similarly useful, and also have a number of clients that may be interested in these latest tests. ”

HealthScreen UK Launch - Unique early detection services for prostate and lung cancer.

Home House, London. 4 October 2012.

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