

Thursday, January 12th 2012

PRESS RELEASE

Invitation to attend a free health seminar on Bowel Cancer Awareness at Blackpool Victoria Hospital

MEMBERS of the public are invited to attend a free presentation on bowel cancer and the screening process at the latest health seminar for members of Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Dr Mark Hendrickse, Consultant Gastroenterologist, will be hosting a seminar entitled '***Bowel Cancer and Screening***' on Tuesday, January 31st 2012, between 12 – 1 pm in the Lecture Theatre, Education Centre at Blackpool Victoria Hospital.

Bowel cancer is often called the 'silent killer' as the symptoms regularly go unnoticed until the cancer is at an advanced stage. It is the third most common cancer and is the UK's second biggest cancer killer, claiming a life every 30 minutes, that equates to over 16,000 lives a year.

Around 40,000 people are diagnosed with bowel cancer each year, most cases being in the over 50's age group. However, more recently the number of younger people being diagnosed is increasing, particularly in the under 30's age group, which has increased by 120% over the last 10 years.

There is no known cause for bowel cancer, however, some factors known to increase the risk of developing it include; having an immediate relative who has been diagnosed, an unhealthy lifestyle, inactivity, being overweight and suffering with diabetes, Crohns disease or ulcerative colitis.

Dr Hendrickse said: "Most bowel cancers can be successfully treated if detected early, which makes screening extremely important and potentially life-saving. Research has proven that regular bowel cancer screening can reduce deaths by as much as 16%.

"The Trust began delivering the national Bowel Cancer Screening Programme for the Primary Care Trusts of Blackpool, part of North Lancashire, Central and East Lancashire, Blackburn and Darwin in April 2008. This programme offers screening every two years to all men and women aged 60 to 74.

"About one in 20 people in the UK will develop bowel cancer during their lifetime. Screening aims to detect bowel cancer at an early stage in people with no symptoms, when treatment is more likely to be effective."

The good news says Dr Hendrickse is that for most people the results of the test will be normal and they will simply be invited for repeat screening every two years, if still within the eligible age range.

Various organisations such as, Bowel Cancer UK and Beating Bowel Cancer run regular campaigns to help raise awareness as public awareness of this disease and its symptoms is poor and many people delay visiting their GP when they have concerns. During the week commencing 23rd January 2012, a campaign 'Be Loud, Be Clear' will run and is all about highlighting the signs and symptoms of bowel cancer and early detection. The month of April is Bowel Cancer Awareness Month, a national campaign that runs every year to inform people about the importance of early testing and treatment.

If you would like to know more about the signs and symptoms of bowel cancer and would like to ask Dr Hendrickse a question, please come along.

To book a place on the seminar please contact Jacinta Gaynor, Membership and Governors Officer, on 01253 306673. You must be a member of the Trust to attend and membership can be arranged over the phone.

Membership doesn't cost anything, and there are numerous benefits for the Trust and the local community alike, which can be seen on the Trust's website: www.bfwh.nhs.uk. Your application can be received via the website, by post or by telephone.



Caption: Dr Mark Hendrickse, Consultant Gastroenterologist

For further information about this Press Release, please call Jacinta Gaynor, Membership & Governors Officer, on 01253 306673 or email jacinta.gaynor@bfwhospitals.nhs.uk

Notes to Editors:

Improving cancer outcomes is a government priority and the earlier cancer is diagnosed the better the outlook. More than 90% of people diagnosed with

bowel cancer at the early stage survive for at least five years compared with only 6.6% of those diagnosed at the late stage.

For more information on Bowel Cancer UK go to www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk

For more information on Beating Bowel Cancer go to www.beatingbowelcancer.org