

Cardiff's healthcare services receive a major boost Spire Cardiff Hospital launches new services to combat stroke and prostate cancer

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Spire Cardiff Hospital (<http://www.spirehealthcare.com/cardiff/>), one of 25 private hospitals (<http://www.spirehealthcare.com/>) in the Spire Healthcare group, is pioneering two important new services in the areas of stroke and prostate cancer, two of the most common life-threatening diseases.

Hospital Director, Nicola Amery, said the developments were part of its commitment to deliver best practice healthcare services which are easily accessible to the local community and in line with their specific needs.

Speedy new stroke prevention service

One of the most significant developments is the strengthening of its TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack) and Stroke Prevention Clinic which now operates weekly with improved diagnostics and same day prognosis.

Typically, people at risk of a stroke in the Cardiff area can wait up to six months for a clinical assessment, Spire Cardiff's new clinic will provide an assessment and consultation all within two hours.

Strokes are the third leading cause of premature death in the UK with 150,000 new cases every year. Rapid diagnosis and timely clinical intervention are critical to reducing its prevalence.

Analysis of recent stroke victims at the University of Wales Hospital shows that half (49 percent) had experienced a TIA in the two weeks preceding their stroke.

"Frequently TIAs are a precursor to a major stroke. It is vital that anyone experiencing a TIA is screened as quickly as possible to establish the status of their carotid artery," said Miss Susan Hill, Consultant Vascular Surgeon at the University Hospital of Wales who also consults from the new stroke clinic at the private hospital (<http://www.spirehealthcare.com/locate-a-hospital/>) in Cardiff.

"Too often we hear of people who suffer a TIA having to wait weeks before being clinically assessed. During this time many experience a life-threatening stroke. The new service offers people speedy access to expert care," she said.

TIAs and strokes are caused by a build up of cholesterol and other debris in the carotid artery. Debris from this artery is carried to the brain where it lodges triggering a TIA or, worse, a major stroke. If the carotid artery is found to be narrowed, a carotid endarterectomy is performed to remove the debris and prevent an attack.

A Carotid Doppler Ultrasound, performed in the clinic, allows the artery to be assessed so that patients can be given advice regarding any medication and lifestyle changes necessary, or surgical intervention, in order to reduce the incidence of both TIAs and major stroke.

Miss Hill said it was hoped the clinic would be widely used to screen people at risk of TIAs or strokes; typically smokers, those suffering from diabetes, hypertension and high cholesterol levels.

As well as enabling rapid assessment and clinical intervention with respect to carotid artery disease the clinic will also help to reduce the risk of heart attacks by identifying signs of heart and vascular disease. Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of premature death in the UK.

The TIA and Stroke Prevention Clinic at Spire Cardiff Hospital is open every Tuesday afternoon and evening. To make an appointment a GP's letter of referral is required.

New prostate cancer test twice as accurate as its predecessor

Prostate cancer is one of the most common forms of cancer in men. Every year 35,000 new cases are identified and 10,000 die from this condition.

"PCA3 is a genetic marker for prostate cancer. When a cancer develops the quantity of this gene multiplies significantly. Abnormally high levels of PCA3 are therefore an important marker of the patient's risk of having prostate cancer," said Professor Howard Kynaston, Consultant Urological Surgeon.

"Previously we relied on a PSA blood test. This too gave an indication of risk but was not a very sensitive technique. The new PCA3 test is twice as accurate but still not a conclusive indication that prostate cancer is present. About 70% of patients who record an abnormal result are found to have prostate cancer when biopsies are performed. "

The PCA3 test was launched in the UK just three months ago and has been used by Spire Cardiff Hospital for several weeks. After a light massage of the prostate area, PCA3 positive cells leak into the urine and their levels can then be read via a urine test.

Patients wanting more information on any of these new procedures or to book an appointment can call Amie Richards on 02920 542 509. A GP referral is required.

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Note to editors:

Spire Healthcare is one of the leading independent hospital providers in the UK with a 25-year heritage

in customer service and clinical excellence. It was formed in 2007 from the sale of BUPA hospitals to leading private equity company Cinven.

Spire Healthcare has 25 hospitals across the UK, providing services for private and insured patients as well as NHS-funded patients under the government's 'Choose and Book' scheme. It also offers cosmetic and weight-loss surgery.

Its hospitals carry more than 160,000 in-patients and day-care treatments a year and work with over 3,000 consultants. It is proud to be the first independent hospital group to publish clinical outcome data.