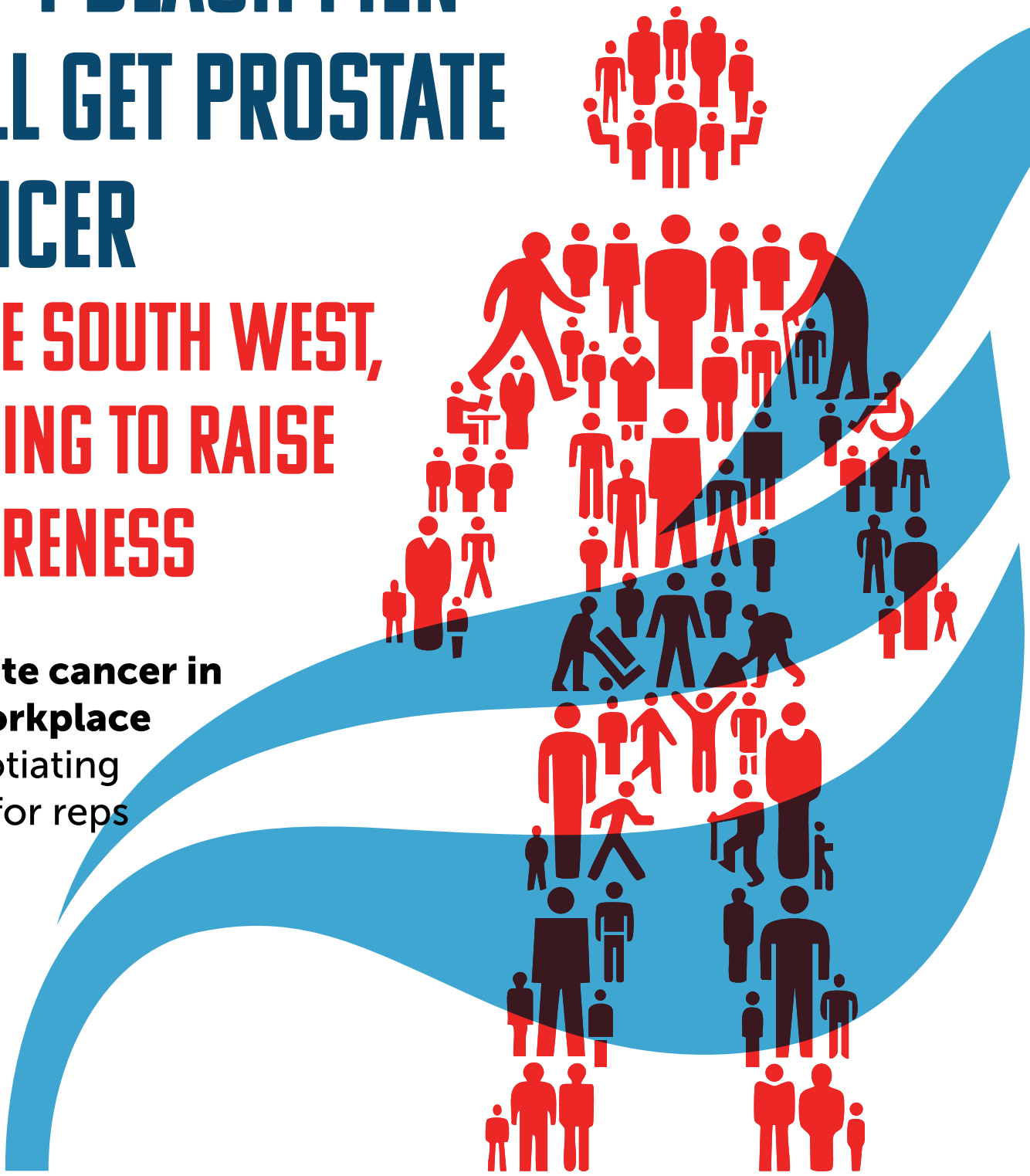
1 IN 8 MEN AND 1 IN 4 BLACK MEN WILL GET PROSTATE CANCER

UNITE SOUTH WEST, HELPING TO RAISE AWARENESS

Prostate cancer in the workplace
A negotiating guide for reps



unite the UNION SOUTH WEST

SUPPORTING PROSTATE CANCER UK

UNITE SOUTH WEST: PROTECTING YOUR JOBS, PAY AND HEALTH

@unitesouthwest

Prostate Cancer UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1005541) and in Scotland (SC039332). Registered company number 02653887.

A MESSAGE FOR UNITE REPS

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the UK. Unite South West is proud to launch our campaign, in partnership with Prostate Cancer UK, to raise awareness of prostate cancer and the risk it poses to our members and their families.

With no nationwide screening programme for prostate cancer, late-stage diagnoses in the South West are unfortunately rising; 24% of men in the South West diagnosed with prostate cancer were diagnosed with stage four disease. Diagnosis at such a late stage reduces treatment options and the treatments men can access have harsher side-effects.

But with our strong network of workplace reps across the region, Unite South West can be at the forefront of the fight to improve the health and wellbeing of our members. Early diagnosis is one of the most powerful ways to ensure a man survives prostate cancer; survival rates are almost 100% five years after diagnosis when diagnosed with stage one or two. By ensuring our members are aware of their risk, we can save lives.

To protect our members' health as individuals, we need to work together as a movement. We all need to understand the big picture, that one in eight men will get prostate cancer, but we need to understand the details too; that how factors such as age and lifestyle affect this risk; that the risk for BAEM members is doubled.

This guide is designed to give you the tools you need to return to your workplace and continue the campaign. From how to start a conversation with your employer to raising awareness with colleagues, it's all here.

As a union, we are committed to protecting the jobs, pay, conditions and health of all our members, and our reps are the first line of that defence.

Thank you for everything that you do.

In solidarity,



Matt Allen
Regional Secretary
Unite South West

Why this campaign matters to Unite South West members?

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men.

According to Prostate Cancer UK, more than 56,000 men are living with prostate cancer in South West, England. Nationally the figure is 610,000. Every year across the UK, 64,000 men are diagnosed and more than 12,000 die from the disease. This makes prostate cancer the UK's biggest cancer killer in men in the UK.

The South West faces different challenges to the rest of the country, due to its geographical isolation, aging population and longer patient travel times to centralised, specialised centres and longer waiting times. More than 6,300 men were diagnosed with prostate cancer in the South West last year and around 1,200 died from the disease, as late-stage diagnoses continue to rise.

Prostate cancer has no screening programme so men will not be invited for a test by a GP or health professional, it is for each individual to be aware of their personal risk, the pros and cons of the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test and feel empowered to speak to their GP. Which is why raising awareness, educating and empowering local men is so important.

Who is at risk?

There are three main prostate cancer risk factors, which are things you can't change:

- Getting **older** – prostate cancer mainly affects men aged 50 or over. 1 in 8 men will be diagnosed with it in their lifetime..
- Being **Black** – in the UK, 1 in 4 Black men will get prostate cancer in their lifetime. It is the third leading cause of death in Black men.
- Having a **family history** of prostate cancer (a father or brother) increases a man's risk by 2-4 times. Men's risk of getting prostate cancer may also be higher if their mother or sister has had breast or ovarian cancer.

Early detection saves lives

For many men, prostate cancer often has no symptoms in its early stages, but the earlier it's diagnosed the better the treatment outcomes, so being aware of your risk, that the first test is the PSA test and knowing the symptoms to look out for is crucial.

Early-stage prostate cancer is very curable with almost 100 per cent of men diagnosed with Stage 1 or 2 prostate cancer surviving five years or more following their diagnosis. In comparison, about half of men diagnosed with stage 4 will survive five years or more after diagnosis.

Step 1 -CHECK YOUR RISK IN 30 SECONDS

The first step is education and that starts with you, our reps. Prostate Cancer UK spoke to men nationally and found that there are low levels of knowledge about prostate cancer, what the test is and what to do next. Which is why raising awareness in our workplaces is so important. We want our members to recognise their risk factors for prostate cancer and empower them to make informed choices about their health.

Prostate Cancer UK has a short free online risk checker which can easily be shared with members in newsletters, noticeboard posters and emails. It provides information about the risk factors, the PSA test, and let's men know that they can request the test from their GP for free. It's quick and simple to use and share.

Check your risk: Scan here
prostatecanceruk.org/unite-risk

Step 2: SUPPORT WHEN YOU NEED IT

Access to healthcare: The second step is providing men with the opportunity and support if they choose to have a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test. This is usually the first test in diagnosing or screening for prostate cancer.

A flexible workplace policy for men, which enables them to attend GP appointments about their prostate health, shows staff that they are valued and that their health is taken seriously by their employer. This is a key Unite negotiating demand.

Male incontinence: Urinary problems are a common side effect of prostate cancer treatment, with bowel incontinence occurring less frequently, but still a risk.

Overall, 1 in 25 men aged over 40 will experience some form of urinary leakage every year, with 1 percent of men experiencing bowel incontinence, which rises to 5.1 percent for those aged over 60.

Male incontinence is a subject that is not properly talked about or understood. Male incontinence can significantly impact mental and physical health, causing feelings of shame, embarrassment and anxiety. We want to change this by raising awareness and tackling the taboo. No worker should suffer in silence.

Step 3: TOILET DIGNITY FOR ALL

The third step is securing support from employers. A big issue for men suffering from incontinence is that they often have nowhere to dispose of their sanitary waste products. Unite fully supports Prostate Cancer UK's campaign for sanitary bins in all men's toilets nationally, to support men who suffer from incontinence. As part of our negotiating demands we are calling on employers to install a sanitary bin in at least one male cubicle, enabling members to dispose of incontinence pads, stoma waste and other hygiene products safely, easily and with dignity.

Another call on employers is to provide toilet facilities that are readily accessible, clean and properly stocked. This matters to all workers but especially to workers in passenger and road transport, including bus and lorry drivers, but also construction workers and other outdoor and mobile workers.

Securing support from employers can make all the difference.

Negotiating action points for Unite reps

1. Secure agreement from the employer to sign the Prostate Cancer Protocol

The Protocol outlines how to run a a prostate cancer risk awareness raising campaign in the workplace and sets out the need for sanitary provision to be made available in all toilets, as well as provisions around toilet dignity and paid time off for testing.

Remember to negotiate specific agreements for inclusion in the Protocol that are appropriate to your workplace, particularly with reference to roles where access to toilet facilities or toilet breaks is a known issue. A copy of the Protocol can be found in the campaign toolkit.

2. Negotiate sanitary provision for men in your workplace

Sanitary bins in at least one cubicle in all men's toilets ensures equality of provision and offers dignity to men, some of whom will be diagnosed with prostate cancer or a long-term health condition. Cubicles with sanitary bins should be identified with clear signage. This provides a safe, hygienic and easy way to dispose of sanitary waste, which helps to reduce stress, anxiety and embarrassment.

Remind employers that installing male sanitary bins ensures workers have access to essential services, while having a positive impact on their mental and physical health. The cost is not prohibitive and by preventing waste products from being flushed down toilets, employers can save significantly by reducing the risk of blockages and expensive repairs.

Make sure employers understand that providing sanitary provision in accessible toilets is not good enough, as men can feel embarrassed or anxious about using these and that the bins must be of a size to accommodate all forms of sanitary waste, like incontinence pads which are big and bulky.

Check out Prostate Cancer UK's Boys Need Bins campaign: https://prostatecanceruk.org/get-involved/campaigning/incontinence/get-involved

3. Negotiate improvements to access to toilet facilities for all workers

In industries such as passenger and road transport, access to toilet facilities and breaks remains an issue. This is a critical issue for all workers, but there is a heightened impact on workers affected by incontinence.

Unite's demands include:

- 24-hour access to facilities.
- Clean, readily accessible and properly stocked toilet facilities.
- Shift-planning and scheduling agreements, which include adequate time for toilet breaks.
- Written procedures on what to do if you need a comfort break while away from facilities (e.g. while driving).

4. Negotiate the inclusion of a medical appointments clause in your existing leave policy

This clause should include provision for time off with pay for regular cancer and other medical screening appointments for every member of the workforce, and time off with pay for treatment, as needed. There is not a national screening programme for prostate cancer, so men will not get invited to have a test.

Men at risk, who have discussed the harms and the benefits of the PSA test, have a right to a PSA test from a trained health professional if they want one. The clause should therefore specifically mention paid time off to attend GP appointments for prostate specific antigen (PSA) blood tests.

Key Negotiating Demands:

- ✓ Employer commitment to ongoing prostate cancer risk awareness raising campaigns
- ✓ Employer commitment to provide sanitary bins in at least one cubicle in all men's and unisex toilet facilities, with appropriate signage
- ✓ Employer commitment to ensuring that all workers have access to clean, readily accessible and properly stocker toilet facilities throughout their shift
- ✓ Paid time off for all relevant medical appointments and tests.

Remember to update your Unite Work, Voice, Pay portal on successful completion of workplace campaigns.



WINNING YOUR CAMPAIGN

1. Engaging members

Right from the start, tell your members about the campaign and what they can do to get involved. Their support can make all the difference. When the campaign is won, make sure to tell them about it. Getting members involved in the early stages will help you with your evidence gathering, which can be used to persuade the employer to act. But equally as important is raising members awareness of their prostate cancer risk, as early detection is when the disease is most treatable.

TIPS TO CAMPAIGING AND ORGANISING

- Build a campaign team to help share the workload and to get the message out to members in your workplace. Reach out to members who are enthusiastic and have shown an interest in the issue and ask them to become workplace champions.
- Put up a campaign poster on workplace noticeboards, in canteens and meeting rooms. Order a supply of Unite and Prostate Cancer UK's posters, from your Unite office.
- Organise activities like early morning coffee chats, lunchtime drops in sessions or workplace stalls. Unite is here to help with your campaign activities. Get in touch for ideas and support.
- Talk and listen –Have one on one conversations with members to uncover issues, build trust and secure their support. Ask for a short slot to talk about your Prostate cancer campaign at team meetings, branch meetings, in the canteen or wherever else there's an audience. Invite a speaker from Unite and Prostate Cancer UK to join you.
- Send an email: a quick and cost-effective way to get your message out and keep members updated. Talk to your Unite officer first to see if they can help. You can share links to Prostate Cancer UK's online risk checker.

2. Making the case

Share the South West regional and national facts and figures about prostate cancer provided in this guide with your employer and members. Find more information on the IMPORTANT DATES AND USEFUL LINKS page.

Encourage your employer to see a prostate cancer campaign as a positive opportunity to do the right thing, exercise their duty of care for the workplace, at little or no cost. Remind them of the potential cost savings from reducing prolonged sick leave and expensive maintenance costs caused by flushing sanitary products and blocking toilets. Tell them that demonstrating a genuine investment in workers' health can boost morale and increase productivity.

Build your case around the specific issues in your workplace. For example,

- Are there particular times, shifts or job roles where access to toilets is a problem?
- What proportion of the workforce are at higher risk of prostate cancer?

To support risk awareness work, we know that you won't have figures on family history, so instead you can look at your membership figures for men over 50, and Black men over 45 and have conversations and send targeted messages to them. **Also consider targeting women over 50, who can share messaging with the men in their lives.**

You can ask the employer for these figures for the workforce as a whole. These figures will help you show how it makes sense for the employer to adopt a preventive approach.

Relevant legislation includes: Health and Safety Executive Workplace Regulations and the Equality Act 2010.

3. Building pressure

Start by making members aware of the campaign.

- ✓ Invite members with stories to tell to be involved.
- ✓ Use anonymised personal stories to bring the issues home to your employer.
- ✓ Consider a short anonymous survey – contact Equalities.SouthWest@unitetheunion.org for guidance and to ensure your survey is GDPR compliant. results to

Raise the campaign's profile by running a prostate cancer awareness session onsite or online for members and potential members, organised by Prostate Cancer UK.

Use the calendar dates as a hook for your campaign activities and to highlight issues in the workplace related to this campaign.

Research good practice among other local companies or other companies in the sector and encourage the employer to keep pace.

Ask for an Equality Audit and/or Equality Impact Assessment regarding toilet provision and male sanitary needs.

4. Publicising the win!

Use the template newsletter in this pack to make sure members and potential members know this is a Unite win. Encourage the employer to see this a good news story for them as well.

Unite Equalities-South West

We are an inclusive union, and our diversity makes us stronger. Prostate Cancer affects members across our different equalities strands, so here's some important information to help you and your members KNOW YOUR RISK.

BAEM members and Prostate Cancer: You will have already read that Black men are at significantly higher risk of prostate cancer-with 1 in 4 being diagnosed with the disease in their lifetime – double the risk of other men. If you're a Black man and over 45, contact your GP, we strongly recommend talking to them about having a PSA blood test. To find out more visit the Prostate Cancer UK website: https://prostatecanceruk.org/prostate-information-and-support/risk-and-symptoms/black-men-and-prostate-cancer

Trans women and Prostate Cancer: The prostate is not usually removed during gender affirming surgery. This means that trans women, non-binary people assigned male at birth, and some intersex people are at risk of getting prostate cancer. Please visit the Prostate Cancer UK website for more information on your risk, symptoms of possible prostate problems and how to get tested: https://prostatecanceruk.org/prostate-information-and-support/risk-and-symptoms/trans-women-and-prostate-cancer

Young members Prostate Cancer : Prostatitis is an inflammation or infection of the prostate – a small walnut-sized organ located below the bladder. Young and middle-aged men, typically between the ages of 30 to 50 are more prone to prostatitis than older men. It is **not** cancer. For information on the four types of prostatitis, signs and symptoms and how to get diagnosed, visit the Prostate Cancer UK website: https://prostatecanceruk.org/prostate-information-and-support/just-diagnosed/other-prostate-problems/prostatitis

Gay and Bisexual members and Prostate Cancer : Gay, bisexual men and men who have sex with men often want to know whether they have a higher risk of getting prostate cancer. You **do not** have an increased risk. Please read more on the PCUK website: https://shop.prostatecanceruk.org/awareness/does-being-gay-bisexual-or-having-anal-sex-increase-your-risk-of-prostate-cancer

IMPORTANT DATES AND USEFUL LINKS

FEBRUARY
4/02: World Cancer Day- **www.worldcancerday.org**

MARCH
1-31: Prostate Cancer Awareness month. More info at: **www.prostatecanceruk.org**

JUNE
Father's Day- third Sunday of the month

World Continence Week (WCW) – last full week in June.

Men's Health Week – second full week in June. More info at **www.menshealthforum.uk.org**

NOVEMBER
1-30 Movember. More info at: **https://uk.movember.com**

19/11: International Men's Day. More info at: **www.internationalmensday.com**

19/11: World Toilet Day. More info at: **www.unitetheunion.org/toiletdignity**

UNITE RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

Contact **Equalities.SouthWest@unitetheunion.org** for support with your campaign and to order materials and other resources.

Unite South West X Prostate Cancer UK campaign: **unitetheunion.org/prostatecanceruk-sw**

Unite health screening campaign: **unitetheunion.org/screentime**

Unite Equalities calendar: **unitetheunion.org/equalities-calendar**

Unite Equalities, disabled members: **unitetheunion.org/disabled-members**

PROSTATE CANCER UK RESOURCES (LINKS)

Prostate cancer; Risk and Symptoms: **prostatecanceruk.org/prostate-information-and-support/risk-and-symptoms**

Let's talk about incontinence: **prostatecanceruk.org/get-involved/campaigning/incontinence**

Lifting the lid on male incontinence (report): **https://tinyurl.com/uk6dk384**

PROSTATE CANCER PUBLICATIONS

Order printed publications or read them online. Go to **shop.prostatecanceruk.org/our-publications**

Search for Awareness Event Bundle and Black Men Awareness Bundle

CHECK YOUR RISK IN 30 SECONDS

prostatecanceruk.org/unite-risk

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