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**To: All Branches**

Dear Colleagues,

**Prostate Cancer and Your Risk - New CWU Leaflet & Information For Black Men:  
(CWU Conference Motion 47 - 2018):**

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the UK. It usually develops slowly, so there may be no signs for many years.

Black men are more likely to get prostate cancer than other men in the UK. If you're black, you may also be more likely to get prostate cancer if you're aged 45 or over – and your risk increases as you get older.

1 in 4 black men will get prostate cancer at some point in their lives. Black men are more likely to get prostate cancer than other men, who have a 1 in 8 chance of getting prostate cancer.

For reasons not yet understood, prostate cancer is more common in men of African-Caribbean or African descent, and less common in Asian men. Public Health England state that the lifetime risk of getting prostate cancer is 27% for a Black man, 7% for an Asian man, and 12% for a White man. The lifetime risk of dying from prostate cancer is 8% for a Black man, 2% for an Asian man, and 4% for a White man.

You may also be more likely to get prostate cancer if:

- you are aged 45 or over – and your risk increases as you get older
- your father or brother has had it
- If you're overweight or obese, you might have a higher risk of being diagnosed with prostate cancer that's aggressive (more likely to spread) or advanced (spread outside the prostate)

If you're a black man over 45, speak to your GP about your risk of prostate cancer.

Prostate cancer can develop when cells in your prostate start to grow in an uncontrolled way. Prostate cancer often grows slowly and may never cause any problems. But some prostate cancer grows quickly and has a high risk of spreading. This is more likely to cause problems and needs treatment to stop it spreading.

**What is the prostate?**

The prostate is a gland. Only men have a prostate. The prostate is usually the size and shape of a walnut. It sits underneath the bladder and surrounds the urethra, which is the tube men urinate (pee) and ejaculate through. The prostate's main job is to help make semen – the fluid that carries sperm.

### **Does prostate cancer have any symptoms?**

Most men with early prostate cancer don't have any symptoms. So, even if you don't have symptoms, if you're a black man over 45, [speak to your GP about your risk of prostate cancer](#).

Some men with prostate cancer may have difficulty urinating. Men with prostate cancer that's spread to other parts of the body might have pain in the back, hips or pelvis, problems getting or keeping an erection, blood in the urine, or unexplained weight loss. These symptoms are usually caused by other things that aren't prostate cancer. For example, if you notice any changes when you urinate or have trouble controlling your bladder, this could be a sign of an [enlarged prostate](#) or [prostatitis](#). But it's still a good idea to talk to your GP so they can find out what's causing them.

### **Why are black men at higher risk?**

The experts don't know why black men are more likely to get prostate cancer than other men. But it might be linked to genes. Genes are sets of instructions inside every cell in your body and are inherited from your parents.

### **What is the risk for men with mixed black ethnicity?**

If you have mixed black ethnicity, you are likely to be at higher risk of prostate cancer than men who aren't black. But experts don't know your exact risk because they don't have enough information on prostate cancer in men with mixed black ethnicity. And they don't know whether it makes a difference if it's your mother or father who is black.

### **Prostate Cancer UK Helpline 08000748383**

**Mon-Fri: 9am-6pm**

**Weds: 10am-8pm**

### **Visit the Prostate Cancer UK Website where you can**

- Order Information Packs
- Book a Talk/Speaker for your meeting with a Prostate UK Volunteer Speaker

<https://prostatecanceruk.org/get-involved/black-men-and-prostate-cancer/prostate-cancer-and-your-risk>

### **CWU Leaflet**

Most Black Men aren't aware they have an increased risk of Prostate Cancer! So use the new CWU Leaflet to raise awareness. A PDF of the leaflet is attached for downloading and printing. Hard copies of the leaflets can be ordered from Debby Akerman [dakerman@cwu.org](mailto:dakerman@cwu.org) at CWU/HQ.

Yours sincerely



**Dave Joyce**  
**National Health, Safety & Environment Officer**