

NEWS IN BRIEF



HOSPITALS: Worcestershire

Waiting times

THE number of patients waiting more than a year for routine treatment at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust has rocketed to a record high.

NHS statistics show 869 patients had been on the waiting list for 52 weeks or more for elective operations or treatment at Worcestershire trust at the end of August. This was the highest figure for the month since comparable local records began in 2011 – the previous August, just four patients had been delayed as long. Within 18 weeks is the target.



TREATMENT: Tony Commander underwent treatment for stage four bowel cancer

My cancer experience

AFTER doctors found an 18-centimetre tumour on his bowel, a Malvern man is urging everyone to get checked out if they feel something is wrong.

Tony Commander, who lives in the town, said he felt absolutely fine until a relative told him to get checked out.

He said: "I didn't notice anything, it was my dad who came to see us and he said 'you look terrible' - I had a normal diabetic appointment so I asked the doctor who sent me for a blood test."

Mr Commander then had a worrying phone call asking him to go to hospital, which he did, and was told the devastating news a tumour had been discovered.

At the time, he was told it would be a simple key-hole operation, however he went on to have extensive surgery due to the size of the tumour. This was followed by six months of chemotherapy which ended in February 2019, when he was given an initial all clear.

Unfortunately follow up scans in September 2019 detected a single malignant

By Tom Banner



lymph node tumour that had grown next to the source of blood supply for the bowel. Due to its location, Mr Commander, 53, was told that the tumour was inoperable by his doctors in Worcester.

His scans were sent to specialists in Manchester and Basingstoke, both of which concluded that the highly invasive surgery available would be too great a risk.

However, Mr Commander was transferred to Dr James Good, a consultant clinical oncologist in Birmingham and GenesisCare's clinical director of stereotactic radiotherapy.

Dr Good suggested that Mr Commander's health insurance may cover a pioneering radiotherapy treatment which was available at GenesisCare in Oxford.

A few short weeks later, Mr Commander began radiotherapy on the MRIdian machine in Oxford, where three sessions took place during a sin-

gle week in February.

He described his experience as a "non-event", as the treatment is an entirely non-invasive day case procedure taking little more than an hour, with no need for anaesthetic. He said: "What surprised me was just how non-invasive it was. I would definitely advise people to get things checked out if something seems out of the ordinary, it could save your life."

When the coronavirus lockdown came into effect, Mr Commander continued his consultations with Dr Good remotely.

A scan in June showed that the radiotherapy had been successful in treating the otherwise inoperable cancer, with Mr Commander going into remission.

Mr Commander is now able to carry on enjoying his favourite pastimes of fishing and golf, as well as planning



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