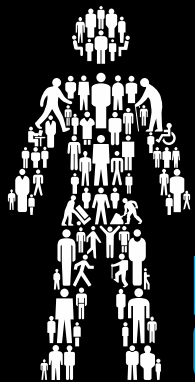


# Prostate cancer: the partner's story

Irene Stewart



**PROSTATE  
CANCER UK**



# Background

**May 2006**

**Roy was diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer at age 57**

- PSA: 5.4 and Gleason score of 9

**Subsequent treatment:**

- Hormone therapy
  - Chemotherapy
  - Clinical Trials
  - Radiotherapy (pain relief)
-

# Our 5 year journey

## Diagnosis

- **Impact on Roy**
  - **Roy became more positive**
  - **Impact on me – distress at Roy’s reaction and ‘imposed silence’**
  - **GP was very supportive – referral to psychotherapist**
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# Hormone therapy, clinical trials and chemotherapy

- **Roy – becoming an awareness volunteer, getting involved with support groups**
  - **Starting clinical trials**
  - **Experience of chemotherapy for Roy and myself**
    - **Excellent support from nurses**
    - **Reaction of family and friends**
  - **Roy continued to work throughout all these treatments**
-

## Later stages

- **Roy was strong and a good patient**
- **Previous experience of caring for relatives**

### **BUT**

- **Difficulty of watching Roy become a 'different' person**
  - **Emotional and physical toll - FEAR**
  - **Support required for patient *and* carer to make life as normal as possible**
  - **Local carers association gave me tremendous support**
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# Later stages - challenges

- **Need for practical support – e.g. difficulties with Roy's wheelchair**
  - **Slow response to call for help / less support available at later stages?**
  - **Importance of pain management**
  - **Local carers association gave me comfort and support**
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# Roy's death – age 62

- Impact and **shock** of Roy's death
  - Wider family and friends – fantastic support from sons at Roy's death and funeral
  - Very supportive GP
  - Prostate Cancer UK – information stands and awareness talks
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# Reflections and key messages

- **More practical help needed – where to access this and how?**
  - **Importance of signposting additional sources of emotional support for patient and carer**
    - Maggies Centres
    - Prostate Cancer UK Specialist Nurses Telephone Line
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# Present day

- **Awareness raising**
  - **Babysitting**
  - **Volunteering**
  - **Social activities**
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