

COMPASS Impact Report 2020-2024

What is COMPASS?

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer affecting men in Scotland, with 1 in 10 men likely to develop prostate cancer in their lifetime. We understand that a prostate cancer diagnosis can be challenging. COMPASS support services were launched to help men in Scotland, and their families, navigate prostate cancer, complementing the excellent care provided by their medical team.

What we have done...

**Prostate FFIT
(Football Fans in
Training) programme**

12 week tailored healthy living and exercise programme for men affected by prostate cancer. In partnership with SPFL Trust



**Living Well with
Prostate Cancer
course**

6 week bespoke programme of learning to help men through their cancer journey. In partnership with Maggie's and Ayrshire Cancer Support (ACS)

**One to One
Support**

For men with prostate cancer and their family, in partnership with Maggie's

**Prostate Scotland
Navigator App**

Helps men to make treatment decisions, track side effects, record medication and access practical information

- 340 Living Well with Prostate Cancer course attendees
- 45 Living Well with Prostate Cancer courses facilitated
- 9 Prostate FFIT programmes delivered
- 130 Prostate FFIT players
- 561 Navigator App users, 261 very active

What we do

Prostate FFIT

Prostate FFIT was developed in line with clinical guidelines which recommend a structured 12 week exercise programme for men with prostate cancer on hormone therapy. 97% of men have found the programme either extremely or very worthwhile. In the past year, 75% of men have said their mental health is either slightly or much improved, a great achievement.



Participants report...

- Feeling fitter and less tired
- Reduced side effects
- Increased confidence
- Making simple but effective changes to diet
- Improvements in BMI and blood pressure
- Needing less pain medication
- Better mental health and lift in mood
- A strong sense of camaraderie and long lasting friendships

“Gentle, regular exercise has so many benefits – from helping with daily tasks like standing up more easily, to getting back into gardening or walking. Being fitter can help men prepare for surgery and improve recovery and manage side effects – it may even reduce the chance of the cancer coming back.”

Prostate Scotland cancer exercise specialist

Living Well with Prostate Cancer course

The Living Well with Prostate Cancer course gives men the opportunity to meet others in a similar situation and looks at how to live better with prostate cancer. It covers side effects, relationships, finances and everything in between. Successful partners sessions have run at Ayrshire Cancer Support and a number of Maggie's Centres, providing support to the wives and partners of the Living Well with Prostate Cancer course attendees. This in turn has led to a monthly Peer and Partner Support Group at ACS and ongoing Partner Groups at Maggie's Forth Valley and Lanarkshire.



“The LWwPC course is highly valuable to men living with prostate cancer, views of which are strongly held by men who completed the course and course facilitators. According to men and course facilitators, the LWwPC course fills a gap in support services not provided by the NHS.”

University of Dundee independent evaluation

Owen's story

Owen was diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer in March 2021, during the second wave of Covid. The cancer was inoperable and life limiting – a devastating shock for someone who had always been in good health.

He assumed he'd handle the treatment side effects well, but hormone therapy and intensive radiotherapy hit hard. He became a shadow of his former self – fatigued, in pain, and isolated, unsure where to turn for help.

By autumn 2023, Owen was at his lowest point. That's when his urology team at Ayr Hospital's Ballochmyle Suite suggested two Prostate Scotland programmes: Living Well with Prostate Cancer and Prostate Football Fans in Training (Prostate FFIT). Designed for men with prostate cancer, the sessions offer shared experience, support, tailored advice on diet and manageable physical activity.



Owen joined the Living Well course at Ayrshire Cancer Support in September 2023, followed by Prostate FFIT at Rugby Park in January. It was a turning point. He said: "For the first time, I met others going through the same thing – all at different stages, but with the same feelings of isolation and embarrassment about side effects. This was the first real, person-centred support I'd had since diagnosis. I started seeing life-changing improvements – not just physically, but mentally too."

Owen committed fully to the programme, adjusting his diet, building up his activity week by week and by week 7, he was off painkillers and regaining mobility he thought he'd lost for good. He continues: "This support has been a godsend. It's given me a new lease of life and the strength to face my cancer head on. It's improved my wellbeing, my confidence and created friendships I really value."

A year on, Owen's in a good place, spending time with the family he adores – his nephew Mark recently held a Race Night with funds coming to Prostate Scotland! He's been involved in setting up a Men's Shed in Troon and along with some of the other men, has been instrumental in helping put the finishing touches to the new Ayrshire Cancer Support Centre in Ayr.

"Family are really pleased I've come along to get some support - feel it's helping me and them."

"It is bridging the gap that the clinical team aren't able to do."

"Combination of this course and Prostate FFIT has completely changed me - I feel 10 years younger!"

"5 star facilitators! It's life changing - I hope it receives funding forever so it can continue to be as useful to as many men as possible."
★★★★★

"Diabetic bloods down by nearly 10% - another benefit of the PFFIT programme at Pittodrie"

"Living and dealing with prostate cancer is hugely challenging but Maggie's and Prostate Scotland have created an environment in which bonds have been created, friendships formed and personal insights freely and unconditionally shared."

In 2025, Living Well with Prostate Cancer courses are ongoing throughout Scotland, in partnership with all eight Maggie's Centres, as well as Ayrshire Cancer Support. Prostate FFIT has so far run again at Aberdeen FC and Kilmarnock FC, both returning in September where spaces are filling up fast, with many previous players recommending the programme! We are also delighted to be partnering with Dundee FC for the very first time. Following the success of PFFIT, we are looking at options to develop it further, delivering in more communities and reaching more men.

What's next?

- Many of the men continue to support each other through coffee and WhatsApp groups, sharing banter as well as stories around their cancer journey, including their clinical issues and medications. Several local support groups have seen significant increases in their attendance, for example, ACS said: "Our prostate cancer numbers have gone through the roof since the courses have started."
- We're continuing to evolve the LWwPC course content, working with expert partners to expand areas such as sexual wellbeing and nutrition – key concerns for men during and after treatment.
- We nominated the NHS Ayrshire and Arran Urology Team for an Ayrshire Achieves award for Collaboration and Working Together, recognising their commitment to supporting these programmes. Demand in their area has been so high that we've consistently had waiting lists. They made it into the final three – a gold star moment!
- We're working with colleagues in Macmillan Improving Cancer Journey (ICJ) and Prehab teams to raise awareness of our COMPASS services – helping us reach more men, earlier in their journey.
- Our PFFITers continue to inspire us – including a group of 'players' from Pittodrie who took part in the Aberdeen Kiltwalk 2025, having maintained their fitness since completing the programme.



Thank you to our partners who have helped make COMPASS services possible

