



GV Health urologist Dr Dan Lenaghan and Tony Owen.

September is National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, a time to shine a light on the most diagnosed cancer in Australia.

PROSTATE CANCER CLAIMS THE LIVES OF 10 MEN EVERY DAY, WITH MORE THAN 25,000 AUSTRALIANS DIAGNOSED ANNUALLY.

For many, like CFA District 22 Assistant Chief Fire Officer Tony Owen, the importance of early detection cannot be overstated. In Tony's line of work, the risks are high, not just from fires but unseen dangers like carcinogens that increase cancer risks.

Tony's elevated PSA levels were first noticed during a routine voluntary medical screening, an option available through his profession. Over the years, these levels continued to rise, leading his GP to refer him to a urologist.

Despite not showing any symptoms, further investigation revealed he had prostate cancer.

"I was lucky," Tony said.

"The PSA test isn't definitive, but it was an early warning.

"Without it, the cancer could have spread beyond the prostate, and I might not be here today."

The journey from diagnosis to recovery was made easier with the support of GV Health's Prostate Cancer Specialist Nurses.

"The care I received was incredible," Tony said.

"The Prostate Cancer Specialist Nurses were always just a

call away, ready to answer any questions or concerns I had.

"Their empathy and expertise made a stressful situation bearable."

Tony's story is a powerful reminder of the importance of regular health checks.

"Especially the generation that I'm in, men in their 40s, 50s and 60s now, we weren't brought up in an era where you talked about your problems that much," he said.

"It's changing, I know the younger generation, if you ask them, they'll tell you.

"But we were taught to suck it up and look after ourselves, and we don't ask for help very well.

"It's something we've got to break.

"If men's health workshops or the work the Prostate Cancer Specialist Nurses do getting out in the community and publicising it helps, we've got to embrace, encourage and support that."

Tony's doctor at GV Health, urologist Dr Dan Lenaghan, emphasised that early detection could be the difference

between living and dying for prostate cancer patients.

"It's the most common malignancy that's going to affect men in our community," Dr Dan said.

"With early detection, we have very good treatments to cure men like Tony with surgery or radiotherapy.

"Once you have symptoms, it's generally too late.

"Talk to your GP.

"It could lead you down a completely different path and maybe save your life."

Dr Dan said he recommended men start having a conversation with their GPs about prostate cancer after they turn 40 and to start testing for the best chance at early detection. Don't wait—get checked, talk to your doctor, and encourage those around you to do the same.

You can get in touch with our Prostate Cancer Specialist Nurses at sonia.strachan@gvealth.org.au, nicole.lewis@gvhealth.org.au or on (03) 5832 3777.

