



Tim's story

I was working as a Cancer Research Scientist at the Manchester Christie Hospital with a great career and great family life when, in 2011, I was diagnosed with locally advanced prostate cancer at the age of 58. The diagnosis destroyed my world and I decided to take early retirement. I was placed on hormone therapy and spent two months at the Royal Marsden Hospital in London undergoing pelvic radiotherapy.

The after effects of the radiotherapy were severe and left me with Pelvic Radiation Disease. I developed serious bleeding from my bowel becoming anaemic. Eventually I underwent hyperbaric oxygen therapy which helped control my symptoms.

I found it really helpful to meet other people with PRD. That's how I got involved with the Pelvic Radiation Disease Association and became a trustee in 2013. I find it really rewarding to still be able to use my research and organisational skills to help cancer patients.

My daughter Sarah loves to run – she lives in Australia and has run marathons in 3 hours – and she inspired me to take up running and maybe to complete a marathon myself. At this stage I admit that running between two lamp posts would make me feel breathless but I thought it would be a great opportunity to feel closer to her and raise money for PRDA. I joined a group in North Manchester called Blackley Walk2Run. Joining the group allowed my fitness levels to improve and I managed to run, and enjoy, several 10k runs in 2013, then a half marathon in 2014.

By running I felt I was getting fitter and fitter, both physically and mentally, and was more in control of my health. But I was still struggling with PRD symptoms and my health crashed as I had become very anaemic from rectal bleeding. I had hyperbaric oxygen treatment daily for three months, and things improved.

By early 2015 I had finished my treatment and resumed training - I was hooked on running! I also joined a clinical trial that got me working on my upper body strength and I joined a gym under a prescription exercise programme called BEATS in Radcliff and saw vast improvements to my health. My Type II Diabetes came under control, my blood pressure stabilised and my weight dropped.

Finally, on 10th April 2016, 12,000 runners lined up at the start of the 40th Greater Manchester Marathon, and I was one of them! It was an amazing feeling to cross the line. Since then, I have run more long distance runs including marathons.

Running has given me time doing something I love with family and friends, has boosted my self-esteem and confidence in my health and I've raised money for PRDA. A win-win all round!