Midlands man gives evidence to Westminster roundtable on access to cutting-edge brain tumour care

Thursday 4 September, 2025

A brain tumour patient from the Midlands, who had to learn to walk and talk again following treatment, shared his experience with pharmaceutical and med-tech companies at a roundtable event in Westminster yesterday (Wednesday.)

The discussion, chaired by Sarah Edwards MP (Lab Tamworth), set out to explore the challenges organisations face in developing and delivering innovative brain tumour treatments and technologies within the NHS.

Ms Edwards' constituent Owen Sutton, 26, who experienced a stroke during surgery to remove a brain tumour and has since been part of a clinical trial, was among several individuals with lived experience of the condition who attended the event.

The information gathered will provide vital evidence for a report on the issue being produced by The Brain Tumour Charity which aims to help shape future healthcare policy.

Its previous report, published in May, identified the key obstacles preventing people with brain tumours from taking part in research.

These included: limited awareness and limited availability of clinical trials for brain tumours; inadequate facilities for the collection, preservation, and storage of tissue for research; and insufficient support for patients' cognitive and physical wellbeing to enable
participation:

Owen, from Tamworth in Staffordshire, was diagnosed with a low grade pilocytic astrocytoma when he was at university in Nottingham.

Now a Young Ambassador for The Brain Tumour Charity, Owen is keen to advocate for greater investment in research and better access to clinical trials for people with brain tumours -which have the lowest recruitment levels compared to other cancer types.

Owen said: "The fact that tumours like mine are "benign", or non-cancerous meant that chemotherapy wouldn't necessarily work for me, so surgery was the only real option, and it was meant to be low risk."

In fact, Owen came round from surgery unable to move or speak. After extensive rehab, speech therapy, and proton beam therapy, he was able to get back on his feet again. But he experienced immense fatigue, seizures and still can't do many of the things he wants to do.

Through his mum's and his oncologist's relentless research, in 2021 he became part of a clinical trial at HCA London for which he was eligible. Since then, he's been taking seven tablets a day and having regular scans, which show that while his tumour has remained stable, the cystic element has been shrinking. His seizures have since stopped too.

Owen said: "Being on a clinical trial gave me the chance to feel that I was making a real difference when my life had changed hugely, and I didn't know what the future would hold. It's also meant that I have access to regular check-ups and brain scans to monitor my progress - something I wouldn't have had on the NHS. The reassurance that all is going well has allowed me to move on in a way I never could have otherwise."

Sarah Edwards, MP said: "I was delighted to chair yesterday's roundtable alongside my constituent, Owen. It's vital that we not only identify the challenges in brain tumour care, but also focus on how we can overcome them. Hearing directly from both patients and experts was invaluable in shaping that conversation.

"Following the roundtable, I also met with the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health

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and Prevention, Ashley Dalton MP, and I'm encouraged that she has already been in discussions with The Brain Tumour Charity. I now look forward to seeing the final report The Charity delivers with the gathered insights and findings."

For more information on The Brain Tumour Charity's research work, campaigning and support services, visit: https://www.thebraintumourcharity.org/news/

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