

The Academic Health Science Network for the North East and North Cumbria

Atrial Fibrillation Programme

Programme background

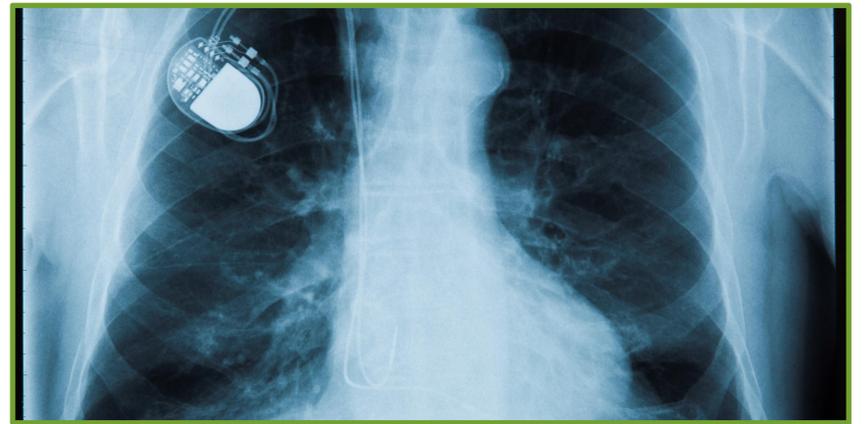
The Atrial Fibrillation (AF) Programme is joint work between the AHSN and the Northern England Cardiovascular Network. The aim of the programme is to reduce the number of strokes as a result of undiagnosed and untreated AF through targeted case finding and optimal treatment with anticoagulants.

A recent report from Public Health England estimates that 1.36 million people in England are living with AF, giving a current prevalence of around 2.4%. The current diagnosed prevalence rate is 1.6%, suggesting that 474,000 people are living with undiagnosed AF across England. Furthermore, a number of recent UK studies suggest that, among patients in whom AF has been detected, best practice of discussion and adoption of appropriate treatment is quite low overall and subject to marked variation in different areas.

At CCG Level estimated AF prevalence ranges from 1.0% to 3.8% and AF prevalence is higher in CCGs in Northern England. The Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) suggests only 65% of people with AF are on AF registers in primary care. Undiagnosed prevalence for CCGs in the North East and North Cumbria vary between 0.6% and 1.0% which equates to 25,619 patients (NCIN, Public Health, England).

Priority areas will focus on:

- Raising the profile of AF with primary care practitioners within the region
- Raising the profile of latest AF guidance, CG180, and patients to be treated according to NICE
- Offer patients information about AF, treatment options including risks and benefits
- Greater detection of those with undiagnosed AF in primary care
- Understand and implement tools to ensure patients with AF are treated and audited
- Improve treatment of those on AF Registers in primary care



Work carried out to date

The Atrial Fibrillation Programme started in April 2015 and is currently in a scoping phase, but 3 or 4 projects will be identified based upon the priorities outlined and build upon work already underway.

Activities are likely to include:

- Infographics developed to demonstrate and measure improvements and to act as a catalyst for change
- Conduct a comparison of GRASP-AF and RAID-R informatics tools to ensure tools used in primary care are fit for purpose
- Explore channels to detect people with undiagnosed AF such as pulse checks at flu clinics or as part of Health Checks
- Education event aimed at primary care staff
- Top Ten Tips for GPs

We will be working with other AHSN Programmes such as Telehealth and Medicines Optimisation so that maximum impact and momentum can be achieved. The North East Quality Observatory System (NEQOS) will support implementation and measurement for improvement.

We are engaging with other organisations such as the third sector and pharmaceutical companies to help us move forward.

Why this work is important for the NE & NC

- There are an estimated 25,619 patients with undiagnosed AF in the NE & NC and each stroke prevented could save £23,315 (NAO, 2010)
- Without treatment 1 in 20 patients will have a stroke which means we could prevent strokes in 1281 patients and consequently save £29.86M

How can you help?

Anyone who is interested, either as recipient of resources or as someone who would like to get involved more formally, please get in touch with the AF Programme Lead, Kate Mackay, on kate.mackay@ahsn-nenc.org.uk