

Atrial Fibrillation Programme



The Atrial Fibrillation (AF) Programme is joint work between the Academic Health Science Network for the North East and North Cumbria (AHSN NENC) 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.

There are over 25,000 patients with undiagnosed AF in the region; without treatment 1 in 20 of these patients will have a stroke.

Programme background

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. 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).



**Northern England
Strategic Clinical Networks**

Priority areas

- 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.

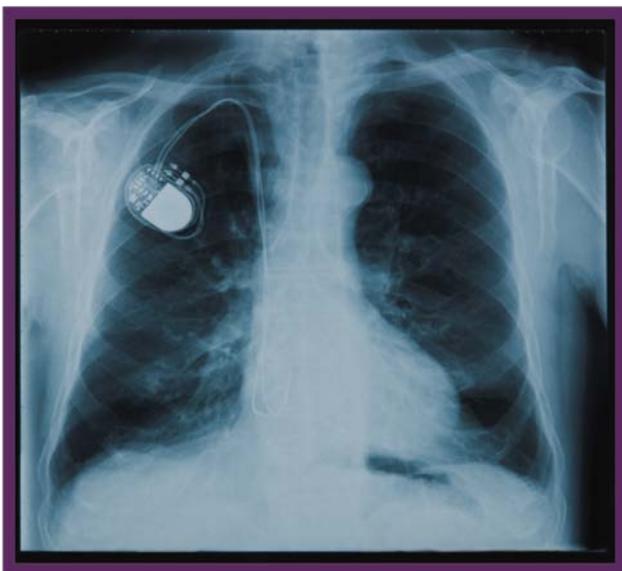


Project overview

- The Atrial Fibrillation Programme started in April 2015, and ten projects have been identified building upon work already started and identified need.

Projects include:

- Engaging with primary care to encourage participation in the AF Programme through use of infographics which have been developed to demonstrate and measure improvements and to act as a catalyst for change.
- Use of resources to support practices to examine patients with AF for optimal treatment in accordance with NICE e.g. promotion of shared decision making.
- Detection of people with undiagnosed AF through pulse checks at long term conditions reviews and flu clinics as well as through other routes where health professionals will be taking pulses e.g. annual foot check for patients with diabetes.
- AF in a Box resource to support primary care providing top tips for diagnosing AF and stroke risk assessment.
- We will be working with other AHSN NENC 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 region

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.

The Academic Health Science Network for the North East and North Cumbria (AHSN NENC)

The AHSN NENC is committed to improving both the health and economic prosperity of the region through innovation and dissemination of best practice. Key aims for the Network are to improve patient care and population health outcomes and to create wealth and stimulate engagement with industry to promote economic growth. The AHSN NENC health improvement programmes have already delivered the following:

- Investment of over £3m into projects designed to disseminate best practice and make a demonstrable impact on health outcomes.
- Established strategic partnerships with organisations including the North East Quality Observatory System, the Northern England Strategic Clinical Network and Health Education North East for the successful delivery of the Health Improvement Programmes.
- Successful delivery of the Patient Safety Collaborative with close to £500k invested in projects focused on improving patient safety and leading towards transformational change.
- Secured over £800k matched funding for investments from partner organisations.

Contact us

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