

Atrial Fibrillation: 'Know your Pulse' at the workplace

Start and end dates of work covered by case study
22nd November 2016 (one day awareness event)

Lead organisation and joint partners

NHS Southwark Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Atrial Fibrillation Association (AFA)

Key points at a glance

- Raising awareness of Atrial Fibrillation (AF) and the link to stroke.
- Promote self-checking of pulse rhythm and rate
- Screening for AF using the Kardia mobile ECG and app (AliveCor, inc)
- The rate of AF detection during the one day awareness event was 1%

Background Summary

AF is a common heart arrhythmia encountered in practice and a major risk factor for stroke, contributing to one in five strokes^{1,2}. Across Southwark CCG, it has been estimated to affect 4,018 people with 1,855 currently living with AF undetected. As part of the Global AF awareness week (21st to 27th November), Southwark CCG Medicines Optimisation Team in collaboration with the AFA organised a one day 'Know your Pulse' campaign at the workplace. This was open to Southwark CCG and council staff, as well as the public attending the premises.

Work undertaken

See table 1 for the steps taken prior, during and following the one day event.

Outcomes

182 people were shown how to check their own pulse rhythm, educated and screened for AF using Kardia mobile and app (AliveCor, inc). Their average age was 47 years (range 21 to 72 years), 58% (105/182) were females and the average heart rate recorded during the event was 79 beats per minute (range 51 to 128bpm). A total of 8 abnormal pulses were detected of which 2 were identified as possible AF using the built-in AF algorithm in Kardia mobile and app (AliveCor, inc). Individuals were forwarded a PDF copy of their ECG results by e-mail and all were advised to contact their own General Practitioner.

There was good engagement with staff and the public who visited the premises. All were very keen in wanting to learn to check their pulse manually and become familiar with checking their heart rhythm.

Plans for the future

Organise future awareness and education campaigns beyond the work place

Tips for success

Start early, have a checklist for planning and running the event and ensure you have appropriate support.

Table 1. Steps undertaken for the one day AF awareness event at Southwark CCG workplace

Preparation before the AF awareness one day event (6-8 weeks planning time)
Engagement of the stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support from the CCG Chief Officer, CCG Chair, CVD Lead, Public Health, COMMS Team, Medicines Optimisation Chief pharmacist and team and AFA were secured
Venue, date and times <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checked availability and booked a space with tables, chairs and standing board in the atrium of workplace building Completed a risk assessment for the premises and equipment (including charging facilities for smartphones) Evaluated environmental noise that can impact on the readings from AF detection device (includes impact of other events occurring on the same day) Ensured WiFi connection was available
Staff and volunteers support and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed the number of staff and volunteers from AFA team available to support the event. Had a nominated champion who agreed to attract interest from workers and public walking by the stand on the event day Organised a training session for staff on performing manual pulse rhythm, using detection device Kardia mobile and app (AliveCor, inc), and had appropriate knowledge and confidence to talk to people about AF and the link to stroke, promote self-monitoring of pulse rhythm and hand out materials as appropriate. Ensured roles and responsibility of all members during the event were agreed and clearly defined Ensured clear referral process is in place
Resources and materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ordered materials and resources (e.g. leaflets, posters, T-shirts) from the AFA (4 weeks before the event) Confirmed and secured AF detection device(s), smartphones/ tablet computers and electrode solution spray used to moisturise patients' dry hands before holding the device Ensured all equipment is charged and has adequate battery life Ensured correct Kardia app is loaded onto the smartphones and/ or tablet computers Ensured all equipment is compliant with local policies including information governance, security and insurance
Public Relations (PR) and advertising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed in-house flyers to promote the one day event and approved content and design by COMMS Liaised with COMMS teams for publicity and staff update of the event using e-mail and staff bulletin Arranged photo opportunities during the event for Twitter purposes, and ensured COMMS are aware of the correct hash tags to use
On the day of the AF awareness one day event (22nd November 2016)
Organise the stand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up the posters, display leaflets and ensured a designated area(s) for screening using Kardia mobile and app (AliveCor, Inc)
Staff briefing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensured all staff and volunteers are present and happy with their roles and responsibilities Ensured nominated champion is encouraging passers-by to have a look at the stand, learn to take own manual pulse rhythm and have their pulse checked with an AF detection device
Staff breaks & lunches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensured staff and volunteers receive appropriate breaks and remain well hydrated Ensured stand is manned during the whole event
Public Relations (PR) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensured opportunities to take pictures and tweets during the event
Equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensured all equipment is secure during the event and all returned
After the AF awareness one day event
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluated the outcome of the screening event Provided a summary of the event's outcome to staff through COMMS Reflected on the day and learning drawn for future events

Contact for further information

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