

The AAA Team

Newsletter of the Northern Ireland AAA Screening Programme



Issue 12: Produced by the NI AAA Screening Programme for HSC Professionals - Autumn 2016

Service User Event - April 2016

The fourth Annual Service User Event took place on Thursday 28th April 2016 in Belfast Central Mission's Grosvenor Hall. As at previous events, all men who had been screen-detected with an abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) in the former screening year (2014/2015) were invited to attend. The workshop was again well supported by service users and programme staff. Forty-two participants – made up of 20 service users (including wives, partners and friends) and 22 programme staff - enjoyed updates on programme performance and developments from key members of the screening team.



Left to right: Gerald and Freda Monaghan with Mildred and Martin McStravick at the AAA Screening Programme 2016 Service User Event in Belfast.

This year, the morning also comprised two separate breakout sessions: the first, as in previous years, to facilitate feedback from service users on their experience of the programme and suggest potential areas for improvement; the second to encourage discussion of the merits of a 'buddy system' being introduced into the programme. Debate around the 'buddy system' (where a man recently screen-detected with an AAA would be able to contact a service user who had already received treatment for a large AAA or who is under surveillance) generated much feedback and various points for consideration. Participants will, in due course, receive a comprehensive summary of the findings of the morning's discussions. The programme team will continue to consider and progress, where appropriate, suggested areas for improvement.

Calling all GPs and Practice Staff! If you would be interested in promoting AAA screening at any of your upcoming Flu Clinics, please contact:

Diane Stewart, Programme Manager on:

02890 638256 or at diane.stewart@belfasttrust.hscni.net

2015 / 2016 Data

Screen-detected AAAs on surveillance: 15/16 cohort	=	113
Large AAAs referred for surgery	=	21
Self-referrals:	=	809

The screening year ran from 1/4/2015 to 31/3/2016. All men in Northern Ireland who turned 65 during this time were offered an initial screening appointment by the end of March 2016.

Overall Data since programme started (June 2012)

Uptake rate:	=	83%
Active Surveillance:	=	459
Large AAAs referred for surgery:	=	78
Total self-referrals:	=	2,713
Overall prevalence rate:	=	1.5%

Programme Promotion through...

We are now in our fifth year of screening! Of the 42,500 men who have been invited for screening, more than 36,000 men have attended. Attendance rates remain high at over 83% on average each year. Men who turn 65 each year will automatically be invited, but anyone who was over 65 at the time the programme started (June 2012) is able to self-refer. During the last year, the whole programme team has been involved in a wide range of promotional activities with the aim being to raise awareness of AAA Screening and encourage eligible men to attend. Some of the work is highlighted below:

Working in partnership with Randalstown Health Centre at flu vaccination clinics

In 2015, the programme worked in partnership with Randalstown Health Centre to promote the programme at their local flu vaccination clinics. Almost 100 men signed up to and attended AAA Screening. The staff team at Randalstown worked with the programme to run four clinics within the Health Centre allowing the programme to screen men in their local area. This model worked well and we would be keen to do something similar in other areas.

If you would be interested in looking at something within your own practice, please contact Diane Stewart or Sarah-Louise Dornan on 02890 631828 or email: aaascreening@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Maximising promotional opportunities at existing screening locations

Our screening technicians attend 23 venues all over NI and continue to identify opportunities to promote the programme in these locations. In early 2016 we put together a promotional plan to ensure all the venues were well stocked with posters, promotion packs and leaflets. Screening technicians also took some time out to speak with staff in the venues to make sure they were aware of the work that we carry out. We have seen a significant uptake of self-referrals within some areas as a direct result of this work.

Alongside this, screening technicians also distributed promotional packs to GP surgeries, dental practices and pharmacies near to clinic venues.

Providing outreach clinics along with Health Promotion teams and the Healthy Living Alliance

In line with 2015/16 objectives, the programme is keen to make contact with organisations and networks to tackle health inequalities. By providing screening in non-clinical environments, this encourages men who may not otherwise attend. We have also been able to use local knowledge to access men who may not be aware of the programme.

Linking in with HSCT Health Promotion Teams and the Healthy Living Alliance (a neighbourhood-based, community-led approach to health improvement providing services and support in communities experiencing disadvantage and health inequalities), 196 men were scanned in ten locations from February to October 2016. The clinics provided an opportunity to raise the profile of AAA Screening among the local community. It also consolidated links to the voluntary and community staff who work in the area and who are keen to continue to work to promote screening locally. Venues were risk assessed for suitability; the clinic and the programme in general were promoted by staff at the venue in local media, on the ground and through posters, etc. This led to a good uptake rate at clinics, a 95% attendance rate and an overall increase in awareness of the programme in the local area.

AAA Screening clinics were very successful out in the community in non-clinical environments. With careful planning, engaged staff at the venue and teamwork across the programme, it is hoped to continue with this project in the future.



Key contacts: Belfast H&SC Trust

Programme Mgr: Ms Diane Stewart, 02890 638256

Key contacts: PHA

QA Manager: Mrs Jacqueline McDevitt, 02890 311611

...Partnership Working

Promotion at other healthcare venues and events

The admin team within the programme worked with local contacts in other healthcare venues to organise promotional stands in the foyers of the main hospital sites. Many members of the public pass through these venues each day, making them ideal places to promote the programme. These were initially focussed in the Belfast Trust (Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast City Hospital, Mater Hospital and Musgrave Park Hospital) but the programme hopes to link in with other Trusts to do something similar across Northern Ireland.



Other promotional activities

The team were also involved in a range of other events such as:

- *Working in partnership with staff in John Mitchell Place to pilot running clinics within the centre – this has worked well and it is hoped the programme will continue to use the centre to run monthly clinics*
- *Setting up promotional stands at various Tesco and Asda supermarkets*
- *Submitting promotional articles to some sports clubs' newsletters, etc. including tennis, golf and bowling clubs*
- *Attending promotion for 'Movember' in the city hospital to promote AAA screening*
- *Libraries NI distributed literature across all libraries in NI; the team also attended a library in East Belfast for a morning to speak directly to members of the public*
- *Taking part in a 10k run in Ormeau park (some of the team!) to promote the programme.*

The above are just some of the activities that the programme has been involved in and has contributed to the continuing increase in the number of self-referrals – 2,713 since the programme started!

If you are interested in helping to promote the programme within your local area, please contact the programme office on 02890 631828.



Existing Information Sources for GPs

Information on the NI AAA Screening Programme is available in the following formats via the website or by contacting **Jacqueline McDevitt** directly on **02890 311611** or e-mailing **jacqueline.mcdevitt@hscni.net**

GP Information Pack | **GP Awareness Presentations** | **Promotional Materials** | **Copies or E copies of our newsletter 'The AAA Team'** | **Screening Invite leaflet 'AAA Screening : Things you need to know'** | **Leaflets for men under surveillance for small, medium or large AAAs**

For more information on the programme, visit our **WEBSITE** at:

www.aascreening.info

Review of AAA Screening Leaflets and Promotional Materials

A review of NI AAA Screening information materials, which ran from September 2015 until April 2016, has successfully concluded. Contributors included Programme Team staff from both the PHA and Belfast Trust as well as PHA Communication colleagues, service users and representatives from local men's groups. The main publications revised were the:

General Information Leaflet

You have a Small Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (results leaflet)

You have a Medium Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (results leaflet)

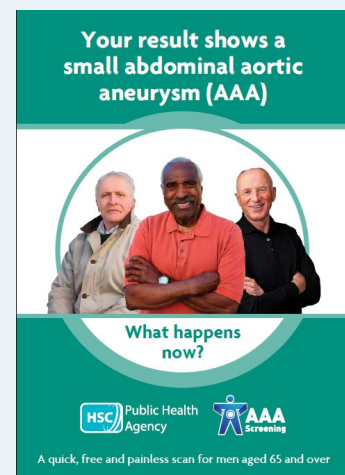
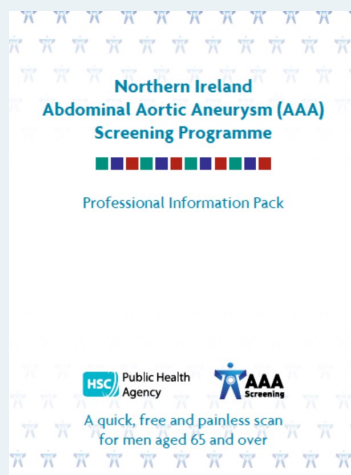
You have a Large Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (results leaflet)

Short form Awareness Leaflet

Healthcare Professional Information Sheet

A3 Screening Poster

Display stands



The aim of the review was to re-format and update materials with new statistics (based on data from the Northern Ireland AAA Screening Programme), images and testimonials from service users. The exercise benefitted considerably from the input of service users whose experience of the programme, and the information available, helped shape the style and content of the updated publications. Particular thanks is extended to Mr Ken and Mrs Roberta McFarland and Mr Barry Dalzell for their contributions. In addition, contributions from Mr Colin Fowler (Director of Operations, *Men's Health Forum Ireland*) and Mr Michael Lynch (Director of Services and Development, *Men's Action Network*) proved to be invaluable in producing a more accessible and relevant suite of materials.

Relevant invitation and results letters will similarly be updated, and changes will be required to existing translations of materials in hard copy, audio and website versions.

In April, following the review, all revised resources were sent as part of a professional information pack to every NI GP practice and pharmacy. In the coming months it is planned to send out an electronic feedback questionnaire to GPs and pharmacies for comment on the new materials. ***If you did not receive one of these packs - or if you would like additional supplies of promotional materials to display in your surgery - please contact Mrs Jacqueline McDevitt on 02890 311611 or at jacqueline.mcdevitt@hscni.net to arrange for a pack to be sent out.***

Calling all GPs and Practice Staff! Don't forget SELF-REFERRAL...

Men over 65, who have never been for AAA Screening, can ask to be screened by calling the Programme Office on: **02890 631828**