

The AAA Team

Newsletter of the Northern Ireland AAA Screening Programme



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AAA Screening – 2018 Service User Event

The programme's sixth Service User Event took place on Thursday 26th April in Belfast Central Mission's Grosvenor Hall. As per the 2017 event, the morning workshop was very well attended with over 70 participants. More than 50 of these participants were service users, including many who have taken part in previous events. Members of the Programme Team, comprising staff from the Public Health Agency (programme commissioners) and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (which provides and manages the programme) facilitated the event. As

in 2017, we were again delighted to welcome Mr Andrew Dougal, Chair of the Board of the PHA, who thanked service users for their continuing support, emphasising that their feedback was essential to ensuring ongoing improvements to the programme. One of the main aims of these annual events is to update attendees on efforts to enhance and further develop the programme.

Dr Stephen Bergin, Public Health Lead for the programme, advised in his opening address that, as per requests from service users at last year's event, the size of a man's screen-detected AAA

is now contained in his results letter. Participants at these yearly events also continue to enjoy meeting and sharing their experiences of AAA screening with both new service users and those they have met in former years. Overall, the programme continues to benefit hugely from innovative suggestions for future improvement which are generated during group discussions. AAA Screening staff at the PHA and Belfast Trust are working through the results of these discussions as part of ongoing quality and service development efforts. An update on the initiatives taken forward will be fed back to attendees at the 2019 event. As always, the entire Programme Team

extend a huge thank you to service users who were able to attend the event for the valuable contribution they make to ongoing enhancements within the programme.



Lead Sonographer Deirdre Kearns with participants Con Hughes and Angela McCrystal at this year's event



Programme Team members at the 2018 Service User Event

For further details on the event contact: Jacqueline McDevitt, Quality Assurance Manager for the NIAAASP, at: jacqueline.mcdevitt@hscni.net or on 02895 361505.

For information on AAA screening appointments contact: Sarah Louise Dornan, (Acting) Programme Manager at sarahlouise.dornan@belfasttrust.hscni.net or the Programme Office on: 02890 631828.

Balmoral Show 2018



The Royal Ulster Agricultural Society (RUAS) Balmoral Show celebrated its 150th anniversary between Wednesday 16th - Saturday 19th May. Over the four days there were 115,000 visitors to what has become Northern Ireland's biggest agri-food showcase event. As at previous shows, the Public Health Agency Stand formed part of the Government Exhibition in the Eikon Exhibition Centre, which provided an excellent setting for engaging with the general public. This year the

PHA focussed on Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) Screening, Bowel Cancer Screening, Breast Cancer Screening, Diabetic Eye Screening and Cervical Cancer Screening. The theme for the stand was targeted screening, with a large team of volunteers from across the PHA and various Health and Social Care Trusts who generously gave of their time to advise visitors what screening programmes could be relevant to them. A diverse selection of leaflets and subtitled videos playing on a large screen to the right of the stand provided further information. There was also an interactive element with a small table, chairs, crayons and themed colouring-in sheets for younger visitors, along with games and prizes to further promote the screening message amongst older visitors. All of this proved hugely popular, generating considerable interest in the stand and programmes. AAA Screening was particularly well represented with a significant turn-out from programme staff at the Belfast



Victoria Scanlan (PHA) along with Belfast Trust AAA Screening staff Paul Goodyear and Tina Guiney at the PHA Stand at the Show



Trust and PHA; the stand received a further boost on the Friday with visits from Valerie Watts, HSCB Chief Executive, Andrew Dougal, Chair of the PHA Board and Dr Stephen Bergin, Public Health Lead for the NIAAASP / (Acting) Assistant Director for Screening and Professional Standards (pictured left). Our thanks again to all those who helped prepare and man the stand, as well as the general public for their support in visiting it to find out more about population-based screening.

Overall Data (since programme began in June 2012 - end May 2018)

Total men invited:	58,500	Referrals to Vascular Service:	85%
Men screened:	49,000	Men on Surveillance:	15%
Detected AAAs:	759	Uptake rate:	84%

Recycled Scanning Equipment

In May 2017 the programme replaced its existing scanners, which had been in operation for five years since July 2012, in line with national Imaging Equipment guidelines. The six brand new Samsung portable ultrasound machines have been in use for over a year and are performing well.



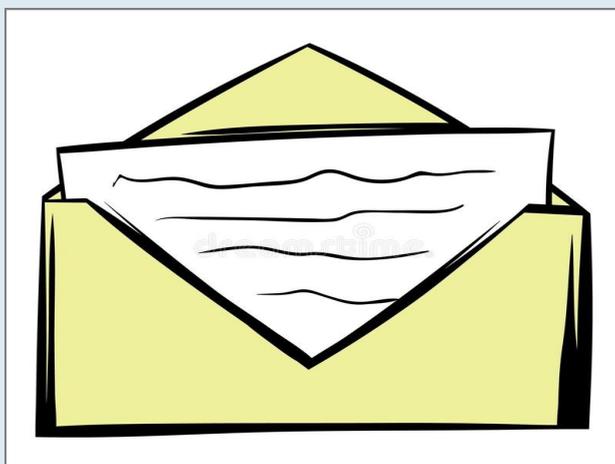
Meanwhile, five of the decommissioned pieces of scanning equipment have been donated to two registered charities. Cardiothoracic Surgeon, Mr Nzewi, has received machines to assist with his work with Friends of Nigeria - RVH - Save a Heart Foundation; and our Clinical Lead, Mr Paul Blair, has received machines to donate to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Global Mission Office, with the machines earmarked to assist in healthcare provision in Malawi. We are delighted to have been able to donate these surplus ultrasound systems to such worthy causes and hope they provide ongoing care and diagnostics to those not as fortunate or privileged as ourselves.

Revised Results Letters

The programme undertook an internal review of letters (invitations and result letters etc.) in 2017 as the same letters had been in use since the programme started in 2012. One of the main drivers for this review was agreement by the programme's main management group to include the actual measurement of a man's AAA in his results letter for all surveillance scans.

This was agreed following requests by Service Users at the 2017 Service User Event.

Changes were implemented on 28 March 2018 and from this date the programme began informing men via letter of the size of their aneurysm. This has been a success to date with the programme advising attendees of the development at this year's Service User Event in April 2018.



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Enhancements to Existing AAA Screening Videos

Over recent months, subtitles have been added to our four videos about the AAA Screening Programme (with the videos in their current format having been accessible on the programme website for some time). The videos now available with subtitles are:



- 1) An animation showing what a large (AAA) is (duration < 1 minute)*
- 2) Testimonial of a man on surveillance for an AAA (< 3 minutes)*
- 3) Guidance on what to expect when being screened (< 4 minutes)*
- 4) Testimonial of a man treated for a large AAA (< 6 mins)*

If you would like more details on - or a copy of - the videos, please contact Jacqueline McDevitt, QA Manager for the NIAAASP, on 02895 361505 or at the following e-mail:

jacqueline.mcdevitt@hscni.net. The

videos can also be viewed in their current format, without subtitles at:

www.aascreening.info



Clinical Lead, Mr Paul Blair, explains what to expect when men attend for an AAA screening appointment

Staffing Update

Deirdre Kearns, Lead Sonographer

Congratulations to one of the programme team's longest serving members, Deirdre Kearns, who will shortly take up the post of Lead Sonographer at the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust. Deirdre has been with AAA Screening since its introduction in 2012 and has played a pivotal role in helping guide it through ongoing programme developments and improvements. Specifically, Deirdre has been responsible for the provision of high quality clinical training and supervision of the screening technicians and ensuring similarly high quality assurance of the scanning elements of the regional screening and surveillance programmes. With best wishes from the team, Deirdre, on your promotion and for ongoing success in the future.



Paul Fusco, Programme Administrator

Congratulations to Paul Fusco, Programme Administrator, who will take up the post of Information Support Officer with the Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Team in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. Paul has been with the programme since October 2016 and has been jointly responsible for the day-to-day administration of the screening programme. We wish you all the best in your new role Paul, and your future endeavours.



Calling all GPs and Practice Staff! If you would be interested in promoting AAA screening at any of your upcoming Flu Clinics, please contact:
Sarah Louise Dornan, (Acting) Programme Manager on : 02890 638389