

The AAA Team

Newsletter of the Northern Ireland AAA Screening Programme



Issue 14 : Produced by the NI AAA Screening Programme for HSC Professionals - Autumn 2017

AAA Screening – promotion at Flu vaccination clinics

We are delighted to report that, in just over five years of screening, over **3,000** men have self-referred into the programme! This is a great achievement as it represents over **7%** of the total men we have screened.

Invitations for AAA screening are automatically sent to around 9,500 men across the region each year. These are men turning 65 and registered with a GP. However, those men who turned 65 before 1 April 2012 will not have received an invitation unless they have contacted the programme office to self-refer and request an appointment.

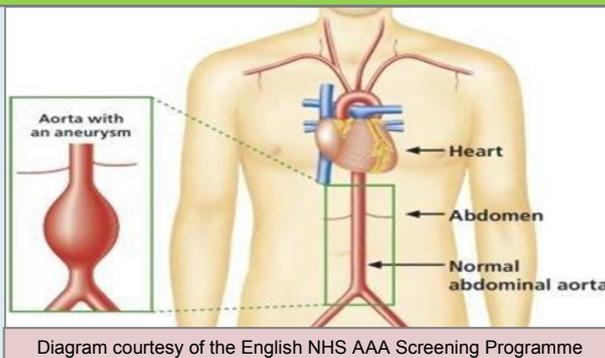


Diagram courtesy of the English NHS AAA Screening Programme

Of the 3,000 self-referrals received, **68** of these have been found to have an AAA. If they had not contacted the programme to request an appointment, these men may have suffered a potentially catastrophic rupture. All of these men are now either receiving regular surveillance scans or, where appropriate, have been referred to our specialist Vascular team at the Royal Victoria Hospital.

As we have reported in previous newsletters, one of the most effective ways of encouraging men to self-refer is through promotion of the screening programme by healthcare providers. When men call the programme office to self-refer we now ask them how they heard of the programme. During 2016-17 over **35%** of all self-referrals were as a direct result of information provided by GPs and other health professionals (where men were advised by their GP to contact the programme or they contacted us after seeing a poster in the GP surgery / hospital / pharmacy).

In previous years some GP practices have used their annual flu vaccination clinics to promote AAA screening and encourage eligible men to self-refer. As we are approaching that time of year again we are keen to hear from any practices that would like to get involved.

We will provide you with the promotional materials to give to men who attend for their flu vaccination. The men will then need to contact the programme office on **02890 631828** and provide a few details such as their name, address and date of birth, to allow us to get them an appointment.

Alternatively, if you are interested in us running a clinic in your GP practice, we would be happy to discuss this with you. For more information, please contact Diane Stewart, Programme Manager, on 02890 638256 or at diane.stewart@belfasttrust.hscni.net

We would like to thank you for your ongoing support for the programme. We are always keen to hear of ways that you think we could improve or develop our service. Please therefore contact Diane Stewart, Programme Manager, as above.

Launch of new Wallet / Alert Card

The programme has recently introduced an Alert Card scheme for those men within the surveillance arm of the AAA Screening Programme (following detection of a small or medium AAA after their initial scan). The card (pictured left) is business card sized and designed to fit within a standard wallet. One side contains information on the size of a man's AAA and how frequently he attends for surveillance. The other side carries programme contact details. Men are encouraged to carry these cards and present them to an HSC professional when attending hospital or medical appointments.

I am under the care of:

Vascular Service
Belfast Health and
Social Care Trust
Tel: 028 9063 1828 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm service)

NI AAA Screening
Programme
www.aaascreening.info
Contact: Diane Stewart



ALERT CARD

I have a **small / medium sized**
Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA)
Currently on surveillance
annually / 3 monthly

Service User Event 2017

The programme's fifth annual Service User Event took place on Thursday 6th April in Belfast Central Mission's Grosvenor Hall. This year the morning workshop was attended by a record number of individuals, with almost 100 participants.

More than 70 of these participants were service users, including many who had taken part in AAA screening service user events in previous years.

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.

The programme was also delighted to welcome the Chair of the Public Health Agency, Mr Andrew Dougal (pictured right) who took part in group discussions and the closing feedback session.

One of the main aims of the morning was to provide attendees with an update on initiatives to develop and improve the programme, including progress on suggestions made by service users at the 2016 event.

Those attending also had the opportunity to meet and share their experiences of AAA screening with fellow service users as well as putting forward more ideas for ensuring the programme continues to meet user needs.



Mr Andrew Dougal (centre) with participants at the 2017 NIAAASP Service User Event, Grosvenor Hall, Belfast



Michael and Gretta Craig at the 2017 NIAAASP Service User Event

The programme team were delighted with the wealth of ideas and innovative suggestions for future programme initiatives generated by service users during group discussions.

AAA Screening staff at the PHA and Belfast Trust will work through the results of these discussions collaboratively as part of ongoing quality improvement efforts. An update on those initiatives which have been taken forward will be fed back to attendees at the 2018 Service User Event.

The programme team would like to extend a huge thank you to all those service users who were able to attend the event and help make such a valuable contribution to the ongoing development of the Northern Ireland AAA Screening Programme.

If you would like further information on the event please contact: Jacqueline McDevitt, Quality Assurance Manager at: jacqueline.mcdevitt@hscni.net or on 02895 361505.

For details of past events go to www.aascreening.info.

Key Contacts : Belfast HSC Trust

Programme

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Patient and Client Council – Healthy Minds Workshop

Representatives from the AAA Screening Programme were delighted to attend the Patient and Client Council's recent Healthy Minds Workshop at Belfast's Grosvenor Hall on Thursday 29th June.

The aim of the day, as part of the work of the Bamford Monitoring Group, was to hear from individuals with a learning disability about their experiences relating to mental health problems or illness.

The NI AAA Screening Programme hosted an information stand at the event and introduced a new booklet which aims to provide easy to understand information about AAA screening in Northern Ireland. Programme staff engaged with a wide range of service users, carers and HSC professionals involved with providing health services for individuals with learning disabilities.

Some thought-provoking theatre by the Lilliput Theatre Company, along with excellent focus group discussions, highlighted key improvements that can be made to ensure individuals with learning difficulties receive the appropriate care within the HSC.

The NI AAA Screening Programme is committed to ensuring that screening is equally available to all men who are eligible.

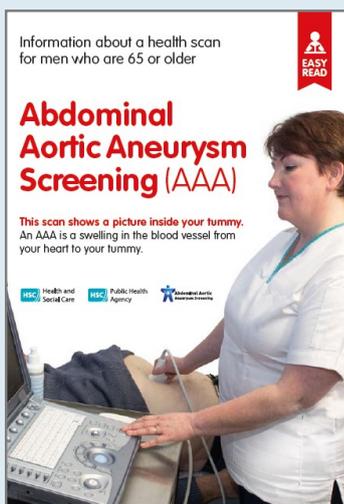
Easy read versions of the general information

leaflet, as well as relevant invitation and result letters, have been developed to provide information in a suitable format for individuals. Further information on the new booklet can be found in the article below.



(Left to right) Jessica Murray, Patient and Client Council, PPI South Eastern Trust; Helen McCann, Public Health Agency, AAA Screening Programme; Keli Farrell, Patient and Client Council, PPI Southern Trust; Brian Sinnamon, Bamford Monitoring Group; Sorcha Forbes, Patient and Client Council, PPI Western Trust.

AAA Easy Read Information



The NI AAA Screening Programme is committed to ensuring that screening is equally available to all men who are eligible.

Easy read versions of the general information leaflet (pictured left), invitation and results letters have been developed to provide information in a format that is suitable for individuals who may:

- have learning disabilities
- find reading and writing difficult

The new booklet was designed by Brea Crothers and Marie Loughran (Health Facilitators for Adults with a Learning Disability at the Southern Health and Social Care Trust). A wide range of other HSC Professionals, including speech and language therapists, NI AAA Screening Programme representatives and service users also contributed to the project.

Overall Data (since programme began in June 2012 - end July 2017)

Uptake rate:	85%	Large AAAs referred for treatment:	95
Total men screened:	43,298	Screen-detected AAAs:	676
Self-referrals screened:	2,965	Prevalence rate:	1.6%

Patient Representatives

AAA Screening Programme and Chamber of Commerce Networking Event

The programme was recently invited to attend a Chamber of Commerce Networking Event to promote AAA screening throughout Northern Ireland.

Mr Kieron McGuire, one of the programme's three patient representatives and a member of the Chamber of Commerce, was keen to use his connections to inform Chamber of Commerce colleagues about the importance of AAA screening for eligible men, aged 65 and over.

The event took place in Burnavon Theatre, Cookstown on Wednesday the 7th June with representation from a wide range of businesses across Northern Ireland.

During his presentation, Kieron shared his own experience of AAA screening, which included the detection of a large AAA after he had been called for his initial scan. Kieron explained how he had been promptly and successfully treated by the Vascular Team at the Belfast Trust with a potentially life-saving operation.

Sarah-Louise Dornan, Deputy Programme Manager, provided the audience with information on what an abdominal aortic aneurysm is, and further details about attending for screening. Attendees were advised that eligible men - who have turned 65 since the programme began (in April 2012) - will automatically be invited; other men (aged 65 or over at that time) can still ask to be screened by contacting the programme office.

Delegates were encouraged to consider any opportunities they may have to promote AAA Screening and were provided with posters, leaflets and business cards to pass on to their own staff or relatives.

The programme is delighted to have been given this opportunity and hopes to develop further links with the business community in the future.



Mr Kieron McGuire speaking to Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce colleagues in June 2017

Key role of Patient Representatives...

The programme has benefitted enormously over the last three years thanks to the work of its patient representatives, Mr Kieron McGuire (pictured above), Mr Peter Bullick (far right) and Mr Tommy Canning (right). They were elected to the programme's main management group in 2014 and have provided a unique insight for the management team based on their specific experiences of AAA screening. Their contributions have made a significant impact, whether this has been speaking about AAA screening at public events, participating in reviews of promotional materials or being ambassadors for the programme. Collectively, they have been an integral part of the programme team, ensuring the service user's voice is heard at all stages of delivery and ongoing development of the programme. We wish our friends, and former colleagues, good health—and some rest!—for the future.



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

www.aascreening.info