

The AAA Team

Newsletter of the Northern Ireland AAA Screening Programme



Issue 9: Produced by the NI AAA Screening Programme for HSC Professionals - Autumn 2014

Self-Referrals - Our 1,000th Man!

We are delighted to report that we have now had our **1,000th** man self-refer into the programme! In just over two years, this is a great achievement as it represents almost **5%** of the total men we have screened. We could not have done this without your help though. As we reported in the last newsletter, around **35%** of the total self-referrals were as a direct result of support from GPs and other health professionals - men were either advised by their GP to contact the programme or they contacted us after seeing a poster in the GP surgery / hospital / pharmacy.

To date, **20** of these men have been identified as having an Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA). 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.

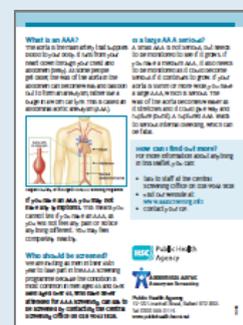
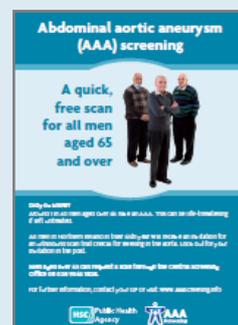
Since the programme began in July 2012, all men aged 65 - and registered with a GP in Northern Ireland - have automatically been invited for a screening appointment at a clinic within their local area. Those already over 65 at this point will not have automatically been invited but are eligible to self-refer. To self-refer, a man should contact the **Programme Office on 02890 631828** where he will be asked for his name, address, telephone number, date of birth and GP details. This information will then be checked against that recorded on the Business Services Organisation's system, HCN Web View. Once verified, it is entered into the screening programme's IT system and the man is sent an appointment at his nearest venue, usually within four to six weeks.

We are asking for your help to continue increasing the number of self-referrals to our programme. Over the next few months, we will be sending out new information leaflets for you to display in the surgery. In the meantime, if you would like more details on the numbers of men already screened from your surgery, including the number of self-referrals, please contact **Diane Stewart, Programme Manager**, on **02890 638256** or diane.stewart@belfasttrust.hscni.net. Diane will be able to provide you with data on the men attending, the detection rates and self-referral numbers. If you are interested in running a clinic within your GP surgery for men in your area, Diane will also be very happy to discuss this with you.

We would like to thank you for your on-going support for the programme. If you have any suggestions for ways that you think we could improve or develop our service, please contact Diane as above.

New Business Cards & One Page Awareness Leaflets

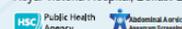
The programme has recently produced a new one page, double-sided A5 **Awareness Leaflet** (immediate right) and double-sided **Business Card** (bottom centre). These materials aim to convey key facts about AAA screening in a portable, user-friendly format to the general public - specifically men eligible for screening. We also hope that they will help to raise awareness of AAA screening across the region and facilitate networking and follow-up with other health professionals, particularly in primary care, as we continue to promote, develop and improve AAA screening in Northern Ireland. **If you would like a supply of either the business cards, awareness leaflets or both to be sent to your surgery for use now**, please contact **Helen McCann on 02890 311611**.



For information on AAA screening:

Phone: 028 9063 1828
Email: aaascreening@belfasttrust.hscni.net
Website: www.aaascreening.info

Address: NI Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) Screening Programme Office
1st Floor, King Edward Building,
Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast BT12 6BA

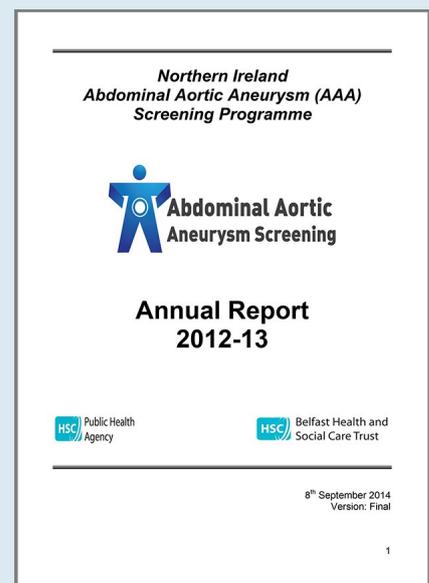


Annual Report for 2012/2013

The first NI AAA Screening Programme Annual Report (covering the period 1st April 2012—31st March 2013) is now available to download from our website (at www.aascreening.info). It provides a range of information about the programme in Northern Ireland during its first year of operation. The report shows the programme is working well and providing a high quality service for eligible men. It is particularly pleasing to note the good uptake rate of 81%.

Since the programme began in June 2012, more than **20,000 men** have benefitted from this quick and potentially life-saving scan with over **300 AAAs** being detected.

The focus now for the Public Health Agency (as programme commissioners) and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (as the programme provider) is to continue to build on the already high standards of service delivery, address any barriers to accessing the programme and encourage all eligible men to seriously consider taking up the offer of screening.

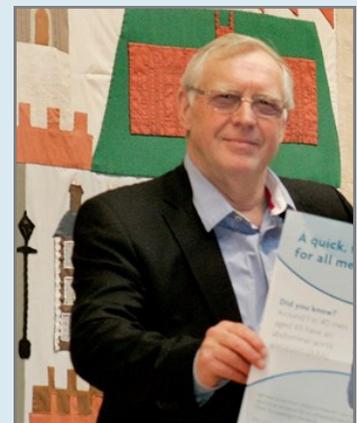


Appointment of Patient Representatives / Service Users to Coordinating Group

As will be seen in the following pages, individuals from a variety of backgrounds have played, and continue to play, a key role in the success of AAA screening in Northern Ireland. We are therefore delighted to announce the appointment of three patient representatives to the NI AAA Screening Programme's Coordinating Group.

Mr **Peter Bullick**, Mr **Tommy Canning** and Mr **Kieron McGuire** have all been through screening and diagnosed with a large AAA before being subsequently referred for treatment to the Specialist Vascular Team at the Belfast Trust.

The Coordinating Group is chaired by the Public Health Lead of the programme, Dr Adrian Mairs, and made up of members of the programme team at the Belfast Trust and the Public Health Agency. The main purpose of the Group is to monitor, maintain and seek to improve upon acceptable standards of service, performance and quality across all elements of the AAA Screening Programme in Northern Ireland. The experience of and input from service users is consequently vital in shaping on-going developments and future improvements to the programme. We would like to extend a very warm welcome to Peter (*below left*), Tommy (*below centre with Jacqueline McDevitt from the PHA*) and Kieron (*below right*) to their first meeting of the Coordinating Group in November.



Recognising Professional Excellence in Practice



The NI Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) Screening Programme Team at the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust is thrilled to have been shortlisted for two awards in the **Advancing Healthcare Awards NI**, which recognises the achievements of Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) in Northern Ireland.

Deirdre Kearns - the programme's Lead Sonographer - was a finalist for the **Seating Matters Award for Innovation and Creativity** through her work to enable AHPs to deliver safe and effective practice and care. This award recognises innovative approaches, including a focus on preventing disease and improving health alongside embracing the principles of Transforming Your Care. As Deirdre explains, engaging people more closely in helping to shape their own health and well-being aims to increase the number of quality life years they experience, prevent illness and ultimately prolong a healthy life.

The programme's hard-working Screening Technicians were also finalists for the **Award for Outstanding Achievement by a Support Worker**. This award aims to recognise and encourage the increasing contribution of technicians in improving patient outcomes by celebrating an individual or team that provide, or who are helping to provide, high quality, creative care which enhances the quality of life for the patient. Presentations were delivered by Deirdre and the Programme Manager, Ms Diane Stewart, to a judging panel with representatives from the Public Health Agency, the Department of Health and other professional bodies on the 26th of September 2014. The awards ceremony took place in the City Hotel in Londonderry-Derry on the 23rd of October.

In addition, Deirdre (below right) has been short-listed for **AHP Manager of the Year Award 2014** in the **Institute of Healthcare Management Awards**. The significant contribution that Allied Health Professionals make to the management of Health and Care Social Services in Northern Ireland is recognised through the development of this award and is an opportunity for those professions to demonstrate their management contribution to providing high quality services to the population. Deirdre will be presenting to the judging panel in mid November 2014 and winners will be announced at the IHM annual conference later that month.



We are especially pleased for the recognition of all the hard work undertaken by our Screening Team at the Belfast Trust, and the opportunity to promote and increase awareness of the NI AAA Screening Programme across healthcare professions and beyond. It is a great achievement to have been nominated in not one but several categories for these awards.

2014 / 2015 Data

Screen detected AAAs: 64

Large AAAs referred for surgery: 4

The screening year runs from 1/4/2014 to 31/3/2015. All men in Northern Ireland who turn 65 during this time will have been offered an initial screening appointment by the end of March 2015 (9,364 men). To date, 296 men who have self-referred have been screened.

Overall Data

(since programme started in June 2012)

Uptake rate: 82%

Screen detected AAAs: 313

Large AAAs referred for surgery: 37

Since screening began in 2012, 1051 men have self-referred while the overall prevalence rate sits at 1.6%.



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

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

English NHS AAA Screening Programme Update

The NI AAA Screening Programme is closely affiliated with the English NHS AAA Screening Programme. Specifically, AAA screening within Northern Ireland has adopted the same operating procedures and national quality standards as those used by English colleagues, as well as employing the same IT system, training provider (for screening technicians) and portable scanning equipment. In a recent progress report, Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive of Public Health England, reported on the significant success of AAA screening in England as follows:



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health



Duncan Selbie
Chief Executive

Friday message

Friday 26 September 2014

'The progress made in reducing the number of deaths from abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) over the last seven years has been absolutely remarkable. Deaths have fallen by two thirds. Our AAA screening programme, led by Mr Jonothan Earnshaw, working closely with the NHS and the Vascular Society, has been pivotal in driving the biggest changes in vascular service provision seen in a generation, with huge benefit. Vascular surgery and radiology is now in fewer, specialist centres; we have a national screening programme; and quality assurance teams working with clinicians to ensure best practice in surgery and radiology is universal. The consequence of all of this is many lives saved and we have moved from having some of the poorest outcomes for AAA repair, to being among the very best.'

The NI AAA Screening Programme looks forward to continuing to improve and develop on existing service provision through on-going partnership working with the NHS AAA Screening Programmes in England, Scotland and Wales.



Mr Paul Blair - President Elect Vascular Society of Great Britain and Ireland

We are delighted that Mr Paul Blair, our Clinical Lead Vascular Surgeon, will become President of the Vascular Society of Great Britain and Ireland (VSGBI) in November 2014. The Vascular Society is responsible for the education and training of vascular surgeons and maintaining the best care for vascular patients throughout these islands. We congratulate Paul on this prestigious appointment and wish him well for his presidential year.

Key contacts: Belfast H&SC Trust

Programme Mgr: Ms Diane Stewart, 02890 638256

Programme Office: 02890 631828

Key contacts: PHA

QA Manager: Mrs Jacqueline McDevitt, 02890 311611

Admin Asst: Ms Helen McCann, 02890 311611

Existing Information Sources for GPs

Information on the NI AAA Screening Programme is available in the following formats via the website or by contacting **Helen McCann** directly on **02890 311611** or e-mailing helen.mccann@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**