

Joint Working

Executive Summary

Project title Making behaviour change happen: remote clinical support of Atrial Fibrillation management by General Practice Nurse Digital Champions (AF Digital Project)

Project partners Staffordshire STP & Daiichi Sankyo UK Ltd

Start date October 2019 – April 2020

Project support Daiichi Sankyo UK Ltd direct contribution £30,000
Staffordshire STP indirect contribution £29,000

Project summary

To actively support general practice nurse digital champions and a GP-led digital exemplar practice team to cascade digital delivery in their practices with a focus on identifying patients currently undiagnosed with AF or lost to follow-up and engaging patients with AF and/or post-stroke to better manage their health condition(s). This will include set up of closed groups and public Facebook pages for AF patients, expand AF screening e.g., using AliveCor for any patients >60 years old without AF at 'flu vaccination clinics in Autumn/winter 2019, batch of videos or an animation relaying clinician & patient perspectives of best practice in clinical management of AF on practice website, upskill PPG (Practice Participation Group) to use digital modes of communication and support eg Facebook for those with AF etc.). Thus, improving patient adherence to anticoagulant and other medications and improve lifestyle habits as well as nurse digital champions to share the experience of their range of modes of digital delivery for technology enabled care for best practice in diagnosis & management of AF & hypertension wider afield.

This project is a follow on from a successful pilot completed in Staffordshire which was funded by the NHSE as part of their delivery of the GPN10 Point Plan where 30 local general practice nurses (GPNs) completed a series of action learning sets then embedded technology enabled care services (TECS) within their practices (all used AliveCor screening for AF in undiagnosed patients) and develop as digital GPN champions (2018/19).

Expected benefits to patients, the NHS and Daiichi Sankyo UK Ltd

The benefits to the patients are an enhanced awareness of the importance of regularly checking for an irregular pulse rate (in those in whom AF not diagnosed). An understanding of next steps if person becomes aware of apparent irregular pulse e.g., to go to GP, capture details inc phone tracking from wearable technology etc. Also, an understanding of the importance of accepting anticoagulation, adhering to medication and improving lifestyle habits.

For Staffordshire STP, the benefits are an increased identification of NVAF patients, improvement in medication adherence, thus resulting in potential stroke prevention and avoiding hospital admissions. It is estimated that Staffordshire STP could make savings of circa £5million in next three years with 336 strokes avoided in the 1.1 million patient population, with improved detection and effective management of AF.

This will also minimise comparative health inequalities between practices included in the project.

Additionally, national recognition by NHSE leads who commissioned digital general practice nurse upskilling and primary care digital transformation of general practices of extended achievements.

The benefit of this project for Daiichi Sankyo UK Ltd is to be recognized for supporting modern ways of digital delivery of diagnosis, clinical care and management of people with Non Valvular Atrial Fibrillation in order to improve health outcomes.

It is anticipated as part of the project that more patients may be treated with a pharmaceutical product. This may include but is not exclusive to products manufactured by Daiichi Sankyo UK Ltd.

Project Outcomes:

Increased prevalence of AF: East Staffs CCG identified 49 new cases of AF in all confirmed by 12 lead ECG; East Staffs CCG average AF prevalence rose by 4% between 2018/9 and 2019/20.¹

Adherence of patients diagnosed with AF to anticoagulant therapy and other prescribed medication: The average percentage of patients currently treated with anticoagulation drug therapy with AF & a CHADS2-VASc score ≥ 2 increased from 92.51% (AF007: 2018/9) to 94.47% (AF007: 2019/20) in East Staffs.¹

AliveCor screening used as usual service for checking patients not diagnosed with AF at annual reviews of their long-term condition(s): The focus was mainly on attainment of the 16 East Staffs practices; as well as that in the AF digital champions' practices. At least one patient/5000 patient population newly diagnosed with AF during six months project.

Patients with AF utilise digital delivery for their shared care management: Explored different digital modes of delivery i.e., AliveCor-6 lead and digital stethoscopes. Learnings shared in the descriptions in the Technology Enabled Care report.

(1. Final report of the Joint Working Project between Staffordshire Sustainable and Transformation Partnership & Daiichi Sankyo UK into an AF Technology Enabled Care Services programme. Accessed March 2021)