



# The role of the arrhythmia care co-ordinator in supporting the patient

British Heart Foundation  
Arrhythmia Care Co-ordinators  
Royal Brompton and Harefield Trust

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# British Heart Foundation Arrhythmia Care co-ordinators

- In response to the development of the National service framework- Chapter 8 BHF awarded funding for clinical nurse specialists for three years.
- They now have established 32 co-ordinator posts in arrhythmia teams across NHS hospitals in England and Wales.
- The main aim of these posts is to improve the delivery of services.
- Arrhythmia specialist module (Level 4). Developed to run at two universities. London South Bank from 3<sup>rd</sup> July and South Tees from April 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Evaluation project (University of York) Professor Bob Lewin.
- Aim is to audit the work of the arrhythmia care co-ordinators over a two-year period, to measure their contribution.

# NSF - Chapter 8 (March 2005)

- Three quality requirements and 20 markers of good practice for implementation.
- Support further improvement in services for arrhythmias.

# Markers of good practice

## Patient Support (NSF CH 8)

- People with arrhythmias receive a formal assessment of their support needs and those at significantly increased risk of anxiety, depression or a poor quality of life receive appropriate care.
- People with long-term conditions receive support in managing their illness from a named arrhythmia care co-ordinator.
- Good quality, timely information about arrhythmic conditions is given by appropriately trained staff.

# NICE – April 2006

- Support and advice to patients undergoing Radiofrequency ablation (RFA)
  - potential complications
  - success rate
  - risk of recurrence associated with the procedure

# The goals of the Arrhythmia care co-ordinators

- Timely and high quality advice, support and education to patients and relatives.  
(NSF quality requirement)
- Help line bleep - support/referral/advice service/point of contact.
- Multidisciplinary arrhythmia clinics-improve access high level expertise.

# Electrophysiology Nurse Specialist service

- After 6 months:
  - Patients have a helpline number pre/during and post RFA procedure
  - 200 new patients seen (in-patient and out-patient clinics)
  - 140 telephone consultations (helpline)
  - 7 Hospital admissions prevented

# Electrophysiology Nurse Specialist service

- Every EP/ablation inpatient seen by nurse specialist, given information literature, advice and help line details.
- Helpline can offer support to GP's and Local DGH's.
- Improved access to support/advice from a tertiary centre.

# Electrophysiology Nurse Specialist Service

- Multidisciplinary Arrhythmia Clinics.
- All new patients awaiting EPS+/-RFA seen by Nurses Specialist prior to initial consultation with EP Consultant (meeting NSF and NICE requirements).
- Routine follow-up patients seen by Nurse Specialist.
- Patients given information literature and helpline details.

# ICD/CRT Nurse Specialist

- 10 week orientation period.
- Time spent in angio, pacing, echo, clinics.
- In-depth training about devices, run for nurses by Medtronic/Guidant.
- Other centres visited to see nurse led services. eg: Bristol, John Radcliffe.
- Investigation to see how role would best help patients.

# ICD/CRT Service

- All patients seen pre-procedure.
- Comprehensive information pack given.
- All patients seen post procedure.
- Followed by 2 week telephone call.
- Patient satisfaction survey being carried out (previously used by NWLCN).
- Patients given details of help-line number.

# Aims of arrhythmia care co-ordinator

- Effective Arrhythmia care allows many patients to be cured and discharged" (NSF,2005, P9).
- Reduce length of stay.
- Preventing hospital admissions.
- Highlight patients awareness.
- Work towards 18 week target (2008) for complete treatment episode.

# Audit/Research

- Database all information.
- Audit Helpline.
- BHF Quarterly reports.
- Patients Questionnaires.
- Questionnaires for members of MDT to evaluate the impact of the role so far.
- Quarterly steering group meetings.