

**Information Strategy**  
**North West London Cardiac Network**

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this strategy is to establish systems and processes to enable the North West London Cardiac Network to have timely access to the information needed in order to fulfil our overarching objective of ensuring that cardiac services develop to meet the standards in the National Service Framework, comply with NICE guidelines and enable the Network to improve the services and health of the people in North West London.

This strategy links closely with the Networks User Involvement Strategy, Communication Strategy and the Department of Health's Coronary Heart Disease Information Strategy.<sup>1</sup>

## **Aims**

In general terms, the Information Strategy aims to:

- Improve clinical information flows so that accurate, timely and clear information is available about existing cardiac services across NWL
- Provide information for patients and the public which meets their needs in a timely and appropriate manner
- Provides accurate data and local statistics on performance and population profiles which will enable priorities to be identified and assessment of progress to be made in relation to meeting specific national and local targets including those in the National Service Framework (NSF) for Coronary Heart Disease (CHD)
- Provide information in relation to the cardiac workforce across the sector to inform planning, future developments, education and training priorities
- Provide audit data to assess health outcomes and to support the overall clinical governance agenda for the Network
- Provides access to evidence based materials

The Information Strategy is fundamental in informing the priorities and work plan of the Network. It is also essential in relation to the planning and development of cardiac services and in assessing and monitoring the quality of care delivered.

## **Patients, Carers and the Public**

Patients, carers and the public need information in an accessible, clear and understandable format covering issues such as:

- Causes of cardiac disease and lifestyle factors

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- Ways of reducing personal and family risk of heart disease and the services available within NWL to support this
- Recognition of symptoms e.g. heart attack, and how to summon help
- The types of treatment and help available for a particular cardiac illness (including it's outcome), and where these can be accessed within NWL
- What individuals can expect at each stage of the patient pathway
- The standards of care individuals can expect from services within NWL including issues such as waiting times and clinical outcomes

There are many sources of public information on heart disease.<sup>2</sup> However, the challenge for the Network is to ensure that this information is complete, accurate and is available to all sections of society who might need it most.

Involving patients in the design of information materials will be essential in ensuring that resources are relevant, accessible, appropriate and easily understood. The Network will work with existing local organisations, other Cardiac Networks and national organisations e.g. British Heart Foundations to provide relevant information for the NWL population. The Network will consult local user groups and patient representatives to prioritise what information should be produced.

### **Access to Evidence Based Materials**

The Network will need to be able to access evidence based material such as protocols and guidelines covering the whole of the patient pathway. The NWL Cardiac Network intends to utilise existing resources such as the NHSnet and Cochrane Database to support this need. The National electronic Library for Health (NeLH) will be utilised for accessing best current knowledge on health improvement, health care and public health. Specifically, the use of [www.nelh.nhs.uk/cardiovascular](http://www.nelh.nhs.uk/cardiovascular) will be promoted across the Network as a valuable resource for providing access to relevant cardiovascular documents, resources and evidence-based material.

### **Public Health**

Public health information will be required to inform work priorities around prevention and health promotion. Information will be needed for across NWL detailing patterns of morbidity, health inequalities and future trends. The Network will intend to link with both the Public Health team at the StHA and via public health membership on the Board to each of the Public Health leads within the PCTs to support the work of the Network.

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Existing sources of information will be sought to inform work plans e.g. the annual Health Episode Statistics [www.doh.gov.uk/hes](http://www.doh.gov.uk/hes) and annual national health surveys. The Network will also use The London Health Observatory as a valuable source of information [www.lho.org.uk](http://www.lho.org.uk)

Where appropriate, the Network will purchase specific public health expertise or analytical support from local universities e.g. Brunel, Westminster, Imperial etc. to assist with particular pieces of work across the sector.

### General Information to Support the Network Activities

- **Core Data Set (Clinical and Non Clinical Information)**

The Network will require high quality information to support each stage of the patient pathway which will include prevention services, primary care, ambulance services, rapid access chest pain clinics, secondary care, tertiary care, rehabilitation and heart failure. In time, information will be required for all aspects of heart disease including rhythm management and grown up congenital heart disease.

In common with much of the rest of the NHS, the current provision of information across NWL is sketchy. Some NWL organisations have very clear, detailed and validated information on all aspects of the cardiac pathway, whilst others are only able to produce relatively basic levels of clinical data. In part, this is a reflection of the fact that some organisations still have to rely on manual paper-based systems for the collection of clinical information.

Whilst the provision of accurate information is essential to the effective functioning of the Network, there is also concern about placing any undue additional demands upon organisations to produce information; particularly when the benefit of such collection is not always apparent to the organisations concerned.

To prevent duplication and ensure a coherent approach, the Network will work jointly with the StHA in developing a core data set. This will also be developed in agreement with each of the organisations and will include both clinical and non-clinical indicators which will be acknowledged as adding value to the process of improving and developing cardiac services across the sector. Such data will be available across all NWL and will be accessible by each of the organisations within it. It is envisaged that this will facilitate a degree of local benchmarking/comparative analysis, potentially highlight areas of good practice, monitor achievement towards targets and standards and enable work priorities to be identified.

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As a first stage, an assessment will be made of what information is currently available centrally via returns to the StHa; specifically, activity information from the Strategic Executive Information System (STEIS). The core data set will encompass information required to monitor the Priorities and Planning Framework (PPF) targets and those cardiac indicators included within the Balanced Scorecard. However, the Network will define what level of this information is required on a regular basis for effective operation of its objectives.

The second stage will be to define what other sources of information is collected within each of the organisations. This will include information currently submitted to the Central Cardiac Audit Database CCAD encompassing:

Myocardial Infarction National Audit Project (MINAP), British Cardiovascular Intervention Society (BCIS), British Pacing & Electrophysiology Group (BPEG) and SCTS Society of Cardiothoracic Surgeons (SCTS)

Again, the Network will define what level of this information is required on a regular basis.

The final stage of the process will be to consider any additional or specific areas of information which should be included within the final defined core dataset. This will also be informed by and will incorporate key reporting indicators contained within the CHD National Service Framework. Agreement will also be sought on the timescales for producing information; some being required on a monthly basis, whilst others being required on a quarterly or perhaps annual basis.

- **Primary Care**

The function of primary care is paramount in the successful delivery of the CHD NSF. As a Network, it will be important to receive succinct information detailing accuracy of practice based registers and the management of cardiac patients in the community so that work plans can be targeted appropriately.

The Network intends to link with each of the LIT leads to gain objective evidence on the quality of care delivered to cardiac patients in primary care across NWL via the Quality Management and Analysis System (QMAS).

QMAS will allow GP practices to analyse data relating to the quality of care delivered and will show how well each practice is doing, measured against national achievement targets as detailed in the General Medical Services (GMS) contract.

- **Rapport**

The Network will intend to support the continued development of the Rapport system, developed and used nationally by the CHD collaborative [www.chdcollaborative.nhs.uk](http://www.chdcollaborative.nhs.uk)

Rapport currently provides a valuable resource including toolkits to assist modernisation methodologies, details of specific national service improvements across the patient pathway and supporting data related to specific areas of cardiac care.

In time, Rapport may be developed to provide national data including STEIS, QMAS etc to Cardiac Networks which the NWL Cardiac Network would fully support and utilise.

- **Workforce**

The Network will link directly with the workforce team at the StHa to support any requirement for information in relation to the cardiac workforce. It is envisaged that the requirements for workforce information may vary depending upon the specific area of work being addressed across the Network and it is therefore anticipated that the StHA workforce team will link, as required, with the various Human Resource Departments/Workforce leads within each of the individual NWL organisations for specific information needs.

However, the Cardiac Operational/General Managers within the various organisations will also provide relevant information and recommendations in relation to workforce issues for any network wide areas of work which they are currently engaged in.

### **Relationship with the StHA Performance Management Team**

The Network will work closely with the Performance Team at the StHa to ensure that clear, accessible information is available to all relevant stakeholders. The StHA will have overall responsibility for performance management across the sector. However, the StHA, Network and local organisations will agree information to share cross the sector which will provide performance data against achievement of NSF standards. The Network will work jointly with the StHa in monitoring and publicising the performance of cardiac services within each of the organisations across NWL; the results of which will be used to determine priority work areas.

## Reporting

It is important that all network stakeholders receive regular information. The Network will continue to work with the StHA to develop a core data set. The StHa will provide support to the Network by producing an agreed set of regular reports to the Network Board e.g. progress towards meeting NSF targets, PPF indicators, mortality/outcome data etc.

- **NWL Cardiac Network Web Site**

Over the coming months, it is intended to develop the existing NWL CHD Collaborative web site to integrate a variety of Network functions [www.nwlchdc.co.uk](http://www.nwlchdc.co.uk)

It is envisaged that one such function will be the accessibility of information for both patients and Network stakeholders. In time, the web site will be used for posting specific activity information, agreed benchmarking data and other audit/clinical data.

- **Annual Report**

Within the Networks annual report, information will be included detailing how well services within NWL have met key performance indicators. It will also report progress against implementation of the Network Information Strategy.

## Implementation

The implementation of this strategy will be led by key members of the Network Board with support from the StHA Performance Team.

## Evaluation

Success will be determined by feedback from organisations. This strategy will be reviewed and evaluated in 12 months time (January 2006).

## Conclusion

As a Cardiac Network, data is required to support clinical governance, performance management, service/workforce planning and public health. This strategy aims to set a direction which will enable the Network to monitor performance against standards and national targets, compare/benchmark

performance across NWL, identify work priorities and increase accountability for organisations in delivering the CHD NSF.

## **Appendix 1 – Information Sources**

1. Coronary Heart Disease Information Strategy, Department of Health, September 2001, accessible at:  
[www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle](http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle)
  
2. Sources of Public Information
  - NHS Direct – 0845 46 47 48
  - NHS Direct Online [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)
  - NHS web site [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
  - The National Electronic Library for Health (NeLH)
  - The CHD Zone [www.nelh.nhs.uk/cardiovascular](http://www.nelh.nhs.uk/cardiovascular)
  - National Heart Forum UK [www.heartforum.org.uk](http://www.heartforum.org.uk)
  - Heartsforlife [www.heartsforlife.co.uk](http://www.heartsforlife.co.uk)
  - British Heart Foundation [www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)
  - British Cardiac Patients Association [bcpa@easynet.co.uk](mailto:bcpa@easynet.co.uk)
  - Coronary Prevention Group [www.healthnet.org.uk](http://www.healthnet.org.uk)
  - Family Heart Association [family@heart.k-web.co.uk](mailto:family@heart.k-web.co.uk)
  - Heart Link [www.heartlink.org.uk](http://www.heartlink.org.uk)
  - National Heart Research Fund [www.heartresearch.org.uk](http://www.heartresearch.org.uk)
  - NHS Smoking Helpline – 0800 169 0169
  - NHS Smoking Helpline Website [www.givingupsmoking.co.uk](http://www.givingupsmoking.co.uk)
  - Health Development Agency [www.hda-online.org.uk](http://www.hda-online.org.uk)