

NATIONAL SERVICE FRAMEWORK (NSF) FOR CORONARY HEART DISEASE

CHAPTER EIGHT - ARRHYTHMIAS AND SUDDEN CARDIAC DEATH

QUALITY REQUIREMENT ONE – PATIENT SUPPORT

Quality Requirement One: Patient Support

Aim: To improve the emotional and practical support offered to patients with arrhythmias

Quality requirement:

People with arrhythmias receive timely and high quality support and information, based on an assessment of their needs

Markers of good practice:

- 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 care co-ordinator
- Good quality, timely information about arrhythmic conditions is given by appropriately trained staff

For children and young people:

- Every child and young person receives age-specific preparation, treatment, support and follow up
- Transition to adult services does not automatically occur at age 16 but takes into account the individual needs and wishes of the young person

Mechanisms for providing support

- Appropriately trained health care professionals
- Patient groups
- Arrhythmia care coordinators
- Help lines
- Patient information booklets
- Support groups

Patient Support Groups

Some centres have already started to develop support services for this group of patients and support groups have been found to be effective

Aims of support groups

- To provide a forum to support all patients with arrhythmias and their partners and families
- To act as a point of contact and resource for patients, carers and other health care professionals
- To provide a forum for discussion and sharing of experiences.
- To help patients and their families to regain confidence to resume their usual activities of daily living
- To provide literature and information on all topics that are relevant to patients with arrhythmias - exercise, driving, insurance, holidays, electro magnetic interference etc
- To provide emergency and technical information to other healthcare professionals i.e. A & E departments, ITU's and ambulance crews in order to promote better understanding of appropriate management of patients with arrhythmias.

Setting up and running a patient support group – what is needed:

- Training
- Active members - patients and health care professionals
- Funding
- An appropriate venue/method of communication
- Energy!

For more advice and information please contact:

www.arrythmiaalliance.org.uk