



Promoting Routine Pulse Checks in Primary Care

Arrhythmia Alliance “Know Your Pulse” Campaign Parliamentary Reception
December 2010
House of Commons



“The ‘Know Your Pulse’ campaign addresses some crucial health agenda priorities, for prevention and stroke. But, there is still as much to do as has already been done”

Professor Roger Boyle, National Director for Heart Disease and Stroke

“It’s difficult to overstate the importance of the contributions made to the health of this country by organisations like the Arrhythmia Alliance”.

“I welcome and recognise the hard work that is going into the ‘Know Your Pulse’ campaign. I’m sure it will help influence commissioners in developing their local AF programmes.”



“What about the NHS Health Check programme? When the time comes to review the programme, we will be considering whether to extend it to include other tests such as the pulse check.”

Mr Simon Burns, Minister for Health



“Pulse checks are quick, simple and extremely low cost - yet a very effective tool for detecting potentially life threatening arrhythmias, including atrial fibrillation (AF), the most common heart rhythm disturbance”

Nadhim Zahawi MP, Stratford Upon Avon

The Parliamentary Reception was a tremendous success; more than 120 patients, carers, NHS staff, leading government figureheads, parliamentarians, medical and allied professionals came together to learn, discuss and share in the success of the ‘Know Your Pulse’ campaign.

The presentations have been applauded and feedback has been outstanding.

The launch officially opened with a welcome from the **Stratford Upon Avon MP, Nadhim Zahawi**, who highlighted the huge impact of heart rhythm disorders upon the 2 million people

affected. He played tribute to the important role of Arrhythmia Alliance, in providing unique support to arrhythmia patients.

A record of achievements for the 'Know Your Pulse' campaign – Founder and Trustee of Arrhythmia Alliance, Trudie Lobban MBE, reported on its success so far...

Trudie celebrated the charity's progress towards improving arrhythmia services, not only in the UK, but across the globe. She highlighted the need for A-A, and its members, to continue raising awareness of a simple health check that can detect arrhythmias.



Dr Matthew Fay, General Practitioner, Westcliffe Medical Centre, Bradford spoke on behalf of Atrial Fibrillation Association and gave the primary care perspective. He impressed the audience with an excellent speech that brought the problems we face to the forefront. Fay was certain that a GP or nurse could easily add a pulse check to their practice:

“When you welcome a patient into your room and you shake their hand, take their pulse! It is simple and it only takes 30 seconds to tell if it is regular or not...”



Professor Roger Boyle, National Director for Heart Disease and Stroke brought his whole team, including Heart Improvement staff to the reception. He gave a report of the Department of Health priorities and complimented the important role of A-A working with government, to address national health priorities for arrhythmia patients.

Government figurehead, **Simon Burns, Minister for Health**, clearly acknowledged the work of A-A and the 'Know Your Pulse' campaign. He congratulated Trudie on her appointment to the Heart Disease Advisory Group and expressed his keenness to work with her, and Professor Boyle, to improve heart disease in the short, medium and long term.

The reception closed with a profound message from Trudie, who reminded the audience of the unrivalled role of the patient at the centre of healthcare. She ended by saying how important it is to continue working in partnership towards improved diagnosis, treatment and management of arrhythmia patients.



After the presentations, there was the opportunity for photos and discussion. Some parliamentarians were shown how to take their pulse, whilst others learned how many people were diagnosed with atrial fibrillation in their constituency.



The Parliamentary Reception succeeded in its aims to raise awareness of the 'Know Your Pulse' campaign, to highlight the importance of effective pulse checks, and provide members with the opportunity to discuss their local arrhythmia services with parliamentarians.

The event highlighted opportunities for continued progress towards pulse checks in primary care. The recognition from leading government figureheads like Nadhim Zahawi, Professor

Roger Boyle and Mr Simon Burns, provides positive encouragement for our continued effort to raise awareness of cardiac arrhythmias on the national health agenda.