

North Midlands – Shropshire & Staffordshire Area

Anglesey House
Towers Plaza
Wheelhouse Road
Rugeley
WS15 1UL

Date: 11th January 2018

Email – a.pickard@nhs.net

Dear Colleague,

Re: Know Your Heart Age Campaign

I am pleased to announce details of the next public health campaign that we will be running across Staffordshire and Shropshire.

The campaign will **launch on 15th January** and will run for 4 weeks.

The aims of the campaign are as follows;

- to make patients aware of the risks of having high blood pressure, and what they can do to reduce it.
- encourage patients to access the NHS Choices Heart Age Test

Background information

High blood pressure (hypertension) affects one in four adults in UK and at least half of all those over age 50 are affected. Hypertension rarely has symptoms, so it is often called the “Silent Killer” and a third of people with high blood pressure don’t know they have it. Many people only find out they have high blood pressure after having a stroke or a heart attack and evidence suggests that half of all strokes and one in five heart attacks are caused by high blood pressure.

There are a number of factors that can increase risk of developing high blood pressure;

- are over the age of 65
- are overweight or obese
- are of African or Caribbean descent
- have a relative with high blood pressure
- eat too much salt and don't eat enough fruit and vegetables
- don't do enough exercise
- drink too much alcohol or coffee (or other caffeine-based drinks)
- smoke
- don't get much sleep or have disturbed sleep

Several of these risks can be reduced by making healthy lifestyle changes so pharmacy teams can support patients with appropriate advice and signposting to other organisations and self-help groups.

The NHS Choices ‘Heart Age’ test can be accessed via the following link, and this will enable patients to assess whether they are at risk and what they can do to reduce these risks. It also contains additional information about blood pressure and cholesterol numbers.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-health-check/check-your-heart-age-tool/?>

If you can encourage patients to access this tool, we can track the number of tests taken from the postcode question in the Heart Age Tool, and this will form part of the evaluation of the campaigns effectiveness.

Resources

Free booklets/leaflets can be obtained or download from the British Heart Foundation. The booklet entitled '10 minutes to change your life - High blood pressure' is excellent, and up to 50 copies can be ordered through their website: <https://www.bhf.org.uk/publications/heart-conditions/10-minutes-to-change-your-life---high-blood-pressure>

I have also attached along with this letter a blood pressure fact sheet that has been produced by colleagues in Telford. This fact sheet does reference a blood pressure checking service at the Healthy Lifestyle Hub in Southwater One, but this is only for Telford residents, however, the rest of the information is applicable for all pharmacy teams.

Data collection and PharmOutcomes

As a reminder, it is a contractual requirement for the information to be transferred from the data collection sheet onto the relevant campaign module on PharmOutcomes within 7 days of the end of each campaign please. Failure to do so may result in a breach notice being issued.

If you have any queries regarding this campaign or access to resources please contact me via email, or speak to one of your LPC representatives.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'A. Pickard'.

Andrew Pickard
Pharmacy Advisor, NHS England North Midlands, Staffordshire and Shropshire Area