The Arrhythmia Specialist Nurse

University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust

Carolyn Shepherd. UWE Feb 2010. Principles of Cardiac Care
Arrhythmia Specialist Nurse Role

- History behind the arrhythmia nurse role
- The patient groups we work with
- The service we provide to those patients and their relatives and carers
- Future developments within the role
The Beginning

National Institute Clinical Excellence (NICE):

Implantable Cardiovertor Defibrillators for Treatment of Arrhythmias;

NICE ICD Appraisal - 2000

NICE Technology Guidance Appraisal No. 11
- ICD’s for Arrhythmias 2000

8.2 “Since implantation and activation of an ICD can cause adverse psychological impact, adequately funded and staffed support services, including support for self-management, should be provided for patients at all implantation centres.”

8.34 “A rehabilitative approach to after-care which includes psychological preparation for living with an ICD”
Arrhythmia service in 2000

Lack of patient preparation/information

Patient anxiety

Prolonged stay in hospital

Recognised need to further expand service to meet this deficit
Number Crunching

- Cardiac arrhythmias are one of the leading causes of death in the world.
- There are more than 2 million people (diagnosed and undiagnosed) with an arrhythmia in the UK.
- 700,000 people suffer from A Fib in the UK.
- 30% of adults and 39% of children in the UK are misdiagnosed with epilepsy.
- There are 100,000 sudden cardiac deaths per year in the UK.

Source: Arrhythmia Alliance.
Role Development

Arrhythmia Alliance (Founded 2003)

Publication of Chapter Eight of the NSF for Coronary Heart disease: Arrhythmias and Sudden Death. (2005)

Arrhythmia Care Coordinators
National template job description/person specification

HRUK, (2005) Acts as a unifying focus for professionals involved in arrhythmia care and electrical therapies in the UK.
Role Development

British Heart Foundation funded 32 arrhythmia nurse posts nationally (2006/7)


Development of MSc Arrhythmia Management Courses at Teeside and Southbank Universities
Our role is based on Chapter Eight of the National Service Framework For Coronary Heart Disease DH 2005.

Arrhythmias and Sudden Death

Aim to provide a quality framework against which local services can secure improvements
Arrhythmia Specialist Nurses

Two Full Time Band 7 posts
Employed from Dec 2008.

Funded by the British Heart Foundation
For three years.
Arrhythmia Specialist Nurses

Annie Horne, Clare Parker, Carolyn Shepherd
Our Mission. Three quality requirements:

To improve the emotional and practical support offered to patients with arrhythmias and their families.

To ensure expert assessment of a person in whom an arrhythmia is suspected.

To reduce mortality from sudden death and improve services for families who have lost a close relative.
What kind of patients do we work with?

Those experiencing or at risk of experiencing arrhythmias (life threatening and non life threatening)

Those requiring:

- Electrophysiology Procedures
- Pacemakers
- Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillators (ICD’s)
- Cardiac Resynchronisation Therapy Devices
- Implantable Loop Recorders

Those requiring screening for inherited cardiac conditions

Those requiring reassurance and support
Service provision

Telephone Helpline:
Support service for all patients pre-op and post-op
Clinical advice for GPs and health care staff

Nurse led clinics:
Pre-operative assessment.
Review, clerk, inform and consent all elective patients
Weekly nurse-led follow-up clinic post ablation.
(Telephone follow-up for simple EP procedures)
Service provision

ICD support groups: 6 Monthly at BRI

Post-MI screening (Primary prevention)

Staff education. Regular teaching slots

Audit and Research
The Future

Multi-disciplinary Inherited cardiac diseases clinics
Syncope clinics

Nurse-led discharge of elective patients

One-stop arrhythmia clinics based in Primary care
References


Arrhythmia Alliance www.heartrhymycharity.org.uk
HRUK. www.hruk.org.uk
NICE. www.nice.org.uk
BHF. www.bhf.org.uk