

**Atrial Fibrillation – sharing best practice**

**Buckinghamshire's 'Excellence in AF partnerships' project**

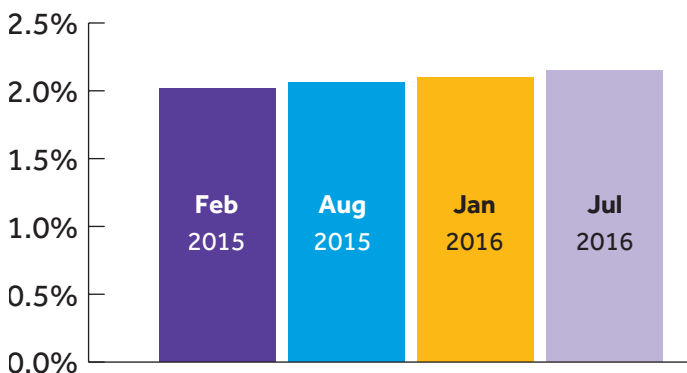
**What was the aim of the project?**

To work collaboratively across the health economy to deliver a step change in AF detection and the number of high risk patients receiving anticoagulation.

**What was the outcome of the project?**

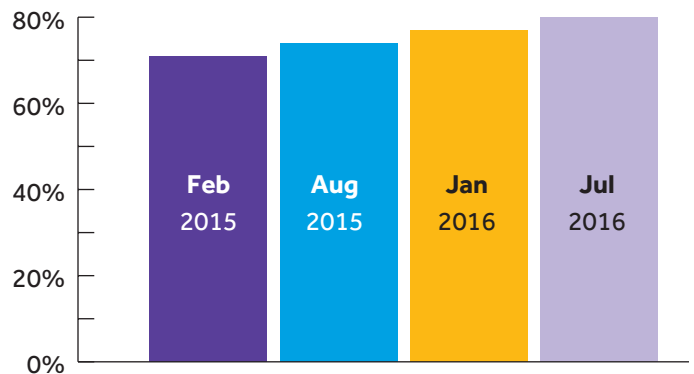
To date, initiatives to increase the rate of AF detection have resulted in 1000 more diagnoses of AF, increasing prevalence from 2% to 2.15% against a national average of 1.6%.

**AF prevalence in Buckinghamshire**

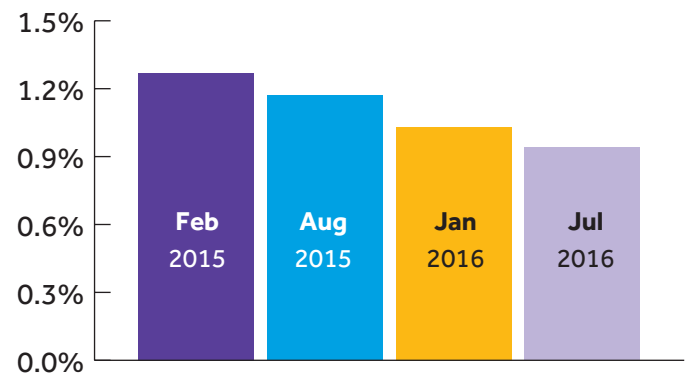


Between February 2015 and July 2016 the number of high risk patients receiving oral anticoagulants in Buckinghamshire increased from 70% to 80%, with a concurrent decrease in the expected risk of stroke.

**% of high risk patients in Buckinghamshire receiving oral anticoagulants**



**Buckinghamshire expected stroke risk - % of high risk patients**



**Who was involved?**

The AF work stream in Buckinghamshire has involved all sectors of the local health economy including:

- Chiltern and Aylesbury Vale CCGs
- Local GP practices
- Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Thames Valley Strategic Clinical Network

# Details of the project

## Opportunistic screening and GP education

- Buckinghamshire CCGs have encouraged practices to integrate opportunistic pulse checking into every patient contact (over 65) through education programmes, a 'Feel the Pulse' campaign and a quality improvement scheme. This led to an increase in AF prevalence from 2% to 2.15% between February 2015 and July 2016.
- With the support of the Medicines Optimisation team, GPs are actively using GRASP-AF data and the targeted feedback provided to practices twice a year, to deliver improvements.
- The Cardiology and Stroke Unit at Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust have introduced a supportive feedback scheme to advise GPs when AF has not been adequately managed, or a stroke has occurred in a patient with known AF who did not receive anticoagulants.

## Pharmacist-led clinic

- Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust has introduced an award-winning Pharmacist-led clinic that offers patients appropriate anticoagulation treatment in line with clinical need and patient preference.
- All patients with AF who may be suitable for a NOAC are referred to this clinic. A team of specialist pharmacists, led by a consultant pharmacist, offer patients a thorough 30-minute consultation to discuss the risks and benefits of anticoagulation.
- Two weeks after the first prescription, patients have a follow-up telephone conversation to discuss any side effects or concerns. Feedback from patients and GPs has proven extremely positive.

## Warfarin monitoring

CCGs have recommissioned warfarin monitoring services under an AQP scheme to improve access to warfarin, ensure consistency and equity of service and ensure high quality assurance in the anticoagulation of patients with Warfarin. There are now multiple anticoagulation services across Buckinghamshire. The service specifications are comprehensive and detailed performance information is produced by providers each quarter.

## What impact is the project having?

As well as delivering a step change in both AF detection and anticoagulation rates, the collective efforts of the local health economy have greatly raised awareness of the impact of AF and the importance of AF management.

Building on the progress made so far, the CCGs, together with Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust and Oxford AHSN will undertake a project to identify other high-risk patients with AF who are not currently prescribed warfarin or a NOAC. The treatment gap will be addressed through practice-based, pharmacist-led review.

Together we can conquer stroke

**Stroke**  
association