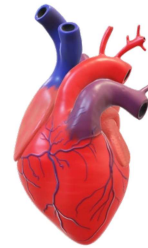


The SAFER Feasibility Study – Screening for Atrial Fibrillation with ECG to Reduce stroke

A big **thank you** for taking part in the SAFER Feasibility Study. This was the initial stage of a large research programme about screening for **atrial fibrillation** (AF) to reduce the risk of stroke.

The research programme is aiming to find out if:

- Implementing a national screening programme for AF is possible;
- It will prevent strokes; and,
- Is good value for money for the NHS



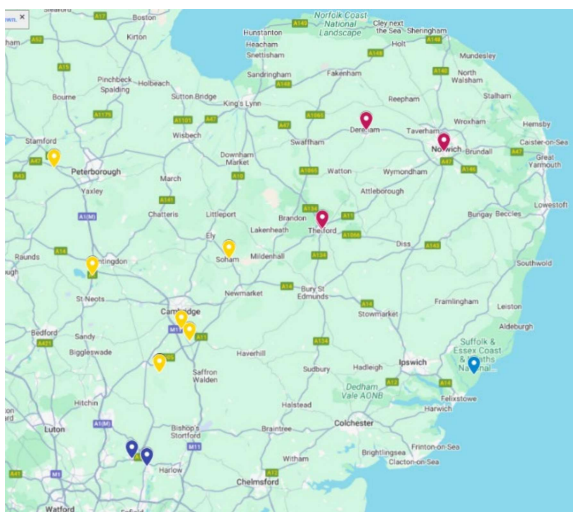
AF is a heart rhythm issue where your heartbeat is not regular. It is more common as we get older and is a major risk factor for stroke, responsible for approximately 1 in 5 strokes, but this risk can be significantly reduced with anticoagulation therapy.

Study design



Patients were aged 65 years and over and not on anticoagulants at the time they enrolled in the study.

All study participants were invited to screen for AF using a hand-held single lead ECG device. They used the device at home multiple times per day, across a number of weeks.



Can you spot your GP practice on this map?



A total of 13 GP practices were involved across the East of England.

The SAFER Feasibility Study proved successful, in that patients were willing to take part and happy using the ECG device at home. This was also supported by GP practices.

As a result of this, the programme moved on to the main trial which has completed recruited in over 89,000 patients, and completed AF screening in over 23,000 participants. This makes it [the largest randomised controlled trial of screening for AF](#).

What happens next?

The Feasibility Study is complete and there is no further study activities required.



The main trial is now in the follow-up period and will continue to collect relevant electronic health data on participants until early **2028**. The data will then be analysed and the results published.

In the meantime, please visit website <https://www.safer.phpc.cam.ac.uk/trial-news/> to see the results from the feasibility study and to keep updated with any programme news and publications.

Feedback

"I've had really lovely feedback from patients who have taken part in SAFER [...] **they are all saying how straightforward the device is and how much they have enjoyed taking part** – all unprompted! The lady I have just come off the phone with told me she thought the study was 'absolutely marvelous'!"

Research Nurse

*I was delighted...I'd been having problems with breathing etc., having tests and things. And when I took part in this, I hoped it would show up something. It's shown up that I've got **Atrial Fibrillation**, never been discovered before. That's the plus as far as I'm concerned.*

Study Participant

Thank you!

Finally, all of us on the SAFER team want to **thank you** again for your invaluable contributions to the SAFER Feasibility study. We cannot do our research without the help of GP practices and the participants who volunteer to take part, and we very much appreciate the effort it takes to conduct research alongside running a busy GP practice.