



News Release

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Registered Charity Number 1122442

AFA backs campaign calling for more of the 1.2 million warfarin users to have access to self-monitoring

TV personality Kate Garraway launches The Personal Touch campaign

Burgess Hill, UK 28th June 2011: AFA is backing calls for increased access to self-monitoring for the 1.2 million warfarin users in the UK. New research has revealed that nine out of ten patients on warfarin want to be more involved or consulted in their care decisions; plus more than half of those not using a monitor did not know self-monitoring exists.

The research has been carried out by the Atrial Fibrillation Association (AFA), AntiCoagulation Europe (ACE) and Roche. Currently less than two per cent of patients in the UK benefit from self-monitoring, despite the fact that it has been shown to cut the risk of death by nearly two-fifths and more than halve the risk of strokes.

Kate Garraway, TV presenter and *Strictly Come Dancing* star, today launches The Personal Touch campaign, with campaign partners, the AFA, ACE and Roche. The Personal Touch campaign launches, as results from a new survey reveal that more than two-thirds of warfarin users find regular clinic appointments inconvenient, yet more than half of those not using a monitor did not even know that self-monitoring was an option.

Although 42 per cent of survey respondents had no problems taking warfarin, and a further 29 per cent were reassured by taking it, 18 per cent wanted more freedom, control or a way to save time. Also, over half of those using a monitor wanted to have more control over their condition. A separate study has also shown that 77 per cent of patients prefer patient self-testing to the usual model of care and more than eight out of ten found it straightforward.

Eve Knight, Chief Executive of ACE said, "*The Personal Touch* campaign is in tune with the NHS reform agenda's aim to put the patient at the heart of care, giving them more



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choice and control. The Department of Health recently highlighted self-monitoring for warfarin users as a prime example of the modern NHS coping with the millions of people with chronic conditions⁷, yet too often we hear that our members are not able to get access to self-monitoring. We call today for healthcare professionals to give people who are suitable for self-monitoring the chance to do so – and let them benefit from the increased control over their lives.”

Trudie Lobban, Chief Executive of the AFA, said: “We are delighted to support The Personal Touch campaign and call for more awareness and access to self-monitoring, which we believe can significantly improve the lives of many people with atrial fibrillation – and other conditions requiring anti-clotting drugs – by reducing the risks of complications and allowing the freedom for people on long-term clotting drugs to test themselves wherever they are. We call on healthcare professionals to ensure that people who are suitable for self-monitoring are offered this as an option, and are provided with all necessary support to ensure they can benefit from it.”

Kate Garraway said, “As someone with close relatives who are on warfarin for the long-term, this campaign is very personal to me. Self-monitoring could benefit hundreds of thousands of people in the UK like my uncle and grandmother, by giving them control over their lives and the freedom to self-test at home or wherever they are. Patients would have less worry over what they eat or about going away. Self-monitoring also helps to ensure that they continue to have the right dose of anti-clotting drugs at all times. In short, it has the potential to deliver huge benefits to long-term warfarin users, both in terms of freedom, improved management of their condition and peace of mind.”

Steve Davidson, Chairman of the Clinical Leaders of Thrombosis (CLOT) said: “Self-testing is a win-win situation for the patient, the healthcare professional, and the NHS. Self-testing has been shown to improve compliance and outcomes, giving patients control over their therapy and lives, and reducing clinic waiting and travelling times. The results of this new survey show that there is a missed opportunity for patients and the NHS, who could benefit more from self-testing.”



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Sixty-four year old long-term warfarin user, Peter Birtles, says, “I started self-testing over ten years ago and it dramatically changed my life. I found it incredibly disruptive previously to have to make frequent visits to the clinic – it was difficult for my job, and as a keen amateur mountaineer, it also restricted my ability to travel and pursue my hobbies. I’m delighted that there is now a new self-testing online support tool - CoaguChek® Academy - which helps patients get to grips with self-testing, bringing new freedom to those hundreds of thousands of others, just as it has done to me.”

Allison Rossiter, Director of Point of Care at Roche said: “The Personal Touch campaign is about giving patients the option to self-monitor if appropriate for them, and self-monitoring is a vital part of a modern NHS, using innovations in technology to cope with the increasing number of people with long-term conditions, and putting patients more in control of how their condition is managed. Self-monitoring with the CoaguChek® XS meter gives people a quick, convenient way to test wherever they are, and enables them to tailor their dose depending on individual needs.”

Self-monitoring may be suitable for up to half of the people taking long term warfarin with conditions including atrial fibrillation, mechanical heart valves, deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism. Warfarin patients who would like to self-monitor should talk to their healthcare professional.

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Notes to Editors:

1. For further information please contact: Jo Jerrome at jo@atrialfibrillation.org.uk
2. The AFA website is at <http://www.afa.org.uk>
3. To find out more about patient self-monitoring and the CoaguChek® XS meter, either call 0808 100 7666, visit www.coaguheck.co.uk or log on to CoaguChek® Academy (Roche’s new e-learning tool) at www.coaguheckacademy.com
4. For further information please contact: Hazel Clarke, Roche Diagnostics, tel 01444 256000. Email hazel.clarke@roche.com