

Health Services: Males

Mr Virendra Sharma: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps he is taking to ensure cardiovascular disease in men is diagnosed as early as possible; [84285]

(2) what steps he is taking to ensure that type 2 diabetes in men is diagnosed as early as possible. [84286]

Mr Simon Burns: The NHS Health Check programme is a national public health programme for people in

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England aged 40-74. The purpose of the programme is to identify an individual's risk of heart disease, stroke, kidney disease and diabetes, and for that risk to be managed through appropriate follow up.

The programme is aimed at tackling inequalities, including inequalities in gender. Primary care trusts are, therefore, commissioning programmes which aim to reach those who are not in touch with formal healthcare, including programmes to increase the take up of the NHS Health Check among men.

In addition, there are a number of strands of work to ensure cardiovascular disease and diabetes are recognised and treated early in all patients, including:

Raising awareness of the symptoms of stroke through the ACT Fast campaign so that people get to hospital quicker and receive life saving treatment.

Use of statins (cholesterol lowering drugs). Around 6-8 million people are receiving statins, saving an estimated 10,000 lives every year. These are now also available over the counter rather than solely by prescription enabling more people to benefit.

Tackling atrial fibrillation (AF). NHS Improvement is working with general practitioners (GPs) to ensure a systematic approach to the identification, diagnosis and optimal management of patients with AF; developing clear guidelines on anticoagulation to ensure that patients who have AF are appropriately anticoagulated, and continuing to promote opportunistic, screening for AF with the Atrial Fibrillation Association and the Stroke Association.

The guidelines and algorithm published by NHS Diabetes and the Royal College of GPs in March 2011 will help GPs diagnose diabetes accurately for every patient. The new audit tools that have also been developed will help GPs to share information and look at similar cases to help to resolve even the most difficult of cases.

GP training includes acquiring competence in recognising and managing appropriate aspects of diabetes.

Full account:

http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111205/text/111205w0004.htm#111205w0004.htm_sbhd63