

RESEARCH NEWS – April 2018

The GARFIELD-AF study, which a good number of patients from the practice had previously kindly been involved with, has come to the stage where the results are beginning to be published. The first paper is available re read online at <http://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/8/1/e018905>

This recent paper highlights how anti-coagulation (blood thinning) treatment has become used more frequently in patients with atrial fibrillation (AF) over time from 2011 to 2016, showing greater adherence with NICE guidelines in clinical practice. It demonstrates how this has been helped by a slight reduction in the proportion of people on the traditional warfarin medication and a larger increase in those on the newer NOAC (novel oral anti-coagulant) medications.

This information helps guide clinical use and allocation of resources for the health service - for example warfarin requires monitoring with staff and test costs, whereas NOAC medication is significantly more expensive but without the monitoring. Future outcomes from the study hope to include further insight into treatment outcomes for patients with AF on these treatments, or those without and blood thinning treatment, such as reduce risk of stroke and any complications from the treatment.

The benefit of this trial over many other trials with AF is that it is based on real world patients in real time, so includes people with multiple other diagnoses and medications. Most medication trials have quite restrictive inclusion criteria and shorter follow-up times. These research studies in the community add really valuable additional evidence to help doctors and nurses in the community provide the best possible care to their patients. We would like to thank all those involved in the research we do at the practice to help achieve this.

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