Exercise promotion is a national strategic goal for the UK government. Exercise is one of the few permitted activities during national lockdown from COVID-19 pandemic.

Current safe promotion of exercise and dedicated prevention/sports cardiology clinic is limited to London.

Requirement for greater access nationwide for patients with heart disease to a tailored prescription of safe exercise.

Time to turn policy attention to address health inequalities between the north of England who have a 20% higher mortality rate and the south.1

Objectives

• To initiate and lead an NHS prevention and sports cardiology service in the north of England, the first of its type in the UK.

• To promote the beneficial effects of safe exercise among general population with cardiovascular disease leading to longevity.

• To increase confidence of patients living with heart conditions.

• To seek research collaborations across the UK with academic, healthcare, industry and charitable organizations.

Methods

• Manchester, the ‘northern powerhouse’, is a suitably large conurbation, which can provide an easily accessible base for patients across the north of England.

• I independently sought opportunities to establish myself in Manchester as a senior lecturer (research post at the University) and NHS consultant in inherited cardiac conditions and sports cardiology.

• Multiple stakeholders were identified that can benefit from service e.g. Manchester Institute of Health and Performance (only institute of its type in the UK), Foundation Trust, charitable/academic bodies (Nuffield/BHF) and sports organizations.

Results

I have acquired and utilized skills from the ELP to be appointed Working Lead for Inherited Cardiac Conditions & Sports Cardiology at Manchester NHS Foundation Trust (largest trust in UK).

I have also been appointed Lead of prevention, rehabilitation and sports cardiology at the Manchester Institute of Health and Performance.

I have established a dedicated weekly clinic in this subspecialty and am taking national NHS referrals for the exercise management of patients (athletes & non-athletes) living with heart conditions that may predispose them to sudden cardiac death, but wish to stay active.

Background

• Manchester, the ‘northern powerhouse’, is a suitably large conurbation, which can provide an easily accessible base for patients across the north of England.

• Multiple stakeholders were identified that can benefit from service e.g. Manchester Institute of Health and Performance (only institute of its type in the UK), Foundation Trust, charitable/academic bodies (Nuffield/BHF) and sports organizations.

Conclusions

1. This project has laid the foundations to promote safe exercise among patients with cardiovascular disease in the north of England, and beyond.


3. A healthy, productive workforce is a path to prosperity for the whole UK in a post-COVID era too.

References

1. The rising north–south divide in health in the UK, Lancet August 19, 2017

2. European Society of Sports Cardiology Recommendations, 2020

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