

XXXXXX MP
House of Commons
London
SW15 0AA

Dear XXXXXX

I would like to take this opportunity to draw your attention to the 'Know Your Pulse' national initiative led by Arrhythmia Alliance.

As you may be aware, Arrhythmia Alliance (A-A), *The Heart Rhythm Charity* (www.heartrhythmcharity.org.uk) is a coalition of patients, patient groups, charities, medical professionals and allied professionals. These groups all work together under the A-A umbrella to promote better understanding, diagnosis, treatment and quality of life for all those affected by cardiac arrhythmias.

The Know Your Pulse campaign aims to raise public and medical awareness of the pulse as one of the most effective ways of identifying potential cardiac arrhythmias. A-A is working towards routine pulse checks in GP surgeries.

What is the point of pulse checks?

- 2007 Department of Health figures estimated there were 600,000+ diagnosed Atrial Fibrillation (AF – the most common arrhythmia) patients in England. Today this figure is suspected to be closer to 1 million and growing.
- 200,000 newly diagnosed AF patients per year in the UK, and this is rising due to an aging population and increased numbers surviving conditions which predispose them to AF.
- 100,000 Sudden Cardiac Deaths each year in the UK, leading to more deaths than breast cancer, lung cancer and AIDS combined.
- The National Audit of the Organisation of Services for Falls and Bone Health of Older People, found serious gaps in the aftercare of services for those who have had a fall and highlighted that 50% of Primary Care Organisations do not check for heart conditions, which can cause fainting.
- AF consumes 1 % of the total NHS annual budget.
- At the age of 40, we all have a 1 in 4 life time risk of developing AF.
- Reduction in stroke (18% of strokes being associated with AF¹-the most common heart rhythm disturbance).
- **The simplest way to detect an arrhythmia is to feel the pulse.**

This is why Arrhythmia Alliance is calling on the Government to ensure pulse checks are taken as routine when people visit their GP.

Please support the *Know Your Pulse* campaign by:

- **Signing EDM 255 ARRHYTHMIA ALLIANCE KNOW YOUR PULSE INITIATIVE.**
- **Attending the Parliamentary Launch on 7th June 12.15-15.00, Churchill Room, House of Commons.**
- **Writing to the CEO of the NHS organisation within your constituency to ask if manual pulse checks have been incorporated into the region's 40-74 year old Health Checks or in the annual flu inoculation programme? If so, is there evidence of the number of arrhythmia patients identified?**
- **Encouraging your constituents to visit the Know Your Pulse website to download a free Pulse Check Card www.knowyourpulse.org**

Thank you in advance for your commitment to this important initiative.

Yours sincerely,