



appg  
on heart  
disease

# 10 Recommendations to improve care and transform lives.



- 1.** Health Education England should work with heart failure specialists to improve awareness, knowledge and understanding of the condition in general medical colleagues, including GPs. This should cover the need to consider the history of heart disease in the patient, and their family.
- 2.** All Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) should commission cost-effective NTproBNP testing to support the diagnosis of heart failure. NHS England should consider how CCGs can be incentivised to do this.
- 3.** NHS England and Health Education England should take urgent action to implement the recommendations in the Strategic Review of Cardiac Physiology Services on meeting workforce challenges, to ensure that demand for echocardiography can be met.
- 4.** Clinicians should ensure that when patients are diagnosed they are provided with information about heart failure, how it may impact on their lives, and how they can help manage this, in a form that is suitable for them. Patients should also be provided with a single point of contact for any questions and concerns.
- 5.** All patients admitted to hospital for heart failure should receive early specialist input to their care. NHS England and NHS Improvement should seek further improvements in the percentage of patients receiving specialist input through the Best Practice Tariff for heart failure and expand it to include other measures such as follow up from the multi-disciplinary team (MDT).
- 6.** Health Education England should work with the Royal College of Nursing, Nursing and Midwifery Council and others to build a picture of the number, location and qualifications of heart failure specialist nurses (HFSNs) and other cardiac nurses treating people with heart failure; and urgently develop plans to ensure that the workforce is sufficient to meet demand.
- 7.** All CCGs should commission heart failure services centred on MDTs including HFSNs, to provide an integrated approach to care. NHS England should consider how CCGs can be incentivised to do this.
- 8.** All CCGs should commission exercise-based cardiac rehabilitation programmes suitable for heart failure patients and increase referrals to them. NHS England should expand its proposal for a Best Practice Tariff for cardiac rehabilitation to include appropriate patients admitted to hospital with heart failure.
- 9.** As part of the Government's commitment to offer people approaching the end of life honest discussions, Health Education England should work with professional bodies to ensure all those caring for heart failure patients receive training in advanced communication skills.
- 10.** As part of the Government's commitment to offer this opportunity to everyone approaching the end of life, CCGs and providers should ensure that all heart failure patients can make informed personalised decisions about their care using advanced care planning.