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Country: **Belgium**

Titel of the project: **Are EU Parliamentarians at risk for stroke from atrial fibrillation?**

Project details

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Belgian Stroke Council / STROKE

Award amount: €50,000

The Belgian Stroke Council in collaboration with STROKE will screen the 736 members of the European Parliament for the presence of atrial fibrillation (AF). This will raise awareness amongst politicians and lay people about AF, a major risk for stroke. Information will be provided about AF and stroke prevention.

Why? Atrial fibrillation (AF) is an important preventable cause of ischemic stroke. Despite the availability of very effective prevention and treatment options, awareness amongst the general population is poor about the importance of AF detection and its relationship with stroke. This lack of awareness leads to potentially avoidable disability and deaths. The level of attention from politicians and health care providers towards stroke prevention and AF is equally limited. It is important to raise awareness amongst health care providers and politicians because they set research agendas and define policy for improving public health. Through a screening programme amongst European Parliament members, we want to raise their awareness on AF and stroke, improving Public Health. How? The Belgian Stroke Council (BSC) (an organisation of professionals aiming to improve stroke care in Belgium) and STROKE (the Belgian stroke patients organisation) will perform a routine electrocardiogram (ECG) on all 736 EU parliamentarians before or after a session of the European Parliament in Brussels. They will be invited to participate in the screening through an e-mail campaign. They will serve as an example for the public. The actual measurement of the heart rhythm by ECG will be performed, privately, in the European Parliament hall on a specific date. During the procedure, brochures and oral information will be provided about AF, cardiovascular risk factors and stroke. As 11% of the EU parliamentarians are older than 65 years, we expect to detect AF in a few members. If AF is detected, the EU parliamentarian will be discreetly referred to their general practitioner for further management. A press conference and a press release to all major European news agencies and media outlets will accompany the event. A podcast with medical explanations and a video from the session at the EU Parliament will be posted on the BSC, STROKE and 1M1M websites.

Audience

Type

- AF Patients
- Healthcare professionals
- General public
- Politicians

Location

Belgium, Europe