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Country: **Canada**

Titel of the project: **Creating an Internet Tool to Empower Patients to Choose Their
Best Stroke Prevention Strategy**

Project details

Stephen LaHaye

Queen's University

Award amount: €100,000

We will develop a Website and iPad Application to empower patients to participate in their healthcare, guiding them through to support doctors as they assist patients in choosing their best treatment strategy.

Nearly 1 in 4 Canadians will develop Atrial Fibrillation, an abnormal heart rhythm, in their lifetime. People with this condition have a 5-fold increase in their risk of stroke. In fact, about one-third of all patients with Atrial Fibrillation will eventually have a stroke, and for many, having a stroke is the worst thing imaginable--even worse than death. Treatment with "blood thinners" can substantially reduce your risk of ever having a stroke. Some options include Aspirin or Warfarin (rat poison). However, these "blood thinners" are a double edged sword; while anticoagulants "thin the blood" in order to prevent strokes, these same medications may also expose you to the potential risk of bleeding, including bleeding into the brain, which is another important cause of stroke. And then there is the associated nuisance of always having to monitor your blood to make sure that it is neither too thin nor too thick. Fortunately, there are newer medications available which are at least as effective as Warfarin at preventing stroke, and which are also at least as safe as Warfarin in terms of the risk of bleeding. With these medications, you never need to have blood tests done. Unfortunately, these newer medications can be expensive. So, once diagnosed with Atrial Fibrillation, there are lots of things to consider in determining your best course of action. What is your risk of stroke? Do you even need to take medications? And if so, how do the various options compare in terms of their effectiveness in preventing strokes? What is your risk of bleeding if you take these medications? How many bleeds are you willing to endure in order to prevent one stroke? Can you afford to take the newer medications? Can you afford not to? We intend to develop a Web Site (and iPhone and iPad Applications) that will: • Support your doctor in helping you to answer these questions; and • Empower you to make the best choice for yourself. On the one hand, your doctor's job is challenging. Our Web Site (and iPhone App) will allow your doctor to accurately and efficiently estimate your risk of stroke and bleeding. Based upon these risks, we can then recommend a treatment option to your doctor. On the other hand, your job is, in many ways, much more difficult. Optimal decision making should be both informed and consistent with your personal values. As a patient, your job is to consider your doctor's advice. But this advice must be considered in the context of your personal situation. Only you can decide whether the potential benefits of a medication can outweigh the disadvantages, be they side effects, cost, or inconvenience. Our Web Site (and iPad App) will guide you through the process of creating a personalized treatment plan that is based upon your risk of stroke, as well as your particular attitudes, values, and life circumstances.

Audience

Type

- AF Patients
- Healthcare professionals
- Carers of AF Patients

Location

Canada, North America