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Country: **Canada**

Titel of the project: **Skip a Beat? - Do you have atrial fibrillation?**

## Project details

### **Feng Chang**

Gateway Rural Health Research Institute

Award amount: €100,000

This community-based project aims to increase awareness and early detection for atrial fibrillation with the application of portable technology at local pharmacies; and improve access to education resources in rural and underserved areas through in-community training for ambassadors for atrial fibrillation and related stroke risk.

Huron-Perth-Bruce-Grey region in Ontario Canada hosts the third largest group of seniors in Canada and consequently, the prevalence of chronic diseases is high. Working with the local Gateway Rural Health Research Institute, this project aims to take on the dual challenge of inadequate early detection for atrial fibrillation, and lack of education resources in rural communities for atrial fibrillation and associated stroke risk. Being community driven with a high degree of local engagement is a unique attribute for Gateway. Part 1 - Atrial Fibrillation Screen-on-the-Fly: During part one, three undergraduate pharmacy students will be trained to provide atrial fibrillation screening clinics in local community pharmacies during their co-op work terms. The students will work under the supervision of licensed pharmacists to provide vital sign assessment, administer a short self-test questionnaire, and conduct an ECG screening test with the use of an ECG portable monitor. The event dates will be advertised in local media as well as through local health care and community groups. Patients can be self or professional-referred, or seen on a drop-in basis. Patients deemed at high risk will be referred to their family physician or family health team for assessment and diagnosis. The pharmacist or pharmacy student under supervision of the pharmacist will communicate relevant data collected during the screening process to the physician. Follow-up will be completed via telephone. For evaluation, screening clinic utilization and referral data will be tracked as well as outcomes from the resulting physician appointment. Part 2 - Atrial Fibrillation Stroke Risk Ambassadors Training Program: During part two, an educational training program and resource toolkit on atrial fibrillation symptoms, management, and associated stroke risk will be developed with input from physician, pharmacist, nurse, and patient. A series of six to ten training programs will be delivered in the region. Patients identified through part one diagnosed with atrial fibrillation, other patients already with atrial fibrillation, family members, caregivers, or interested public members will be invited to attend. These will be held in places of easy access such as churches, community center, or local markets. For the people who complete the program, they will be invited to participate as an Atrial Fibrillation Stroke Risk Ambassador and asked to deliver at least one related event within their own community, in the format of their choice. They will have support of the original trainers and access to the toolkit. This will enable them to fully apply their creativity and make use of their in-depth local knowledge, as well as existing social networks within these communities. Follow-up will be completed six months after their attendance at the training program via telephone. For evaluation, training program attendance, resulting educational events, and toolkit utilization will be tracked. Attendees will also be asked for feedback.

## **Audience**

### **Type**

- AF Patients
- Healthcare professionals
- Carers of AF Patients
- General public

### **Location**

Canada, North America