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Country: **Europe**

Titel of the project: **"Act Fast on AF"**

Project details

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The Stroke Alliance for Europe

Award amount: €100,000

Using our European wide network of stroke organisations, will publicise AF across European countries, creating greater public awareness of this condition: increasing diagnosis and more effective treatment of patients. Additionally, we will also empower our members to successfully lobby for better provision for patients affected by AF.

SAFE intends in 2011 to undertake a major piece of work to empower our member organisations raise awareness of AF amongst the public in their countries, whilst also lobbying for better provision from healthcare systems. In 2010, SAFE undertook a significant piece of research into AF. This looked at factors such as data available for AF across Europe; treatment options and patient materials available; evidence of guidelines and clinician adherence to these; and the economic burden of stroke across the continent. The report exposed some very worrying information; but chiefly the sheer lack of data available at all was of the greatest concern. Additionally the research uncovered that trends indicated that AF currently affected about two percent of the population across Europe, but that it was set to double in the next fifty years. In spite of this concern, the overwhelming picture that emerged was an obscure one, with patient groups feeling in the dark about how to get information about AF in their country, and unsure about the availability of materials, guidance and information in their own countries. The bulk of the work will be undertaken by a full time employee based in Brussels. Their role will be as follows: • To create networks with other relevant pan European patient groups to undertake effective joint EU level lobbying for better provision around AF and underlying cardiovascular risk factors (With groups such as The Atrial Fibrillation Association, World Heart Federation, Anticoagulation Europe, European Heart Network). • Co-ordinate SAFE members into a unified force able to carry out synergised activity across Europe • Be responsible for the development of media materials, toolkits and guidance for members to run their own national campaigns • Monitor and drive activity amongst member organisations. 60% of delegates at a recent conference SAFE held to disseminate our research to patient groups felt concern at the lack of knowledge about AF amongst clinicians in their countries. Materials will be produced and tested which groups can use to send to clinicians and other stakeholders in their country to raise awareness with them of AF, and the need to swift and appropriate treatment. Looking at public awareness, a great deal of the media outreach undertaken will be simply around raising awareness of what AF is, (including opportunities to reduce stroke risks and informing about treatment options) with activity looking at an irregular heartbeat, and driving patients to visit their doctors. Lobbying toolkits will also be produced which members can follow to approach policymakers in their own countries. In 2011 SAFE hopes to undertake another separate piece of research which will be looking at the gaps identified by the existing research, and also delving deeper into the economic burden of AF. Whilst the two pieces of work are not co-dependent, the new research when it is launched will provide another opportunity to undertake even greater media outreach.

Audience

Type

- Healthcare professionals
- General public
- Key opinion leaders and politicians

Location

Europe