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Country: **Italy**

Titel of the project: **Prevent a stroke! Information campaign: lifestyles and proper use of drugs**

## Project details

### **Daniela Poli**

Award amount: €50,000

In Tuscany, there are laws for the management of patients who are undergoing therapy for the prevention of unexpected stroke. A thorough information effort shall be made on patients in the Province of Florence who are affected by Atrial Fibrillation, through the dissemination of informational material during face to face meetings with staff prepared ad hoc.

It is estimated that in Tuscany there are about 40,000 people undergoing oral anticoagulation treatment, 2/3 of which are not monitored by specially equipped facilities, and that over 50% of these are being treated for the prevention of stroke since they are affected by Atrial Fibrillation (AF). On the other hand, it is known that the fear of bleeding risk and the management problems of this therapy signify that many patients with AF do not receive an adequate prophylaxis for stroke. In January 2008, the Tuscany Region has adopted a Resolution (No. 46 dated 28/01/2008) with the aim to define the minimum level of safety and quality necessary for the correct administration of this therapy for all patients. The cornerstones of this provision are the written transmission of information (laboratory values and therapeutic prescription) and patient education. Unfortunately, this provision of law is only a guideline, that does not envisage penalties for non-compliant health care workers, mentioning these behaviors but does not bind them with concrete actions. Therefore, 2 years from the issue of the Resolution, AIPA Florence has conducted a survey among 200 patients with AF to evaluate the impact of this regulation on the real life of citizens. The result from this survey show that 93% of the patients are not receiving a prescribed therapy program. In addition, most of them (60%) make the therapy adjustment alone and have not received the information necessary for the correct management of the treatment. This increases the risk of bleeding on the one hand, but it also increases the risk of a lack of efficacy of the therapy in the prevention of stroke. Therefore it was considered necessary to carry out a program of a widespread dissemination of information pertaining to the prevention of stroke and of good therapy management, in order to achieve adequate application of the existing regulations. All those persons affected by AF and who reside in the Province of Florence will benefit from these projects. These patients will be seen at clinics so that blood samples can be taken. They will also be asked to go to the waiting rooms of outpatient cardiology clinics to be addressed by staff specially trained to disseminate information material on the embolic risks of AF, the correction of risk factors for stroke and on the treatments that are currently available. Furthermore, the material provided by the Resolution of the Region of Tuscany, which is aimed at persons who are receiving oral anticoagulant treatment, shall be disseminated in order to facilitate the smooth management of the treatment. Upon the delivery of materials, a questionnaire shall be submitted to the patient to evaluate the following: 1. if anti-thrombotic prophylaxis has been recommended, 2. if the prophylaxis is being conducted correctly according to the procedures laid down by the aforementioned Regional Resolution, 3. if control measures are being implemented for the adequate control of arterial blood pressure and other risk factors. Evaluation phase: After 6 months from this intervention, specially trained staff shall visit the patients in the same locations to evaluate, by means of a verification questionnaire, what were the changes after the information campaign. In particular, information will be collected on the 3 points mentioned above and the results obtained will be forwarded to the competent health authorities.

## **Audience**

### **Type**

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### **Location**

Italy, Europe