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Country: **Jamaica**

Titel of the project: **Prevent Stroke –Know Your Heart Rhythm**

## Project details

### **Deborah Chen**

The Heart Foundation of Jamaica

Award amount: €100,000

The objective of The Heart Foundation of Jamaica is to fight cardiovascular disease (CVD) and stroke in Jamaica by focusing on prevention which includes screening for risk factors and offering health education programs. A campaign on Atrial Fibrillation (AF) will assist persons in identifying their risk for atrial fibrillation-related stroke.

The Prevent Stroke – Know Your Heart Rhythm campaign is a wake-up call for persons who may be at risk for AF-related stroke and don't even know it. With Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) being the leading cause of death and disability in Jamaica there are many burdens this causes. The effect of this includes increased mortality rate, low productivity, economic and emotional strain on family units and a strain on the public health care sector. In the long term untreated AF-related stroke will lead to the loss in quality of life and the general socio-economic decline of the country. The Prevent Stroke – Know Your Heart Rhythm campaign aims to raise public awareness across Jamaica about AF-related stroke, through screening, and extensive media efforts. In order to draw attention to this campaign, a media launch, public forum and aggressive advertising will be used to educate the public about how common cardiovascular disease, and AF related- stroke are in Jamaica. This will get the attention of the media and the public about the campaign, explain why it is important and what to expect for the next year. Along with the media campaign, increased screening would be conducted island wide for AF to determine how many persons are at risk. The Heart Foundation of Jamaica routinely engages in island wide screening for the risk factors of cardiovascular disease and stroke. During these screenings cases have been seen with AF. These persons have been referred to our medical clinics for further evaluation and follow up. Although our screening has been useful in identifying AF, there is much more that needs to be done, as the public health facilities are burdened with cases and have wait lists which are far too long to effectively address the problem. By increasing our equipment for mobile teams, more teams will be able to go across the island and reach more persons within the next year. By making our message continuous, more people will be educated, and remember the importance of being tested for AF and take the necessary steps to prevent and correct this. Prevent Stroke – Know Your Heart Rhythm campaign spreads advertising for the period of one (1) year in 4 phases. Each phase consists of 4 months in which there will be newsprint, television and radio advertisements in the most popular newspapers, television slots and radio stations on the island. This will ensure that there is maximum reach and that all corners of the island are covered. To ensure that persons understand what AF-related stroke is, educational brochures will be printed and distributed. These brochures will be distributed at meetings, churches, health talks, emergency cardiac care courses, island wide mobile screening, screening at the Foundation's office, medical symposiums and other events held by The Heart Foundation of Jamaica and conferences attended and hosted.

## **Audience**

### **Type**

- AF Patients
- Carers of AF Patients
- General public
- Persons who do not know they are at risk for AF-related strokes

### **Location**

Jamaica, North America