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Country: **Mexico**

Titel of the project: **DISCOVER TO PREVENT.**

## Project details

### **Marco Lara Mendoza**

Award amount: €100,000

The idea is to set up atrial fibrillation detection units for the prevention of stroke, through electrocardiographic studies, for those patients who have this arrhythmia. Once the diagnosis has been established, the patients will be sent to a private or public doctor of their choice.

Atrial fibrillation is a change to the heart rhythm (increased frequency), and although it mainly occurs in the elderly, there are increasing numbers of young people with this disorder. The patients may not have any symptoms between each individual episode, but the memory of the arrhythmia may limit the patient's activities. In many patients the arrhythmia may be clinically silent until a serious consequence occurs, which is often difficult to reverse, such as a stroke or decompensated cardiac insufficiency. This reduces the quality of life of the patients. The latter is similar to that of those patients who have suffered myocardial infarction and survived. When an incident of atrial fibrillation lasts for more than 48 hours there is a greater risk of intra-atrial thrombi forming. Thrombi in the atrium can migrate through the blood vessels causing thromboembolic phenomena, which can affect the central nervous system, causing cerebrovascular illnesses. They may also be peripheral, producing acute arterial obstruction. Current treatment of patients with atrial fibrillation is through vitamin K inhibitors, however this medication is only prescribed to two thirds of patients due to the risk of haemorrhage and the need to carry out very frequent coagulation tests in order to be able to prescribe the optimum dose of medication. This problem is very frequent in elderly patients who also have concomitant illnesses requiring other medication which can interfere with the treatment. There are currently new medications available which have proven to be more effective than the existing drugs; they do not require coagulation monitoring and they can be administered side-by-side with the majority of medication required for patients with heart disease. The objective of this project is to carry out electrocardiographic studies without cost on people aged over 60 or those younger than 60 who present symptoms. The project which we are presenting is based on the setting up units for taking ECGs, for which interpretive electrocardiograph equipment was purchased, and these will be operated by GPs who will receive training on taking ECGs as well as on the detection of atrial fibrillation. Once the diagnosis of atrial fibrillation has been established, the patients will be sent to the private or public doctor of their choice. Promotion on the television, radio and in local newspapers will form part of the project. Doctors who do not have electrocardiographs will be asked to send their patients to the detection units. Our idea is to set up five strategically placed units in the city which can be accessed by everyone. In order to reduce stroke risk factors in these patients, we will take advantage of the patient being present by taking the ECG as well as their blood pressure.

## **Audience**

### **Type**

- AF Patients
- Carers of AF Patients

### **Location**

Mexico, North America