

Implementing Follow Your Heart

Please see below for suggestions on steps you could take to organise and encourage the implementation of Follow Your Heart in your local area. Please note that these are just suggestions as implementation will need to be tailored to the structure of your local services.

1. Recruit two **Follow Your Heart “Champions”** – one in primary care and one in secondary care. Their role will be to raise awareness of Follow Your Heart and drive forward implementation of the guidance. It may be appropriate to fulfil one of these roles yourself.

2. **Identify key personnel** in post-MI primary and secondary care. These could include:

Primary Care Trust (PCT) / Practice Based Commissioning Group

- Cardiac leads

Primary Care:

- CHD nurses in general practice
- General Practitioners
- Healthcare assistants
- Co-ordinators of local patient support groups

Secondary Care:

- Ward nurses from cardiac care units (CCU) and step down wards
- Cardiac rehabilitation team members (e.g. nurses, dieticians, physiotherapists, pharmacists, psychologists)
- Cardiology specialists (including consultants)

Cardiac Network:

- Cardiac network leads

3. Commence discussions and planning for the implementation of Follow Your Heart. Means of approach could include:

- **Identify the baseline of current practice** in your area so that you have a point against which you can measure the effects of Follow Your Heart implementation.
- **Raise awareness** amongst key personnel by sending them an email or letter providing an introduction to Follow Your Heart. Include a link directing them to the online Follow Your Heart Implementation Toolkit http://www.heartuk.org.uk/HealthProfessionals/index.php/follow_your_heart/ for more information.
- **Organise a meeting**, inviting key personnel to attend. Use the ‘*Introducing Follow Your Heart*’ PowerPoint presentation available online to outline the guidance, why it was developed and how it can help patients. Share copies of the Follow Your Heart materials (guidance, HCP poster, patient leaflet) to demonstrate their simplicity and ease of use. Encourage everyone attending to contribute and discuss ideas on how to implement the guidance locally.

- **Develop relationships and engage** interested parties. Arrange a one-to-one meeting or pick up the phone to discuss ideas further. This will help to identify the nuances of individual practices and the challenges they might encounter.
 - **Sustain momentum** through the Follow Your Heart “Champions” who can drive activity with ongoing support and contact with key personnel to:
 - **share best practice**
 - discuss ideas for overcoming possible barriers to implementation
 - ensure people implementing Follow Your Heart feel supported and motivated
 - maintain a good supply of Follow Your Heart resources to participating practices
4. You may wish to conduct **wider dissemination** of Follow Your Heart information to raise awareness amongst the local medical community and encourage use of the resources. Potential opportunities include:
- Incorporating an article on Follow Your Heart in your local newsletter
 - Distributing copies of the guidance, patient leaflet and HCP poster to people involved in the care of post-MI patients
 - Offering to present on Follow Your Heart at practice meetings and other events
 - Circulating the contact details of the Follow Your Heart “Champions” to ensure that people have access to further information when needed.

* Please contact *Caroline Burt* (caroline.burt@ketchumpleon.com) if you would like to order further copies of the *Follow Your Heart* guidance, patient leaflet or HCP poster.