



## The BRITISH SOCIETY FOR HEART FAILURE AND THE MERIDIAN (FOOTBALL) CLUB A COMMUNITY HEART HEALTH AWARENESS DAY

- A family-oriented sporting and educational event in memory of Robert Eshun, a member of Meridian FC who sadly died from a cardiac arrest.
- Raising awareness of the British Society for Heart Failure (BSH)-led 25in25 ambition to reduce deaths due to heart failure by 25% in the next 25 years.
- First imperative: **'detect the undetected' to save 10,000 lives every year** - to find the ~400,000 people living with heart failure who are currently undiagnosed and consequently not receiving life preserving treatment, by **making every patient contact count**.

The British Society for Heart Failure (BSH) hosted an educational, community heart health awareness day in partnership with the Meridian Club at the Sporting Club Thamesmead Tower Football grounds, Bayliss Avenue, SE28 8NJ, on Sunday, 5 May 2024. There were 3 community football matches (2 semi-finals and a final) accompanied by engaging, interactive talks from patients and clinical professionals; drop-in blood pressure checks, distribution of informative materials, complimentary lunch; souvenirs and competitions for prizes on offer during the event. More than **250 people** attended on the day and over **70 voluntary blood pressure checks** were taken by our clinicians and careful guidance given, as necessary. Attendees included: the local communities of Thamesmead, Erith, Greenwich, Bexley and other like-minded communities from North London, BSH clinicians and PAP members, BSH Exec and family volunteers, Meridian and Peabody Trust volunteers, other participating charities including: Cardiomyopathy UK, Amyloidosis UK, Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY), HEART UK and Blood Pressure UK. The Virtual Approval Team, who support BSH with event production for the Annual Meeting, kindly gave freely of their time and expertise including the services of a professional photographer.

The BSH, like the Meridian Club, has a profound commitment to fostering awareness of health conditions facing black and ethnic minority groups. The objective of the day was to raise awareness and increase the accessibility of information on cardiovascular disease, encouraging conversations about heart health and promoting healthy lifestyle to the local community.

This Community Heart Health Awareness Day was held in honour of one of the Meridian FC players, Robert Eshun, who sadly lost his life due to a cardiac arrest. Robert Eshun's family wanted to raise awareness of heart health and cardiovascular disease. Robert, who was aged 48, from Thamesmead, passed away in October 2023 on his way to work. His cardiac arrest was caused by suspected heart failure. Robert was nicknamed 'Ebo Electric' among his teammates and fans for his speed and dribbling skills. He played professionally for clubs in his native Ghana, most notably scoring a goal for his team Asante Kotoko in a cup final in 1990, as well as in Turkey, Belgium, and Asia. And he represented Ghana at international level for the under-21s squad. Robert's family said in a



statement: “We are hoping people will support the tournament and the charity as it will help raise awareness and better understanding of heart health.”

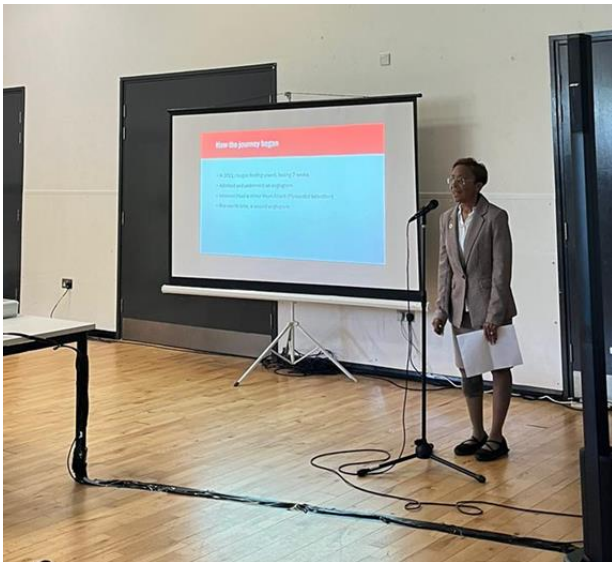
The event has highlighted the importance of co-creation, collaboration and persevering in reaching into underserved communities. Using this grass roots approach to target those who, typically tend not to go to the GP or to purely health/ screening events and who may have personal experience of heart disease in themselves or loved ones, but a limited knowledge of heart health and HF symptoms, offers a first class template for further and future events. Freedom from Failure – The F Word, simply identifying 3 HF symptoms beginning with the letter F, to enable earlier detection, resonated strongly and memorably with this community and with the policymakers.

The event was featured in the local paper, read the full article [here](#).

The Heart Health Awareness Day coincided with the UK and Europe-wide Heart Failure Awareness Week (which this year is themed ‘Detecting Undetected Heart Failure: Find Me’) and promoted the BSH’s 25in25 campaign to reduce deaths due to heart failure by 25% in the next 25 years. Achieving this in the UK alone, would mean 5 fewer deaths for every 100 patients newly diagnosed with heart failure every year, translating to over 10,000 lives saved annually. With heart failure rates set to double by 2040<sup>1</sup> we must come together as communities to detect and treat heart failure much earlier.









## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

### **About the Meridian Club and Football Club:**

Meridian Club is a small charity set up in 2022 by a group of like-minded individuals ages between 35 and 60 years old, who come together to engage in football and other sporting activities. The charity supports and encourages sporting activities in multiply deprived neighbourhoods in Bexley, Erith, Thamesmead, and Greenwich.

The Meridian football team was established over 20 years ago, gathering to play football socially, and has since become a registered charity with a commitment to fostering awareness of health conditions facing black and ethnic minority groups such as prostate health, heart disease and heart related concerns including high blood pressure and raised cholesterol.

Sadly, our football club (Meridian Football Club) lost one of its members, Robert Eshun, in whose memory the heart health awareness day is being held, to an undiagnosed heart related disorder and our Charity (Meridian Club) decided to develop a calendar of health awareness "SPREAD THE WORD" campaigns on heart disease and prostate related disorders, for the benefit of its members and the wider community. Consequently, a prostate awareness event was held in partnership with Prostate Cancer UK in Thamesmead SE28, on 29th October 2023

Following a successful event for prostate cancer awareness, Meridian Club would like to develop a calendar of continuous health awareness community appointment days, centred on activities such as voluntary blood pressure checks, together with distribution of supportive educational materials.

We envisage this to be an on-going programme; we will have community days and engagements with local people, to foster health awareness. Our Health Matters! Spread The Word campaign would bring people together, to build strong relationships in and across our communities.

According to research BME communities are disproportionately more susceptible to heart failure and prostate related disorders. The programme will bring people together regularly, from local areas allowing them to bond over common interests and experiences. These shared moments have the potential to create lifelong connections and strengthen the fabric of our communities. Your support will enable these awareness programmes and physical activities, to be delivered throughout the year.

For more and information and to make a donation go to: [https://www.gofundme.com/f/heart-health-matters-spreadtheword?utm\\_campaign=p\\_cp+share-sheet&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=customer](https://www.gofundme.com/f/heart-health-matters-spreadtheword?utm_campaign=p_cp+share-sheet&utm_medium=email&utm_source=customer)

### **About the British Society for Heart Failure (BSH):**

The British Society for Heart Failure, the professional association for heart failure care in the UK, was founded in 1997 and registered as a charity in 1998. The BSH aims to increase knowledge and promote research about the diagnosis, causes, management, and consequences of heart failure amongst healthcare professionals, with the intention of delaying or preventing the onset of heart failure and improving care for patients with heart failure. To provide expert advice to healthcare professionals, patient, or government organisations, including the National Health Service, when appropriate and as requested. To learn more, please visit: <https://www.bsh.org.uk>



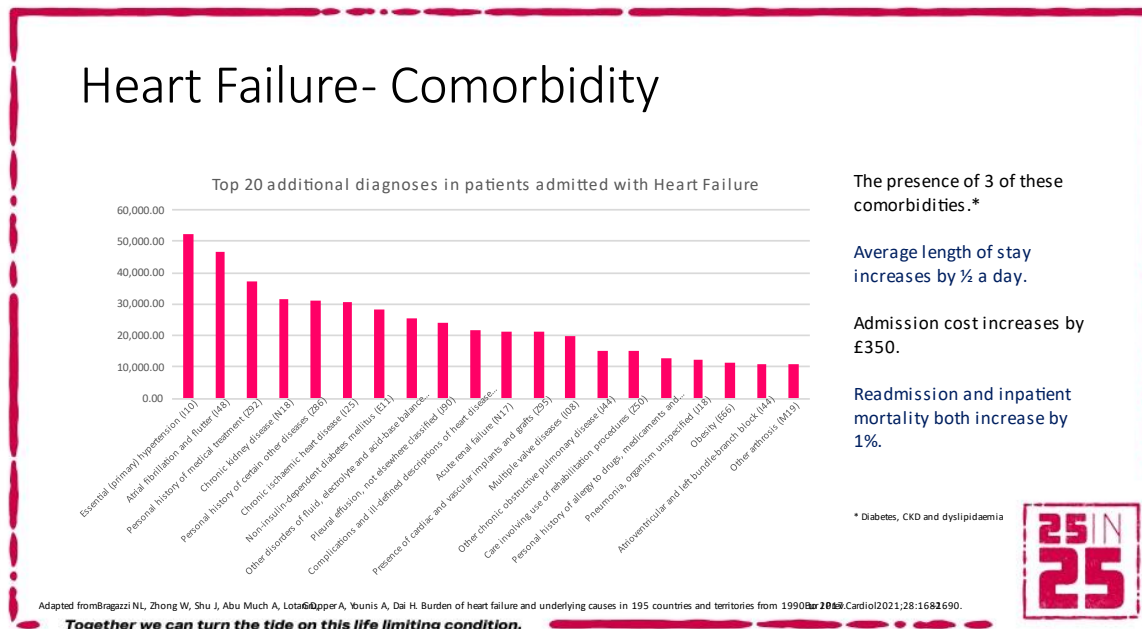
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### About Heart Failure:

Heart failure rarely exists alone. It is caused by structural or functional abnormalities of the heart<sup>ii</sup>. It is often the final common pathway for the many cardiac conditions that affect heart pump function and therefore the endpoint of almost all cardiovascular disease.

People with heart failure typically have one or more comorbidities (meaning that more than one disease or condition is present in the same person, at the same time). Coronary artery disease (where the arteries that supply blood to the heart become clogged up with fatty substances such as cholesterol) and raised blood pressure are two of the most common precursor conditions<sup>iii</sup>. 98% of those diagnosed with heart failure in the UK live with at least one other long-term condition, such as diabetes and/ or kidney disease<sup>iv</sup>. Obesity can also be a complicating factor. From epidemiology to pathophysiology, there are overlaps with many other organ systems and clinical specialities. Thus, heart failure must be considered a shared responsibility across the wider healthcare environment and hence the convention of the 25in25 Summit.



Convened by the British Society for Heart Failure (BSH), the 25in25 initiative recognises heart failure as the endpoint for many conditions, cardiovascular and non-cardiovascular. As malignant as some common cancers<sup>v</sup>, despite growing success due to scientific breakthroughs and increasing understanding, heart failure is too often overlooked.



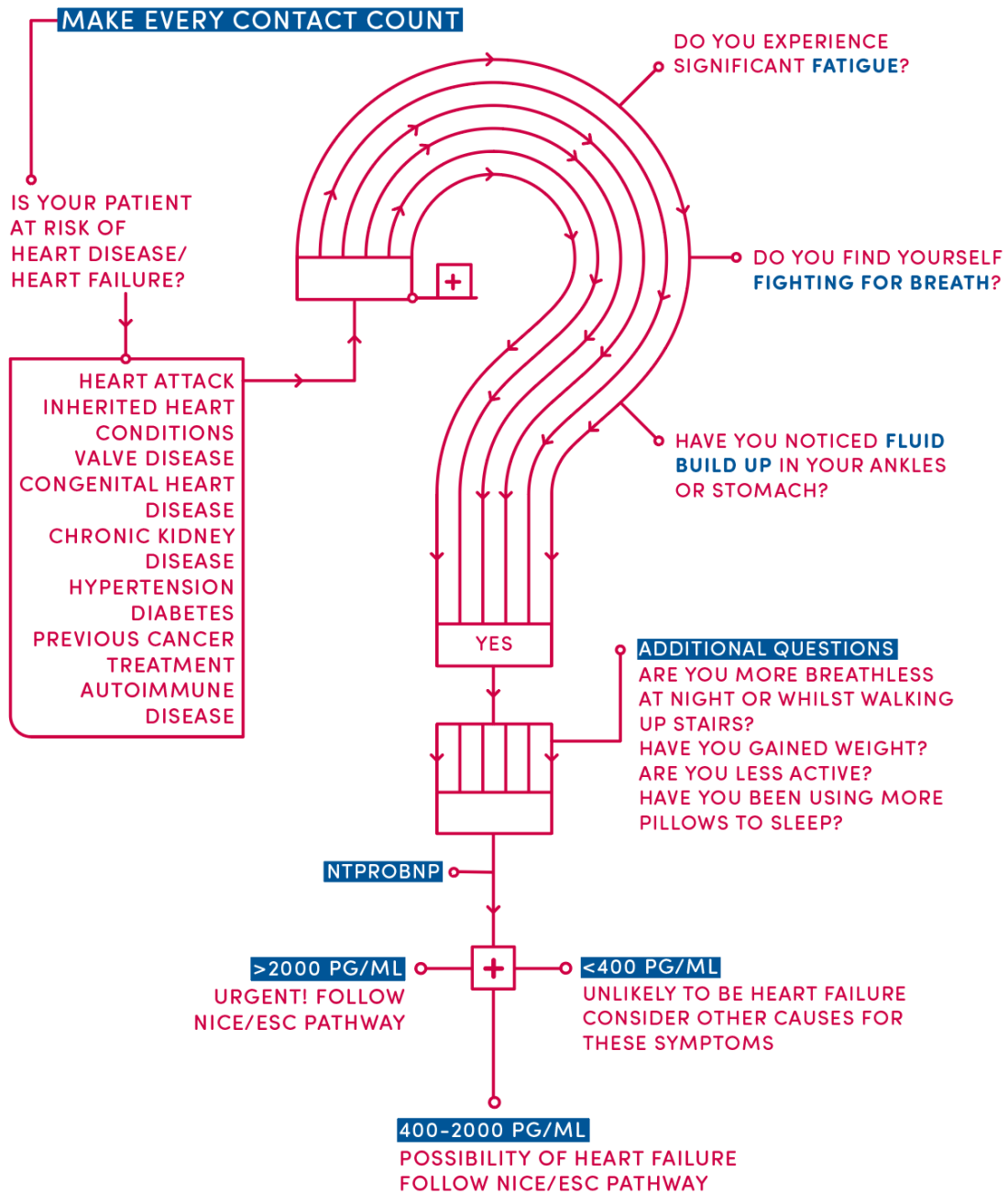
### Heart failure - scale of the problem

As malignant as some common cancers<sup>vi</sup>, heart failure is too often missed or overlooked yet it is an endpoint of many cardiovascular and non-cardiovascular conditions. Heart failure currently takes up 2% of the entire NHS budget. The human and economic costs are huge. We are at a crucial point in time to address the growing heart failure epidemic<sup>vii</sup>

- The current worldwide prevalence of heart failure is estimated at 64.34 million cases.<sup>viii</sup>
- This accounts for 9.91 million years lost due to disability (YLDs)<sup>ix</sup>.
- And a worldwide economic burden of heart failure can be estimated at \$US 346.17 billion<sup>x</sup>
- Worldwide trends in heart failure are set to skyrocket<sup>xi</sup>, augmented by the ageing 'Baby Boomer' generation.

Over 1 million people in the UK have heart failure. A number set to double by 2040<sup>xii</sup>, with 200,000 new diagnoses every year. Estimates suggest there are a further ~400,000 people with heart failure who are currently undetected, undiagnosed and, consequently, missing out on life-preserving treatments. These numbers are on the rise due to several factors including the anticipated exponential growth in our ageing population.

Currently, in the UK, 80% of heart failure is diagnosed in hospital where 40% of people had symptoms that should have triggered an earlier assessment in primary care in the months prior<sup>xiii</sup>. The 25in25 initiative aims to reduce the mortality from heart failure in the first year after diagnosis by 25% in the next 25 years. In the UK alone, this would mean 5 fewer deaths for every 100 patients newly diagnosed with heart failure every year, translating to over 10,000 lives saved annually.



**DETECT THE UNDETECTED**

IDENTIFYING AND TREATING HEART FAILURE EARLY, IMPROVES OUTCOMES





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- <sup>i</sup> <https://www.health.org.uk/publications/health-in-2040> Accessed 10Nov23
- <sup>ii</sup> Public Health England cardiovascular prevention initiatives 2018-2019, November 2018, p3  
British Heart Foundation, Heart Failure: a blueprint for change, October 2020
- <sup>iii</sup> NHS England, End of life care in heart failure A framework for implementation, October 2014
- <sup>iv</sup> British Heart Foundation, Heart Failure: a blueprint for change, October 2020
- <sup>v</sup> <https://www.bmj.com/content/357/bmj.j2179> Accessed 10Nov23
- <sup>vi</sup> <https://www.bmj.com/content/357/bmj.j2179> Accessed 4Mar24
- <sup>vii</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5435875/> Accessed 4Mar24
- <sup>viii</sup> GBD 2017 Disease and Injury Incidence and Prevalence Collaborators Global, regional, and national incidence, prevalence, and years lived with disability for 354 diseases and injuries for 195 countries and territories, 1990–2017: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017 *Lancet* 2018 ;392 :1789–1858 (Accessed 28Feb24)
- <sup>ix</sup> Lippi, G. and Sanchis-Gomar, F., 2020. Global epidemiology and future trends of heart failure. *AME Med J*, 5(15), pp.1-6. (Accessed 28Feb24)
- <sup>x</sup> Lippi, G. and Sanchis-Gomar, F., 2020. Global epidemiology and future trends of heart failure. *AME Med J*, 5(15), pp.1-6. (Accessed 28Feb24)
- <sup>xi</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/clinicalcommissioninggroupsinenglandtable3> Accessed 4Mar24
- <sup>xii</sup> [file:///C:/Users/janin/Downloads/Projected%20patterns%20of%20illness%20in%20England\\_WEB.pdf](file:///C:/Users/janin/Downloads/Projected%20patterns%20of%20illness%20in%20England_WEB.pdf) Accessed 28Feb24
- <sup>xiii</sup> <https://www.nice.org.uk/about/what-we-do/into-practice/measuring-the-use-of-nice-guidance/impact-of-our-guidance/nice-impact-cardiovascular-disease-management> Accessed 28Feb24