

Heart Failure Awareness Day, UL Hosp Nenagh

Heart Failure Awareness Day was marked at UL Hosp Nenagh on Thurs 4th May 2017. The Heart Failure Support Unit in collaboration with The Cardiac Rehabilitation Team, in conjunction with Healthy Ireland hosted an Information Morning in the Hospital Lobby.

The objective of the event was to raise awareness of recognising Heart Failure so that patients can get an accurate diagnosis and receive optimal treatment for this sometimes debilitating condition. The event was advertised via local print media with 2 articles submitted to the Nenagh Guardian and Tipperary Star on consecutive weeks prior to the event. Information was also distributed via posters and email and the event was advertised on the European Society of Cardiology: [https://www.escardio.org/Sub-specialty-communities/Heart-Failure-Association-of-the-ESC-\(HFA\)/Advocacy-&-Awareness/heart-failure-awareness-days-2017](https://www.escardio.org/Sub-specialty-communities/Heart-Failure-Association-of-the-ESC-(HFA)/Advocacy-&-Awareness/heart-failure-awareness-days-2017)

The morning was attended by Hosp Staff and The General Public. Dr Abbas Consultant Cardiologist opened the event and gave an overview of Heart Failure. The Heart Failure Nurse Manager and Nurse Specialist together with the Cardiac Rehabilitation Physiotherapist and Cardiac Rehabilitation Co ordinator were on hand to answer questions.

There was Literature on Heart Failure, Blood Pressure, Healthy Eating, Physical Activity etc. In addition there was a Heart Failure Country Barometer; Ireland Report and systematic review poster of nurse led clinic role in Heart Failure. Fruit and water was distributed and there was an opportunity for people to test their knowledge on Heart Failure via a quiz. Thanks to Kathleen Delaney a relative of the HFSU patient who designed and supplied bracelets for ICD alert.

The highlight of the event was when two patients spoke of their personal experience of living with Heart Failure. They spoke of their personal journey from symptoms to diagnosis and treatment, attending the cardiac rehabilitation exercise classes, poly pharmacy and their day to day lives with heart failure. The support of Dr. Abbas and the Heart Failure Support Team are invaluable in terms of receiving expert treatment, ongoing monitoring and having a phone service if they have a weight gain or any deterioration in symptoms. Photographs and video snippets from these talks were sent to UHL communications for uploading to HSE media ULH group Twitter and newsletter.

Thanks to Cathrina Ryan operational Director of Nursing , the Team at Nenagh Hospital for their support and those who attended to make this awareness morning a great success.



news

Heart failure awareness day

INTERNATIONAL Heart Failure Awareness Week takes place in early May and is being marked at Nenagh Hospital with an Information Day on Thursday, May 4th (9am to 1pm) in the main foyer of the hospital. Members of the public are encouraged to attend to learn more about their heart health. Nenagh Hospital runs a specialist nurse-led heart failure clinic for outpatients and also runs cardiac rehabilitation classes.

Introduction

The heart is a muscular pump that provides blood to all the organs in the body. The heart must squeeze to pump blood which produces the heart beat and relax between each beat in order to fill with blood again. If either of these functions don't work properly you may get Heart Failure (HF).

What is heart failure?

Heart failure is a medical condition whereby the heart's efficiency is compromised, therefore the blood supplied by the heart is insufficient for the body's demands.

What are the causes of heart failure? Weakened heart muscle due to a heart attack which damages part of the heart muscle are a cause. Long-term uncontrolled high blood pressure, damaged heart valves, alcohol or viral related damage to heart muscle are also causes.

What are the symptoms of heart failure?

Typical symptoms include breathlessness, extreme tiredness, and fluid

retention which can cause swollen ankles. Loss of appetite and irregular heart rhythm can also occur. Disturbances in the heart rhythm can cause palpitations, dizziness or blackouts. Not everyone who has these symptoms suffer from heart failure. Talk to your doctor if you have concerns that your symptoms may be heart failure

What test will my doctor do?

The doctor will assess your symptoms and how they interfere with normal activities and examine your heart, lungs, blood pressure and pulse. The following tests will help in diagnosis: blood tests, Electrocardiograph (ECG) and Echocardiogram (heart scan). Further invasive tests may be necessary. Treatment of heart failure is aimed at:

- Improving symptoms and health promotion
- Stabilising heart function and preventing it from getting worse.
- Preventing heart rhythm problems.
- Helping you live longer.

Monitoring heart failure symptoms daily and taking action if you notice any deterioration is very important. Fluid build up can be noticed by checking ankles for swelling and checking for sudden weight gain by daily recording of body weight.

Lifestyle changes are important, balancing physical activity with rest, healthy eating, taking medicines as prescribed and reducing stress.

Physical activity should be gradual and increased slowly over weeks to



Nenagh Hospital runs a specialist nurse-led heart failure clinic for outpatients and also runs cardiac rehabilitation classes. Front: Ann Cantwell (Cardiac Rehabilitation Co-Ordinator), Sinead Killeen (Senior Physiotherapist), Dr S. F. Abbas, (Consultant Cardiologist), Jacinta Walsh (CNMIL, Heart Failure Support Unit), Kathryn O'Brien (CNS, Heart Failure Support Unit). Back row: Agnes Carroll, (Admin), Dr Zia (Cardiology Registrar), Dr Hassan (Cardiology SHO), Cathrina Ryan (Operational Director of Nursing).

help the heart become more efficient. Healthy eating involves a low fat diet, avoiding salt, oily fish twice weekly, eating plenty of fruit and vegetables 5-7 portions daily and controlling the amount of fluids you drink. Medicines are used to control symptoms and reduce the workload of the heart.

What supports are there to help?

Some patients with chronic heart failure benefit from attending a special

ist nurse-led heart failure clinic for support, education and ongoing monitoring closely supervised by a consultant cardiologist for medical management. The specialist nurse teaches you the knowledge and self-care skills needed to manage your symptoms.

This service is provided at the Heart Failure Support Unit in the outpatients department, Nenagh Hospital. You will also get advice on how to reduce risk factors such as smoking, excess

alcohol, high cholesterol or obesity. The specialist nurse works with the cardiologist to manage the illness, optimise treatment and assess the need for further options such as pacemakers or defibrillators.

By adherence to recommended treatment, monitoring symptoms and contacting your specialist nurse if symptoms deteriorate hospitalisations can be avoided and quality of life improved.