

welcome

Welcome to Issue 2 of SCVC Pulse, bringing you the latest information about the Surrey Cardiovascular Clinics, services, staff and health topics.

SCVC truly provides a unique service to its patients. Not only is it one of the very few specialist cardiac centres in the UK but it operates an integrated multidisciplinary team approach, involving a wide range of healthcare professionals to provide the best care possible. For more details, see our story on Page 2. Through education, collaborative working and the latest diagnostic equipment, SCVC is at the cutting edge of cardiac care.

GP Educational Evening

Keeping up to date with the latest advances in cardiac medicine is truly at the heart of SCVC. For this reason, we run an annual educational evening for local GPs covering the latest cardiac issues and techniques. With GPs as the first port of call for nearly all of our patients, we feel it is important to provide them with the latest information in order to offer you, the patients, with the best care and advice.

This year our educational evening was held at Farnham Castle on the 12th of March. It was chaired by Dr Peter Clarkson of SCVC and attended by 50 GPs and professionals from the surrounding area. Dr Edward Leatham of SCVC updated the attending GPs on the Clinic's new outreach programme operating in Farnham. We were also privileged to have the following speakers: Dr Sam Firoozi, Consultant Cardiologist, Frimley Park Hospital; Mr Neil Moat, Consultant Cardiac Surgeon, The Royal Brompton Hospital and Dr Jonathan Clague, Consultant Electrophysiologist, The Royal Brompton Hospital, who provided insight and discussion on the latest cardiac care in relation to angioplasty, valve surgery and modern treatment of atrial fibrillation.



Dr Emma Wood, Consultant Radiologist, Royal Surrey County Hospital presented on the place of Cardiac CT Angiography in the Chest Pain Clinic.

Dr Julia Blatchly from Austin Road Surgery, Guildford commented on the evening, " It was very useful and interesting to meet all the specialists and the lectures were extremely informative. Overall an excellent education meeting."

The event was kindly sponsored by Merck, Sharpe & Dohme, Novartis Pharmaceuticals, Pfizer, and Servier Limited.

Multi Disciplinary Team explained...

Patients at SCVC have access to a wide range of clinical staff with a number of specialist skills and cardiac interests. From their own nutritionist and fitness instructor to some of the top cardiac surgeons in the UK, the Clinic operates a multidisciplinary team approach to provide patients with the best and most proactive care possible.

Working with Mr Neil Moat of The Royal Brompton Hospital, one of the country's leading surgeons in mitral and aortic heart valve surgery, the Clinic is able to provide patients with surgical consultations close to home. Just one set of medical notes is required and the patient's full medical team is available during the decision process.

SCVC patients benefit from having a dedicated team of health professionals working together to discuss their case and how

best to manage their treatment. This team involvement enables appropriate care decisions to be made quickly.

The best treatment options can be agreed by the team, taking into account existing medical conditions and other factors that may affect suitability or recovery times such as mobility, weight and age.



Neil Moat of The Royal Brompton Hospital

When a migraine became a stroke

One patient's story

Mr S from Guildford, aged 40, was an extremely active and fit man with none of the usual symptoms of heart problems or a related family history. Mr S was into extreme sports, such as white water canoeing and mountain climbing, and explains that, **"Heart problems aren't something you'd think of if you first saw me."**

Whilst abroad, Mr S woke up with a terrible headache, feeling extremely weak down his right side and fell over. His doctor initially diagnosed a migraine, but a later MRI indicated Mr S had suffered a fairly major stroke.

A few months later in the UK, Mr S had a similar episode but on this occasion the left side of his face was completely distorted. This time he knew it was a stroke and went straight to A&E

in Guildford. **"It was much harder the second time, knowing instantly I was having a stroke,"** explains Mr S.

Because Mr S's general health was so good, the NHS doctor who saw him explained that he could have a hole in his heart and a bubble echocardiogram confirmed this was the case. He attended SCVC where, after seeing 3 specialist doctors, it was agreed that closing the hole in his heart should prevent another stroke.

The surgical procedure Mr S went through was over in less than 2 hours. **"I feel extremely lucky that I received the care I did. I am still very active, but this experience has made me look at life differently. I used to do a lot of extreme sports but if a stroke happens on top of a mountain, I'm in trouble. I do miss it a little bit, but I'm still happy, life is wonderful,"** remarks Mr S. Although everybody has a hole in their heart which closes up before we are born, in around 1 in 20 people, it doesn't and can cause symptoms later in life such as shortness of breath and tiredness. A hole in the heart is also known as an 'atrial septal defect' and can often be easily repaired with simple surgery like that of Mr S.

Meet the team

There are many friendly

Dr Mike Hickman

Dr Hickman has recently joined our Faculty as a Consultant Cardiologist with a special interest in cardiac imaging and pacemakers. He also conducts stress echo tests.



Dr Carol Sadler

Carol is SCVC's registered nutritionist, assisting people to make improvements to their diet and lifestyle. Carol is a keen cyclist and tennis player and joins the SCVC team after living and working in Dubai.

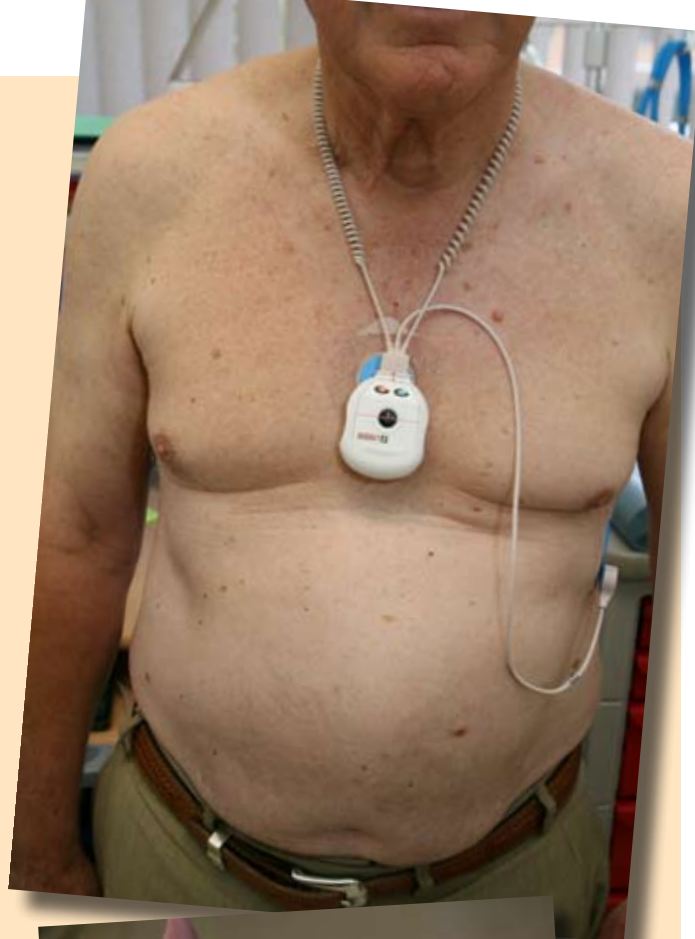


NEW R. Test ambulatory ECG

For patients with intermittent episodes of palpitation, blackouts or dizziness, the Clinic has a new ambulatory ECG – the R. Test – to help identify the reasons behind these events.

The new device, which is small enough to be worn by the patient, has enough memory storage to record heart rhythms continuously for up to a week. The advantage of this is that the device does not require any action by the patient, such as pushing a button when an episode occurs, and will record abnormal heart episodes not noticeable by patients.

At SCVC, we have many options and capabilities available to us to investigate and diagnose patients. Our wide range of ECG event recorders enables us to fit the right test with the right patient and symptoms, making us the best equipped cardiac clinic in the south.



From the heart!

I felt very well looked after during the whole of my visit and was grateful for the clinic making time to see me so quickly even though you were actually very busy. I felt all tests and procedures that were necessary were done and carried out in a reassuringly efficient way. I was never kept waiting and I had full and understandable explanations from the Doctors. What a pity the NHS with all the billions stuffed at it, can't manage some joined up medicine in this way.

Thank you Dr Leatham and all your team - a really fantastic clinic in all respects.

If you have a story you wish to share, please contact editor@scvc.co.uk

faces here at SCVC, however you may not have met the newest members of our team:

Andy Bowness

Andy is the Clinic's exercise physiologist and works alongside Carol in helping patients improve their health through lifestyle changes.

Andy has experience giving exercise guidance and support working with patients in a clinical environment. As a personal trainer he helps clients implement effective and positive practices to improve their health and well-being.



Claire Currie

Claire is one of the first people you will meet on entering the Clinic. Answering your calls, arranging appointments and organising patients' notes, Claire helps keep reception running smoothly. In her spare time, she enjoys singing in a local choir.

Tracey Everett

Cardiac physiologist, Tracey's speciality is in conducting pacing tests with patients. Due to sit the International Board of Heart Rhythm Examiners exam, Tracey also enjoys West End musicals, especially "Wicked".

Waiting for your CT results? You won't have to at SCVC

For years, SCVC has referred its patients for computerised tomography (CT) scanning to a third party centre as a separate investigation. However, the Clinic has now built a relationship with neighbours LifeScan and is able to provide patients with CT scanning as a one-stop SCVC service.

The CT clinic consists of a consultation with a SCVC cardiologist, followed by non-invasive CT scanning at our partner facility next door and a review consultation back at SCVC. Previously, patients could wait up to 3 weeks for their CT results, but with SCVC's new partnership with Lifescan and both your cardiologist and radiologist on-site, waiting times have been removed completely and results are now available straight away.



Heartwise Glossary

Medical terms can often cause unnecessary confusion during consultations, so at SCVC we try our utmost to explain everything to our patients as clearly as possible. Our Heartwise Glossary is aimed to help you understand some of the more common medical words you will hear whilst at the Clinic. In this issue of SCVC Pulse we explain perfusion test, cardiac CT angiogram and ambulatory ECG.

Perfusion test

A cardiac perfusion test or scan measures the amount of blood in your heart at rest and during exercise. It is often undertaken to find out what may be causing chest pain. The heart is scanned after a special tracer medicine is injected into a vein in the arm and travels to the heart through the blood. Areas of the heart with good blood flow absorb the tracer whilst areas that do not absorb the tracer may not be getting enough blood or may have been damaged.

Cardiac CT angiogram

Cardiac computed tomography or cardiac CT is a painless test that uses an x-ray machine to take clear, detailed pictures of the coronary arteries supplying blood to the heart. It is a common test for showing problems of the heart. During a cardiac CT angiogram, much like a perfusion test, a special tracer or dye is injected into the patient's arm which travels to the heart. This makes it easier to examine the heart chambers and vessels when x-rayed.

Ambulatory ECG

An ambulatory electrocardiogram (ECG) monitors your heart when you are doing your normal activities. It helps to detect abnormal heart rates and rhythms. There are several different types of ECG device, all lightweight and portable for patients to wear or carry around. An ambulatory ECG can last for 24 hours up to several weeks depending on the frequency of symptoms.

The Surrey Cardiovascular Clinics

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