Improving CVD risk communication in NHS health checks

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Project Overview

Improving risk communication in NHS Health Checks in Newham CCG to improve management of CVD risk factors.

To do this:

• Develop personalized ‘risk report’

• Pilot evaluation in 6 surgeries

• Qualitative interviews
Poll: Which of the following represents a higher risk:

a) 1 in 5  
b) 1 in 10  
c) 1 in 20  
d) 1 in 196  
e) Not sure

Answer: a) 1 in 5

One quarter of the US population cannot say whether 1 in 10, 1 in 100, or 1 in 1000 represents the largest risk of getting a disease
Understanding Risk

Poll: 1 person out of 1000 has a CVD event. What is the percentage risk?

a) 1 %
b) 0.1 %
c) 0.01 %
d) 0.001 %
e) Not sure

Answer: b) 0.1%

Around 75% of the US population cannot transform 1 in 1000 in to a percentage
Every year in the UK

160,000 people die from cardiovascular disease

Cardiovascular Risks

What’s your health risk?

Your age is: [XX]

What’s your risk?

1 out of every 4 people

2 out of every 5 people

4 out of every 5 people

Blood pressure

Your blood pressure is [XX/mm Hg].

This means it is:

- Normal
- Borderline high
- High

Cholesterol level

Your cholesterol ratio is [XX]

This means you are: [XX]

- Normal
- Borderline high
- High

Diabetes check

Your glaudated haemoglobin level is [XX]%.

This means that you:

- Are at risk of diabetes
- May have diabetes

Body Mass Index

Your BMI was [XX].

This means you are:

- Healthy weight
- Overweight
- Obese Class I (30-34.9)
- Obese Class II (35-39.9)
- Obese Class III (40+)

You said you smoke

- [XX] a day on average

You said you drink

- [XX] units a week
- [XX] units a day
- [XX] units a week

Your Personal Action Plan

Now that you know you have an elevated risk:

- Lose some weight
- Sign up to a weight loss programme
- Eat more healthily
- Eat your 5 a day
- Do more exercise
- Sign up to an exercise programme
- Reduce your alcohol intake
- Reduce your salt intake
- Add less salt to food
- Stop smoking
- Order your stop smoking kit
- Reduce the amount of alcohol you drink
- Use smaller glasses of alcohol
- Days each week

What goal(s) would you like to achieve?

What small changes can you make today?

When will you achieve these goals?

For more information and support about how to achieve these goals, visit or call:

- NHS Health Check: www.nhs.uk/Conditions/nhs-health-check
- NHS free weight loss plan: www.nhs.uk/Livewell/weight-loss-guide
- Change for life: www.nhs.uk/changedlife
- NHS Alcohol information: www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol
- Action on Salt: www.actiononsalt.org.uk
- Diabetes: www.diabetes.org.uk
- Dementia: www.alzheimers.org.uk

Treatment:

After this health check, you may need a follow up appointment, and your doctor may prescribe you some medication to manage your risk of cardiovascular disease. You will be told by the clinic staff if you need to make another appointment.

For every 20 potential strokes or heart attacks, treatment will prevent 7.

Remember to take any prescribed treatment according to your doctor’s instructions.

Extra information/Local Support Groups:

Your next appointment will be due in: 

[signature]
Risk Communication

Heart age

What’s your heart age?
Your age is: [XX]

Your current heart age is about: [XX]

What’s your risk of having a heart attack or stroke in the next 10 years?

- 1 out of every 20 people like you will have a stroke or heart attack in the next 10 years
- 2 out of every 20 people like you will have a stroke or heart attack in the next 10 years
- 4 out of every 20 people like you will have a stroke or heart attack in the next 10 years

QRISK Icon array:
- Simple frequencies
- Avoid percentages
- Time and denominator
- Social norms messaging
Every year in the UK.....

160,000 people die from cardiovascular disease

1,700 people die from road traffic accidents

350 people die from domestic fires

Less than 1 person dies from a plane crash

Dread risk comparator infographic
Blood pressure

Your blood pressure measurement was [XXX] / [XX] mmHg (systolic/diastolic)

This means it is:

- In the healthy range
- A little high
- Very high

Survival/ Positive framing

For every 20 potential strokes or heart attacks, treatment will prevent 7:
EAST Framework
Think about behavioural exchange

Easy

Stop smoking
Order your Smokefree quit kit today, save your cigarette money in a pot to see how it builds up

Reduce the amount of alcohol you drink
Use smaller glasses or measures when pouring wine and spirits at home, have a few drink-free
days each week, alternate alcoholic drinks with glasses of water, drink with a meal

Attractive

Social

Timely

What goal(s) would you like to set yourself?

What small changes would help you achieve your goal(s)?

You said you drink [XX] units of alcohol per week
Cutting out a couple of large glasses of wine or beer each week could save you more than
£400 year, as well as helping you to lose weight and get better quality sleep.
“We are like a salty family. I would just add salt to everything and now I’m starting to think that I can’t. This is my health and it’s quite real and it’s quite serious so yeah, I’ve definitely looked at, it’s definitely motivated me” Female Patient

“They were more interested about the heart age more than anything” HCA

“Patients

“I liked the bit of paper that they gave me at the end that just jots down everything because I think you forget really easily and that’s been good to look back at” Female Patient

“I think I’ve been more detailed about the QRISK more than before […] even the cholesterol levels, sugar levels, even if they are normal.” HCA

“When they do go home maybe they can share it with their family as well. Maybe they didn’t fully understand so, it would be really good to look back” HCA
In summary, numbers can be difficult so:

- Don’t neglect your **denominator**
- Remember **icons** help
- Provide risk **context**
- Be positive with your **framing**
- Be ‘**chunky**’ with your goals
- Remember to **tell the time**
- Think **now** as well as in the **future**
Acknowledgements

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Meredith K.D. Hawking, CPCPH, Queen Mary University, e: m.k.d.hawking@qmul.ac.uk
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Dr Bhupinder Kohli, Newham CCG
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Thanks for listening!