



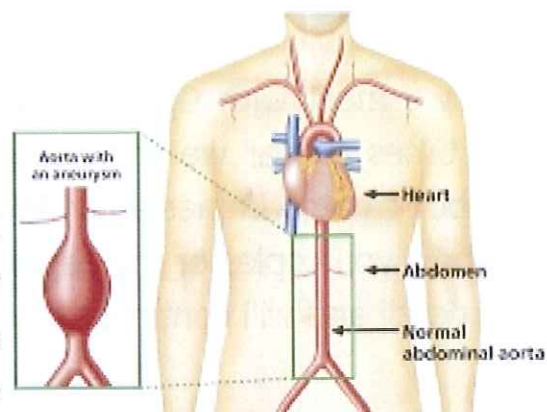
SOMERSET AND NORTH DEVON ABDOMINAL AORTIC ANEURYSM (AAA) SCREENING PROGRAMME

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We are the Somerset and North Devon AAA Screening Programme, based at Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton, Somerset. AAA screening is a locally delivered simple ultrasound test which the NHS is offering free of charge to all men in the year they turn 65.

The team consists of Mr Andrew Stewart, Clinic Lead, Karen Bentley-Hollins, Programme Manager, along with a screening administrator, a senior sonographer and four screening technicians.

All patients will be screened by a nationally trained screening technician who will initially be supervised by the senior sonographer, and the programme will be running a full and robust quality assurance programme



Over the coming weeks we will be contacting your practice to arrange to come in and meet you. We hope to arrange clinics within your practice for your patients.

When we visit we will be able to tell you:

- How many and which patients are eligible for screening;
- How often we will need to visit your practice;
- And provisionally book sessions for the next year.

What is an abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA?)

The aorta is the main blood vessel that supplies blood to your body. It runs from your heart down through your chest and abdomen.

In some people as they get older, the wall of the aorta in the abdomen can become weak. It can start to expand and form what is called an aneurysm.

Large aneurysms are rare but can be very serious. As the aorta stretches it becomes weaker and could give way. If this happens, the person usually dies.

It is estimated that 1 in 25 men aged between 65 and 74 in England have an abdominal aortic aneurysm. This is about 4% of that age group.

The Programme starts officially in April and the screening team will be visiting GP Practices. The screeners will work in teams of two and will need the use of one room (with a couch, access to the internet) They bring everything else with them (ie blue roll, gloves, gel, kit etc)

The programme will issue the Practice Manager with a prior notification list, so that patients whom it is inappropriate to call can be ceased. The Programme then issues invitations, deals with all the appointment changes etc. We can provide an electronic or paper copy of the clinic list if required.

Patients are screened in their own practice and given the results on the same day. The Practice is informed of the results within a couple of days. Any patient identified with an aneurysm is offered an appointment with a nurse Practitioner. All recalls for patients on monitoring is handled by the programme as is referral to the vascular team.

When we meet with GPs and Practice managers we be able to tell them how many times a year we will need to visit them (based on eligible cohort) and clinic book dates immediately. We are very happy to come along to a meeting and show you copies of the paperwork and leaflets and to discuss the process in more detail and will continue to contact Practices on a one to one basis.