

Date 09.08.18

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Media Release

RUH cardiologist draws up new heart screening guidelines

New national guidelines for identifying potentially fatal heart conditions, including among young athletes, have been drawn up by a team of experts including a cardiologist from the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust.

Consultant Dan Augustine was one of the authors who have produced two updated papers endorsed by the British Society of Echocardiography.

One publication gives guidelines for cardiac screening for sports participants with a focus on heart ultrasound scans (echocardiograms), particularly in young athletes aged from 14-35, to identify hidden health issues.

Dr Augustine said: "Sports cardiology is a passion of mine. A shocking twelve young adults a week suffer sudden cardiac death in the UK, so it's really important that we raise awareness and improve understanding of screening methods so we can try to pick up cardiac abnormalities at an early stage. The sports participation screening guidelines will help doctors and physiologists to distinguish between what may be normal for athletic training with potentially abnormal findings."

The subject of sports cardiology has been in the headlines following the retirement of 26-year-old England cricketer James Taylor after it was found he has a rare, genetic heart condition. A similar condition led to the on-pitch collapse of Premiership footballer Fabrice Muamba in 2012 and his subsequent retirement from the sport. This week (August 8) a new study warned that the risk of footballers dying from heart failure was underestimated and said there was a duty to protect players.



Dr Augustine led the second publication which looks at pulmonary hypertension and how better to identify the probability of patients having dangerously high pressure in their lung arteries.

He said: “Both of these guideline papers focus on the use of heart ultrasound scans to help detect potentially dangerous heart problems. I’m really proud that these new pulmonary hypertension guidelines will help to aid the diagnosis of this important condition and will be implemented in NHS hospitals. Pulmonary hypertension can affect all ages and is a disease with high mortality and morbidity, so prompt diagnosis is crucial.”

The new 2018 guidelines are an update of the original 2013 joint guidance document by the British Society of Echocardiography and the charity Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY).

Dr Augustine said: “We are continually striving to enhance our detection of disease using heart ultrasound scans and to improve our ability to identify accurately patients with conditions that we can then treat. Both of these guidelines will help clinicians and hopefully reduce death due to heart disease.”

For more information please visit

<http://www.echoespract.com/search?fulltext=sudden+cardiac+death&submit=yes&x=11&y=8>

<http://www.echoespract.com/search?fulltext=pulmonary+hypertension&submit=yes&x=14&y=11>

www.c-r-y.org.uk

Ends

Notes to Editor:



- The Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust provides acute treatment and care for a catchment population of around 500,000 people in Bath, and the surrounding towns and villages in North East Somerset and Western Wiltshire. The hospital provides healthcare to the population served by four Clinical Commissioning Groups: Bath & North East Somerset CCG, Wiltshire CCG, Somerset CCG and South Gloucestershire CCG.
- The Trust has 759 beds and a comprehensive range of acute services including medicine and surgery, services for women and children, accident and emergency services, and diagnostic and clinical support services.
- In 2015 The Royal United Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was acquired the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (RNHRD) NHS Foundation Trust. The RNHRD treats patients from across the country offering services in rheumatology, chronic pain, chronic fatigue syndrome/ME, cancer related fatigue and fatigue linked to other long term conditions such as multiple sclerosis
- The RUH is changing - we have an exciting programme of redevelopment underway transforming our site and further improving the services we provide. The Trust is now working towards building a purpose built RNHRD and Therapies Centre and a new Dyson Cancer Centre. For more details visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk/about/fit_for_the_future
- For more information about the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk

