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Dear Doctor / Cardiac Health Visitor

Protocol for GP-Based Referral of Non-Phase III CHD Patients Directly into Phase IV Cardiac Rehab Exercise Classes

NHS Grampian is responsible for the delivery of Phase I to III cardiac rehabilitation (CR) services. as part of the patient pathway. However, since 2001, the provision of Phase IV CR programmes rests with community-based voluntary organisations , local authorities or commercial providers.. It has thus been necessary to develop a specific protocol for referring cardiac patients into those Phase IV CR Exercise programmes.

Medical screening is a pre-requisite to participation in a CR exercise class. Many patients progress from a Phase III programme to a Phase IV programme by a long established referral protocol. In some cases they may have performed successfully an exercise tolerance test (ETT) which additionally helps to determine their suitability to participate in CR exercise classes (if completed within the last 6 months). On the other hand more than 50% of CHD patients are not directed through the 6 Phase III centres in Aberdeenshire .

For all such CHD patients who have not been through a Phase III process, a specific GP-Based Referral Protocol for direct entry into a Phase IV CR Exercise programme has been developed jointly by NHS Grampian and Grampian Cardiac Rehabilitation Association Ltd (GCRA). This has now been used successfully over the past 18 months at selected GP practices in both Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire and it has been endorsed by the Managed Clinical Network - Coronary Heart Disease Project Board of NHS Grampian. Use of this protocol should make CR exercise classes more accessible to many more people while balancing patient safety with simplicity and ease of use for GPs and cardiac nurses. Copies of the protocol pro-forma are appended.

This GP-referral protocol is now available to GP practices from which referrals to a number of new or existing Phase IV CR exercise classes can be made. Eventually all GP practices in Grampian will be included in the distribution. GP's and associated cardiac nurses are invited to implement this protocol and refer appropriate candidates to the exercise classes . This will contribute significantly to the provision of a more comprehensive and effective cardiac rehabilitation service for the population of Grampian.

In making referrals with this protocol, GP's / Cardiac Nurses should normally direct the patient to a Phase IV CR Exercise class where the leader is qualified to a standard (such as BACR) recognised by NHS Grampian.

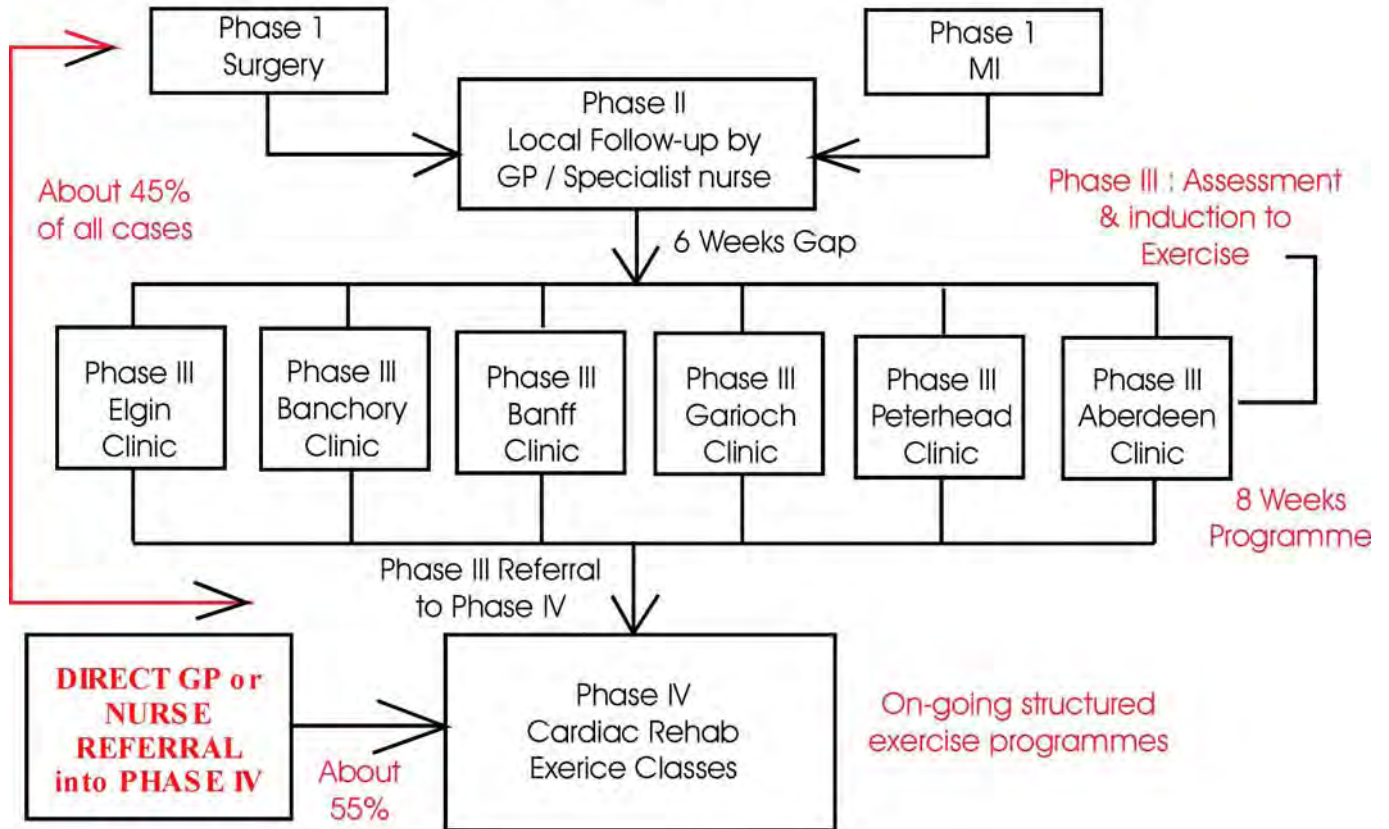
For information, the Grampian Cardiac Rehabilitation Association Limited , formed in 2002 , is recognised by NHS Grampian as the main provider of Phase IV CR Exercise groups in the community throughout Grampian. It is mainly funded as a third party grant-holder in the Big Lottery Fund (NOF) umbrella grant award made to the CHD Strategy Group of NHS Grampian. in 2003.

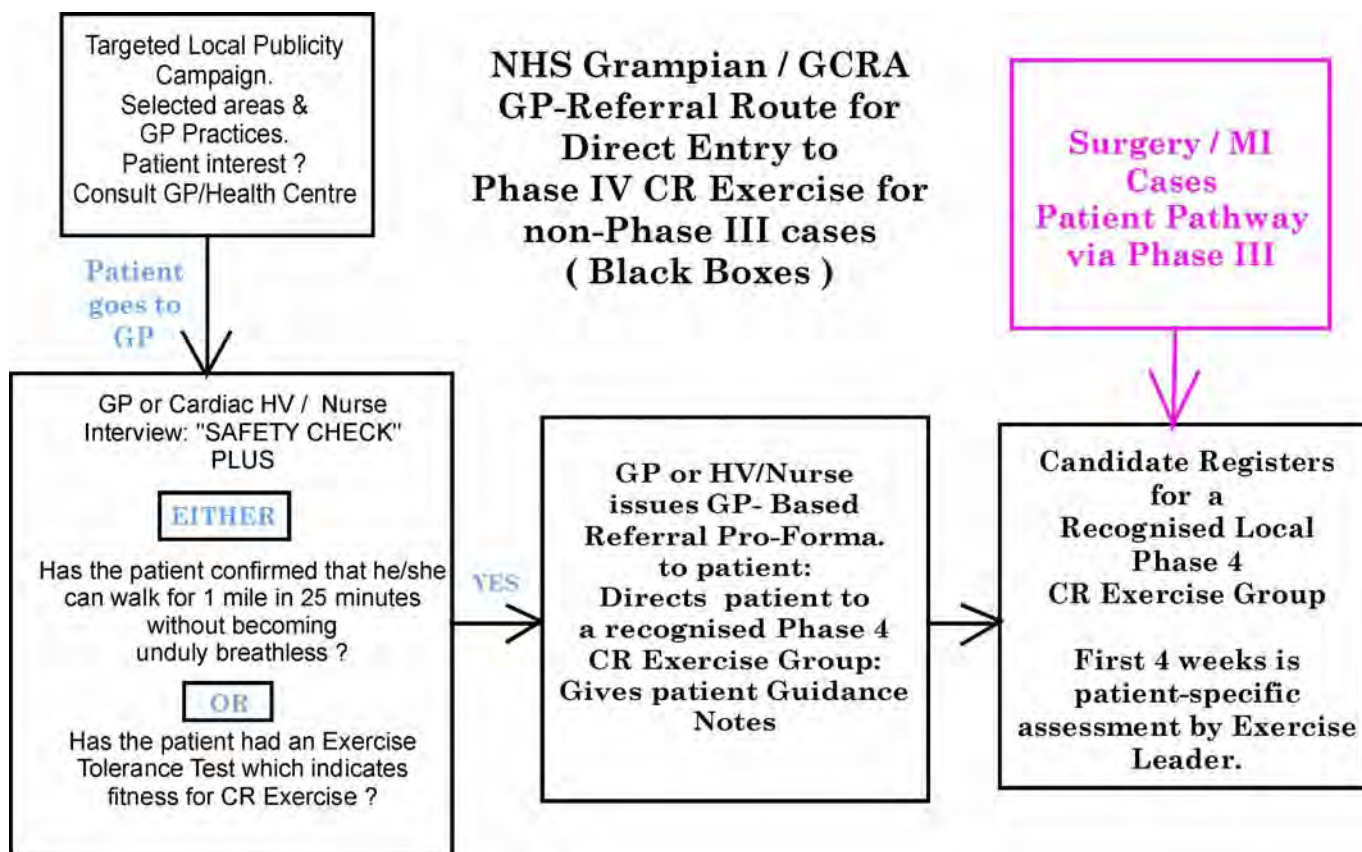
Yours sincerely,

R. Hosie: Secretary GCRA

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NHS Grampian / GCRA Patient Pathway Flow-Chart for CHD Progression from Phase 1 to Phase IV







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NHS Grampian , in association with GCRA : GENERAL GP REFERRAL PROTOCOL for direct entry TO PHASE 4 CARDIAC REHABILITATION EXERCISE PROGRAMMES (For cardiac patients who are not eligible for or who have not attended a Phase 3 Clinic)

To be completed by the patient’s GP or Secondary Prevention Clinic Nurse

- 1: Name or STAMP of Medical Group or Practice:.....
- 2: Name of patient being referred:.....
- 3: Address of patient being referred:.....
Post Code:.....
- 4: Date of Birth of Patient being Referred:.....

5: This patient meets all of the following criteria of suitability for phase 4 exercise classes (please tick boxes)

- Has Ischaemic Heart Disease
- Has not had an acute coronary event (MI or unstable angina) in the last 4 months
- BP is < 180/100
- Resting Pulse rate is < 100
- Does not have uncontrolled heart failure
- Has not had a BP drop > 20 mm Hg on ETT (**NB: the patient does not need to have had an ETT**)

6: This patient *is / is not* on medication which will influence his / her pulse-rate. (Delete as necessary)

7: This patient *has / has no mobility limitations*. (Delete as necessary).

8: Special guidance notes (if necessary) from GP to Exercise Leader:

SIGNED:.....DESIGNATION: GP or CARDIAC NURSE (Delete as necessary)

Date:.....

I confirm that I satisfy the requirement of the exercise assessment test and that I can walk 1 mile on flat ground within 25 minutes, and still be able to hold a conversation at it’s conclusion . (**Patient please tick box**)

SIGNATURE of PATIENT :

Notes to GP / Cardiac Nurse:

- 1 Please file a copy of the above pro-forma in your Practice Records **and give a copy to the Patient.**
- 2 Direct the Patient to the nearest local Phase 4 CR Exercise Group, and instruct the patient to give the pro-forma copy to the exercise leader of that Group.
- 3 Please also give the patient a copy of the Guidance Notes to Candidates for Exercise, which indicates an initial 4- week close monitoring period on joining an Exercise Group.

GUIDANCE NOTES to CANDIDATES for Referral to PHASE IV CR EXERCISE GROUPS

The Exercises

The exercises are specifically designed for people like you with a heart condition, to help improve your fitness and maintain it at a higher level. You will find over a period of time that your improved fitness will give you the ability to enjoy a better and higher quality of life.

The Group Leader

The Exercise Group Leader will be a qualified Cardiac Rehabilitation Exercise Instructor.

What you will do at the group:

When you first enter the class you will go into an introductory phase of light exercises. This will allow the Leader to assess your fitness over a period of around 4 weeks during which time you will be taught how to judge the amount of effort you must put into your exercises.

The introductory phase may vary for individuals but you will soon enjoy the full class exercise regime which may be exercise to music or be based on exercise equipment and circuits. It will last for approximately an hour doing routines that will exercise your body as a whole and specifically help your heart to function to its best potential. The exercises are intended to be enjoyable and will build up and maintain your cardiovascular system.

You will do exercises to warm you up, then exercise to the point where your heart and lungs are operating at a faster rate but at a level with which you feel comfortable, with guidance from the Exercise Leader. Finally there will be a period of relaxation before you leave.

It is important that you understand that you are responsible for the level of work you put into the exercise. If at any time you feel overtired or ill while exercising you must stop and inform the instructor right away.

About you at the class

- You should wear light clothes suitable for exercising, such as slacks or shorts or tracksuit, T - Shirt , and trainer shoes.
- Take with you a refreshing drink, water or dilute orange is also recommended. It is advisable NOT to eat a large meal before exercising.
- At your first visit to the group, you will be asked, initially, to complete a Registration Form, which will be kept by the Exercise Leader as a confidential document in case of emergency.
- If you are attending a GCRA-sponsored class, you will also need to complete a GCRA membership form to satisfy our insurance requirements. Membership is free.
- Your GP will advise you of any medication you may need to bring and will give you a referral form to hand to the class instructor.
- If you want to bring a carer, spouse or other family member to accompany you they will be made more than welcome. If they wish to exercise they will require to declare that they are fit to do so .

Time and place

GCRA maintain a comprehensive list of all Phase IV CR Exercise Classes in Grampian. This is available on our website at www.gcra.org.uk, or by phoning R. Hosie on 01467 623366

Normally there is a fee of approximately £2.00 per Exercise Session to defray expenses: This may be directly payable to a sports centre or club on entry, depending on what partnership or management arrangements may exist with GCRA.