
VTE AWARD – PROPHYLAXIS AND PRESCRIBING

Excellent Quality Improvement programme that advanced practice in thrombosis prevention or management

NORTH BRISTOL HOSPITAL TRUST

Pulmonary Embolism Response Team (PERT)
– Providing multidisciplinary approach to acute severe Pulmonary Emboli (PE) and a continuous learning environment to improve our approach to managing unwell PE patients in North Bristol Hospital Trust

In 2022, across the North Bristol Hospital Trust, 97 pulmonary embolism (PE) patients were classified as intermediate high risk and 10 patients subsequently died due to their PE.

The traditional management of a patient with a pulmonary embolus (PE) includes initiating anticoagulation drugs under the on call medical team. In severe cases, the patients care must be escalated beyond that, including utilising thrombolytic drugs and intensive care treatment.

Over the last decade, there have been improvements in the management of PE using specialist PERT teams and in select cases the clots are removed with minimally invasive surgery known as mechanical thrombectomy.

In 2023, a handful of highly interested clinicians formed the basis of a rudimentary Pulmonary Embolism Response Team (PERT), as a quality improvement project. This quality improvement moved beyond a traditional QI project and sought to achieve the aim of improving quality of PE care through initial small scale operation and growth through demonstrating success.

To date, the team has managed:

- 22 acute cases.
- Five successful thrombectomies with patients surviving 30+ days beyond discharge
- Has secured urgent access to leg and heart scans for decision making in complex cases in need of escalation.

In addition to acute case review, PERT members collate cases and share learning at bi-monthly meetings. This in turn has had positive impacts in PE pathway optimisation.

What started as a small-scale operation has evolved into a wider awareness and interest in the team's work resulting in the current status of:

- On-call teams referring to the PERT.
- The original handful of consultants is now a team of 20 clinicians and clinical scientists encompassing multiple specialities.

The lack of financial remuneration is offset by not fixing this role into job plans but creating an environment for continued professional development in PE management. Clearly this benefits the organisation by not increasing the cost for high quality care. And the patients benefit from Consultant MDT level decisions for their care with access to the most effective treatments.

By initiating the project as a small-scale QI project as opposed to a business case, the North Bristol team have shown success and potential for perpetual growth which benefits both the patient and organisation.

