



NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact: Nigel Breakwell

T: 07785 277343

E: [nigel@heartrhythmalliance.org](mailto:nigel@heartrhythmalliance.org)

## **INTERNATIONAL HEART RHYTHM CONGRESS CALLS FOR URGENT ACTION TO PREVENT THOUSANDS OF UNNECESSARY DEATHS FROM ARRHYTHMIAS**

**Thursday 29 September, World Heart Day, Birmingham, UK:** Over 3,000 heart rhythm experts and healthcare professionals from around the world will converge on the ICC, Birmingham, for the annual Heart Rhythm Congress (HRC), 9-12 October, the UK's largest educational congress devoted solely to heart rhythm disorders.

Even though there have been tremendous breakthroughs in heart disease, leading to reductions in overall mortality and morbidity, arrhythmias are still looked upon as 'cinderella' conditions with many patients in the UK struggling to get the appropriate management and treatment they deserve. The goal of HRC is to enable healthcare professionals, patients, carers, industry, allied professionals and advocates to share learning and best practice, working together to improve the overall detection, management and treatment of all arrhythmias and reduce the thousands of unnecessary deaths that occur each year in the UK.

Arrhythmia Alliance Founder & CEO, Trudie Lobban, MBE, raised her concerns on World Heart Day for more concerted action to urgently address the devastating effects of arrhythmias, and how Arrhythmia Alliance and HRC lead the way in making a positive difference:

"HRC is a tremendous opportunity for all those involved in the management and care of people with arrhythmias to come together and find ways to make a difference to these terrible statistics:

- Over half a million people in the UK do not know they have atrial fibrillation – which if left unmanaged can lead to an AF-related stroke or death. Public Health England has stated that there are over 11,600 unnecessary AF-related strokes in England each year, with more than 2,000 deaths from an AF-related stroke. Arrhythmia Alliance and its partner organization, AF Association, are leading the call for a National Screening Programme for unknown AF, which is supported by new International data being presented at HRC by Professor Ben Freedman (Heart Research Institute, University of NSW, Sydney, Australia)
- Commissioning through evaluation is an initiative set up by NHS England to evaluate currently well-used technologies, but the process is now preventing patients getting access to potentially life-saving technologies, such as left atrial appendage occlusion for patients unable to take oral anticoagulants and who are at high risk of an AF-related stroke, due to restrictions on the numbers of patients who can receive such treatment. Dr Dhiraj Gupta (Consultant Cardiologist,



NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact: Nigel Breakwell

T: 07785 277343

E: [nigel@heartrhythmalliance.org](mailto:nigel@heartrhythmalliance.org)

Liverpool, UK) will be leading a session at HRC on 'Commissioning through Evaluation' and proposing a way forward that allows access for all patients in need of such treatment

- Since Arrhythmia Alliance launched its manifesto – 'Now is the time' (June 2015) – there has been a dramatic increase in the number of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) made available in public places to help save a person's life from a sudden cardiac arrest. Arrhythmia Alliance has itself placed nearly 3,000 AEDs, over the last five years, however, more needs to be done to ensure that the general public and the emergency services know where these AEDs are, and when to use them, and when survivors do get to hospital they must receive the best possible post-resuscitation care."

She added, "Together we can make a difference – preventing AF-related strokes, saving lives and improving the management and care for people with arrhythmias."

For more details about Heart Rhythm Congress, please visit [www.heartrhythmcongress.com](http://www.heartrhythmcongress.com).

-ends-

#### Notes to editors

1. **To arrange a pre-congress interview** with Trudie Lobban and HRC keynote speakers on the issues raised above please contact:  
[nigel@heartrhythmalliance.org](mailto:nigel@heartrhythmalliance.org) or on 07785 277343
2. Arrhythmia Alliance, are global advocates, working in partnership to reduce deaths and impact on individuals caused by cardiac arrhythmias and their associated morbidities. By raising awareness and campaigning for the improved detection and care of heart rhythm disorders, Arrhythmia Alliance aims to extend and improve the lives of the millions around the world that these conditions affect. Visit website [www.heartrhythmalliance.org](http://www.heartrhythmalliance.org)