

**P-05-870 Let's Get Every Young Heart Screened (Age 10-35), Correspondence –
Petitioner to Committee, 15.01.20**

Dear Sir/Madam,

The UK National Screening Committee has decided not to recommend systematic population screening for cardiac conditions associated with sudden cardiac death (SCD) in the young. This conclusion seems to stem mainly from the fact that most research in this important area has been conducted on professional athletes, rather than general population study groups. Welsh Hearts has been conducting cardiac screening sessions for several years and we have screened many hundred individuals and found a higher incidence of both life-limiting and life-affecting cardiac conditions than that published in the literature. This may be because there is a suggestion from the Wales Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy genetic testing service that the genetic prevalence of susceptible genes in Wales is different from the data in published the literature. It is possible therefore that published international screening studies may not always be applicable to the Wales population, and the negative cost/benefit conclusions from some studies may not be relied upon. To directly address the lack of clear data in the Welsh population we call upon the Welsh Assembly to fund Welsh Hearts to continue screening and keep a systematic registry of all abnormalities detected. This will then inform future decisions about systematic population screening in Wales.

The greatest evidence for the benefit of screening for SCD in the young is from studies on professional athletes and this has formed the basis for the European Society of Cardiology and International Olympic Committee recommending cardiac screening for any young person taking part in competitive sport. We therefore call upon the Welsh Assembly to fund Welsh Hearts to work with Sport Wales and screen all young people taking part in competitive sport in our clubs and societies, even though they are not paid professionals. This approach would cut through the barrier of inequalities in access to health and seek to improve the cardiac health of all young people regardless of their sociodemographic background.

Kind Regards

Sharon