

Angina clinic for hospital outpatients

Jane Caton, an angina specialist nurse at Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust, has set up nurse-led clinics for patients with angina. Four angina clinics are run weekly in hospital outpatients, each with capacity to see 7–9 patients.

After discharge from hospital patients with angina often come back into A&E with symptoms. The clinics offer ongoing follow-up and support to those who have been in hospital with angina or who have unstable angina.

Ms Caton has also set up a nurse-led rapid-access clinic for patients with chest pain who have attended their GP with a new onset of chest discomfort. These patients are seen within two weeks of referral at the clinic.

Looking back on the experience, Ms Caton says: 'I think initially I was naive. The number of patients was daunting and I had no secretarial support. I was making appointments, sending letters to patients and GPs, doing my own typing.'

Fortunately, the clinic now receives five hours of secretarial support a week. Having previously worked as a coronary care sister in the same hospital meant that Ms Caton had a sufficiently high profile to make the process of publicising the clinics and securing multidisciplinary support straightforward.

Ms Caton says: 'I would advise any nurse setting up a clinic not to run before you can walk and to be sure to get all systems in place before the launch. You do have to be prepared to put work in at the beginning but I did run myself into the ground. Sometimes we do say yes when we mean no.'