



Press Release

Tuesday 31st March, 2009

World's First Use of a New Cardiac Device at Beacon Hospital

*- Successful First Use of the Amplatzer Cardiac Plug by
Beacon Hospital's Cardiac Team -*

The world's first use of a new cardiac device, known as the Amplatzer Cardiac Plug (ACP), was successfully used on a patient at Beacon Hospital in recent weeks. Consultant Cardiologist at Beacon Hospital, Kevin Walsh, used the device on the patient, with the team from AGA Medical, the creators of the device, in attendance to witness this medical milestone.

The device takes its name from its creator, Kurt Amplatz (see below for further information), and is a self-expanding transcatheter plug that can be inserted on the left side of the heart to reduce risk of stroke in patients with atrial fibrillation. It is designed to block the left arterial appendage from the bodies' circulation and thereby prevent the clots that can form in this area of the heart breaking free and travelling to the brain causing a stroke.

The device is inserted using a catheter through the groin, therefore avoiding the need for open-heart surgery.

Over 90% of clots which form in the left atrium of patients with atrial fibrillation form in the left atrial appendage and as such a patients stroke risk can be significantly reduced by the insertion of the Amplatzer Cardiac Plug. There are 4.5 million people with atrial fibrillation in Europe, of whom two thirds of these are at high-risk of stroke, which increases with age.

According to Kevin Walsh, Consultant Cardiologist at Beacon Hospital, “The Amplatzer cardiac plug is both easier to use, safer and more effective than previously tried devices. Currently patients with atrial fibrillation are usually prescribed a blood thinning medication where dose regulation can be difficult to manage and as such many patients still remain at risk of a stroke despite medication.”

“Our patient was deemed particularly suitable for this procedure as he has an irregular heart beat for which he takes blood thinner. His occupation working as a tradesman means he can sometimes receive nicks and cuts, which as he is taking a blood thinning medication result in prolonged periods of bleeding affecting his working ability. Following the procedure he was able to come off his anti-coagulant treatment without being at an increased risk of stroke resulting in a much improved quality of life and better outcome for the patient”, said Dr Walsh.

The Beacon Hospital Team Responsible for World’s First Use of the Amplatzer Cardiac Plug

Dr Kevin Walsh, Cardiologist

Dr John Magnier, Anaesthetist

Therese Moloney, Cath Lab sister

About the Amplatzer Cardiac Plug

The Amplatzer Cardiac Plug (ACP) is a transcatheter self-expanding device constructed from a nitinol mesh and polyester patch. ACP consists of a lobe and a disc connected by a central waist. The ACP is available in a range of sizes designed to suit individual patients heart size. ACP is manufactured by AGA Medical and has been licensed for use across Europe.

About Kurt Amplatz – Creator of the Amplatzer Cardiac Plug

Kurt Amplatz was born in Weistrach, Lower Austria, on February 25, 1924, and graduated from the University of Innsbruck with a medical doctorate degree in 1951. He subsequently emigrated to the United States to pursue training in diagnostic radiology, which he successfully completed at Wayne State University in 1957. On completion of his training, Dr. Amplatz took a position at the University of Minnesota

under Dr. Leo Rigler and spent his entire academic career at this institution, where he achieved the rank of full professor of radiology and was director of the division of cardiovascular and interventional radiology.

Over the past 40 years, Dr. Amplatz has been one of the most prolific and inventive individuals in academic radiology. In the diagnostic field, some of his most notable inventions include vascular injectors for angiography, a chair for pneumoencephalography and autotomography, and the slot cardiovascular device to limit scattered radiation. In the interventional procedures field, his inventions include many tools that are currently in use, including the Amplatz access needle; catheters for selective coronary arteriography; the Amplatz guidewires; the Amplatz thrombectomy device; the nephrostomy dilatation set for the creation of percutaneous access to the kidney, which revolutionized the management of renal stones.

He has produced many academic texts during this time and has received numerous awards for his scientific work.

On retiring as professor of radiology from the University of Minnesota in 1997, he helped found the company AGA Medical and is still inventing devices that simplify the repair of cardiac defects, avoiding the need for open-heart surgery.

About Beacon Hospital

The 238,000 sq ft, nine-floor Beacon Hospital was opened in October 2006, and provides world-class acute care services, including heart surgery, neuro-surgery, and emergency medicine services. Beacon Hospital has eight operating theatres, two endoscopy suites and fourteen critical care beds. The eight operating theatres are divided into dedicated rooms for neurosurgery, urology, cardiac, general, orthopaedic and ophthalmic surgery.

The Critical Care Unit is a fourteen-bed unit with individual glass-fronted cubicles, in order to ensure privacy and to minimise the risk of infection. The open plan design allows for visibility of all patients at all times.

Beacon Hospital opened its Consultant-delivered Emergency Department at Beacon Hospital in March 2007. Beacon Emergency Department is the first Emergency Department in the Eastern region attached to an independent hospital, giving patients immediate access to all of the major specialities on site, including some of the most advanced diagnostic and laboratory services available in the region, such as X-Ray, Ultrasound, CT, MRI, routine and specialised blood tests.

Beacon Cancer Centre offers an unparalleled range of cancer treatment and uniquely has key services such as diagnostics, surgery, chemotherapy, radiology, two state-of-the-art Linear Accelerators (LINACs), and follow-up under one roof.

The hospital has also introduced a dedicated Beacon Women's Centre, which encompasses the full spectrum of women's gynaecological needs in a modern environment, utilising minimally invasive procedures whenever possible, with a speedy turn around time for patients.

Beacon Hospital is the European showcase for General Electric (GE) equipment and is the only hospital in Ireland that has a full complement of the most advanced radiology equipment under one roof.

About UPMC

UPMC, (University of Pittsburgh Medical Centre), is an integrated global health enterprise headquartered in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and one of the leading nonprofit health systems in the United States. As western Pennsylvania's largest employer with 48,000 employees and nearly \$7 billion in revenue, UPMC is transforming the economy of the region into one based on medicine, research and technology. By integrating 20 hospitals, 400 doctors' offices and outpatient sites, long-term care facilities and a major insurance plan, UPMC has advanced the quality and efficiency of health care and developed internationally renowned programs in transplantation, cancer, neurosurgery, psychiatry, orthopaedics and sports medicine, among others. UPMC is commercializing its medical and technological expertise by nurturing new companies, developing strategic business relationships with some of the world's leading multi-national corporations, and expanding into international markets including

Italy, Ireland, the United Kingdom and Qatar. For more information about UPMC, visit our website at www.upmc.com.