

## PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

# Optimizing care and quality indicators in the management of patients with acute ischaemic heart disease and atherothrombotic stroke: measuring to improve

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## What was this study about?

Acute ischemic heart disease (AIHD) and atherothrombotic stroke (AS) are serious cardiovascular conditions and major causes of death and long-term disability worldwide. These disorders share similar biological mechanisms, mainly driven by a process called atherothrombosis. Patient outcomes depend greatly on fast, high-quality emergency treatment and consistent long-term follow-up. However, the use of quality indicators (QIs), which help evaluate and improve care, is not yet standardized across healthcare systems.

## What did the study investigate?

This study aimed to create a coordinated and practical healthcare model for managing both AIHD and AS. The goal was to support better clinical outcomes and efficient care pathways by selecting a set of strong, measurable, and clinically relevant QIs. To do this, a multidisciplinary group of experts (physicians with diverse specialities)

took part in structured discussions and a formal consensus process to identify the most important QIs.

## What were the main findings?

The expert panel agreed on 16 QIs for each disease that cover the full patient journey, from early recognition and response to long-term prevention and follow-up. The model highlights several key aspects of high-quality care: rapid diagnosis, early and effective treatment, co-ordination among care teams, and regular monitoring of clinical goals.

## What do these results mean for patients?

The proposed set of QIs and the integrated care model offer a valuable framework to improve the quality and consistency of care for people experiencing AIHD or AS. By promoting clearer standards and continuous improvement, this approach may help support better outcomes for patients at high cardiovascular risk.