

## Report key messages

**Project title:** *National Audit of Cardiac Rhythm Management (NACRM)*

**Report ref. and name:** *National Audit of Cardiac Rhythm Management 2022 Summary Report (2020/21 data)*

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<b>Key message 1:</b>	The total number of pacemakers, implantable defibrillators, and cardiac resynchronisation devices implanted fell by 25-30% in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic year
<b>Key message 2:</b>	More than 10,000 fewer patients received these life-saving treatments in England and Wales, and this will have had significant impact on life and quality of life.
<b>Key message 3:</b>	Catheter ablation procedures for heart rhythm disturbances fell by 35% during the first pandemic year.
<b>Key message 4:</b>	This will have had a major impact on the quality of life of those on waiting lists, and for many patients the opportunity for successful treatment will have been missed.
<b>Key message 5:</b>	Most specialists have been undertaking fewer device and ablation procedures, and for some this may have led to a degree of 'de-skilling'. Likewise, the opportunities for the next generation of consultants to gain experience in these technically challenging procedures has been diminished.
<b>Key message 6:</b>	Most centres continue to meet the national standards for procedure volumes.
<b>Key message 7:</b>	Centres have been able to plan their services around the pandemic to avoid patients missing device changes for battery depletion. They have also been able to treat late complications arising from device implants in the previous year. Repeat ablations for atrial fibrillation, however, plunged by 75%.

### **100 word summary or abstract of the report:**

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly reduced activity. Implants of devices fell by 25-30% compared to previous years. For ablations, the fall was even greater at 35%. The impact varied greatly between hospitals, with some seeing more than 60% reductions in activity. Due to the drop in procedure volumes, slightly fewer doctors met minimum implant and ablation standards than in 2020/21. Fewer subspecialty trainees obtained the high-volume experience required. 1-year follow-up of patients implanted with devices shows that re-interventions have been unaffected. Follow-up data after ablation procedures performed prior to the pandemic show a substantial drop in re-interventions (75% for AF ablations).