

ACE-i	Angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor: a class of drug used after a heart attack, and other causes of weakening of the heart muscle, to treat and prevent heart failure. They stop the body's ability to produce angiotensin II, a hormone which causes blood vessels to contract, thus dilating blood vessels and this reduces the work the heart needs to do.
Acute coronary syndrome	Covers all episodes that result from sudden and spontaneous blockage or near blockage of a coronary artery, including heart attack and unstable angina.
Angina	Covers symptoms of chest pain that occur when narrowing of the coronary arteries prevent enough oxygen containing blood reaching the heart muscle when its demands are high, such as during exercise.
Angiogram	An X-ray investigation performed under a local anaesthetic that produces images of the flow of blood within an artery (in this case the coronary artery). Narrowing and complete blockages within the arteries can be identified, allowing decisions to be made regarding treatment, such as primary percutaneous coronary intervention or coronary artery bypass grafting.
Angiography	The technique of producing angiograms.
Angioplasty	A procedure used to treat the narrowed coronary arteries of the heart and angina in patients. Nowadays, the expression PCI is used.
Aortic stenosis	One of the most common and most serious valve disease problems. Aortic stenosis is a narrowing of the aortic valve opening and restricts the blood flow from the left ventricle to the aorta. It may also affect the pressure in the left atrium. The condition mainly develops during aging, as calcium or scarring damages the valve and restricts the amount of blood flowing through the valve.
ARB	Angiotensin II receptor antagonist/angiotensin receptor blocker: a group of medicines usually prescribed for those patients who are intolerant of ACE-Is. Rather than lowering levels of angiotensin II, they instead prevent the chemical from having any effect on blood vessels.
Atherosclerosis	A process where the walls of the arteries develop fatty deposits called atheroma.
Atrial fibrillation	A heart condition that causes an irregular and often abnormally fast heart rate. A normal heart rate should be regular and between 60 and 100 beats a minute when resting. In atrial fibrillation, the heart rate is irregular and can sometimes be very fast. In some cases, it can be considerably higher than 100 beats a minute.
Bare metal stents	Stents without a coating or covering, made of a mesh-like tube of thin wire.
BCCA	British Congenital Cardiac Association
BCIS	British Cardiovascular Intervention Society
BCS	British Cardiovascular Society
Beta blockers	A group of medicines that slow the heart rate, decrease cardiac output and lessen the force of heart muscle and blood vessel contractions. They are used to treat abnormal or irregular heart rhythms and abnormally fast heart rates, help prevent attacks of angina and are a key treatment for patients with heart failure.
BHRS	British Heart Rhythm Society
BPT	Best Practice Tariff
BSH	British Society for Heart Failure
CABG	Coronary artery bypass grafting: a surgical procedure where blood is bypassed around narrowed or blocked arteries by connecting or grafting a healthy artery or vein in its place.
Call-to-balloon time	The interval between the call for help to the emergency service and the beginning of the PCI procedure – an expression of the overall response of the healthcare system.
Call-to-door time	The interval between the call for help to the emergency service and the time the ambulance stops outside the hospital – an expression of the ambulance service response including the prioritisation of the call, the ambulance response time, the diagnosis and treatment at scene and the transport time.
Cardiac rehabilitation	A programme of exercise and information sessions designed to help patients who have had a heart attack and reduce their risk of a further heart event.
Cardiogenic shock	Occurs if the heart suddenly cannot pump enough oxygen-rich blood to the body. The most common cause is damage to the heart muscle from a severe heart attack.

Case mix	Refers to the different types of patients treated by a hospital or an operator.
CCAD	Central Cardiac Audit Database
Chronic total occlusions	Complete or almost complete blockage of a coronary artery for three months or more, caused by a heavy build-up of atherosclerotic plaque within the artery.
COP	Clinical Outcomes Publication: an NHS England initiative, managed by HQIP, publishing quality measures at the level of individual consultant doctors.
Coronary heart disease	A group of diseases that includes stable and unstable angina, myocardial infarction and sudden coronary death. It results from the narrowing or blockage of the coronary arteries, usually caused by atherosclerosis.
CQC	Care Quality Commission
CRT	Cardiac resynchronisation therapy (also known as biventricular pacing): aims to improve the heart's pumping efficiency by making the chambers of the heart pump together. 25–50% of all heart failure patients have hearts whose walls do not contract simultaneously. CRT involves implanting a CRT pacemaker or ICD with leads positioned to stimulate both ventricles. Most devices also include a third lead positioned in the right atrium to ensure that the atria and ventricles contract at the right times.
CRT-D	CRT with defibrillator.
CRT-P	CRT with pacemaker function only.
CVA	Cerebrovascular accident is the medical term for a stroke. A stroke is when blood flow to a part of your brain is stopped either by a blockage or the rupture of a blood vessel.
CVD	Cardiovascular disease: a general term for conditions affecting the heart or blood vessels. It is usually associated with a build-up of fatty deposits inside the arteries – known as atherosclerosis – and an increased risk of blood clots. There are different types of CVD, including coronary heart disease and other causes of heart damage such as valve disease.
DAPT	Dual anti-platelet therapy: using two drugs that inhibit platelet function by different mechanisms, thus enhancing the effect that can be achieved with just one drug.
Diuretic	A group of medicines that help to remove extra fluid from the body by increasing the amount of water passed through the kidneys. Loop diuretics are often used in heart failure patients to ease symptoms of oedema and breathlessness.
Door-to-balloon time	The interval between the time the ambulance stops outside the hospital (or the patient 'self-presents' at the hospital) and the beginning of the PCI procedure. This is an expression of the 'hospital' response, though the performance of an ECG before arrival at hospital and early warning by the ambulance service can alert the receiving hospital and so reduce this interval.
Drug-eluting stents	Metal stents that have been coated with a pharmacologic agent (drug) that is known to suppress restenosis (the reblocking or closing up of an artery after angioplasty due to excess tissue growth inside or at the edge of the stent).
ECG	Electrocardiogram: a diagnostic test that records the rhythm and electrical activity of the heart.
Echocardiogram	A diagnostic test that uses ultrasound to create two-dimensional images of the heart. This allows clinicians to examine the size of the chambers of the heart and its pumping function in detail, as well as examine valves and the myocardium (heart muscle).
EF	Ejection fraction: the left ventricle is the heart's main pumping chamber that pumps oxygenated blood through the ascending (upward) aorta to the rest of the body, so the ejection fraction is usually measured only in the left ventricle (LV). An LV ejection fraction of 55 percent or higher is considered normal.
Elective patients/surgery/procedure	Surgery that is scheduled in advance because it does not involve a medical emergency. A stable condition is one in which the condition of the patient is not expected to change in the near future.
ESC	European Society of Cardiology: a professional association for cardiologists across Europe, which aims to facilitate improved diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular disease in Europe. It runs numerous education and training events, and edits and publishes nine journals on cardiology. The ESC has produced numerous Clinical Practice Guidelines, which the audit uses, along with NICE guidance, as benchmarks for good practice.

Heart failure	A syndrome characterised by the reduced ability of the heart to pump blood around the body, caused by structural or functional cardiac abnormalities. The condition is characterised by symptoms such as shortness of breath and fatigue, and signs such as fluid retention. Acute heart failure (AHF) refers to the rapid onset of the symptoms and signs of heart failure, often resulting in a hospitalisation, and more common with a first presentation. Chronic heart failure (CHF) describes more stable symptoms, often following effective treatment for acute heart failure, or a more insidious deterioration, where the slow development of symptoms can more easily be missed. People with heart failure are characterised by periods of stability (CHF) when at best they are rendered asymptomatic, and a susceptibility to acute deteriorations or episodes of AHF. Effective treatment of the underlying cause and regular informed review will minimise or even abolish these episodes.
HES	Hospital episode statistics: a database containing details of all admissions, A&E attendances and outpatient appointments at NHS hospitals in England. Initially, these data are collected during a patient's time at hospital as part of the Commissioning Data Set (CDS). This is submitted to NHS Digital for processing and is returned to healthcare providers as the Secondary Uses Service (SUS) dataset and includes information relating to payment for activity undertaken. It allows hospitals to be paid for the care they deliver. These same data can also be processed and used for non-clinical purposes, such as research and planning health services. Because these uses are not to do with direct patient care, they are called 'secondary uses'. https://digital.nhs.uk/data-services/hospital-episode-statistics
HF_rEF	Heart failure with reduced ejection fraction: the most common type of heart failure due to left ventricular systolic dysfunction, where there is impaired contraction of the left ventricle.
HF_pEF	Heart failure with preserved ejection fraction: heart failure with impaired filling of the left ventricle when the heart muscle is thickened, often as a result of long-standing high blood pressure.
HLHS	Hypoplastic left heart syndrome: a type of congenital heart defect that affects normal blood flow through the heart. As the baby develops during pregnancy, the left side of the heart does not form correctly.
HQIP	Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership: established in April 2008 to promote quality in healthcare, and in particular to increase the impact that clinical audit has on healthcare quality improvement. It is an independent organisation led by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, The Royal College of Nursing and National Voices. www.hqip.org.uk
ICD	Implantable cardioverter defibrillator: a small device placed in the chest or abdomen to help treat irregular heartbeats called arrhythmias.
Interventional centre	A hospital equipped with catheter laboratories and trained staff to perform percutaneous coronary interventions (normally available around the clock); also known as a Heart Attack Centre or PCI hospital.
ITU	Intensive therapy unit
JAMA	Journal of the American Medical Association
LAuNCHeS	Linking Audit and National datasets for improvement in Congenital Heart Services
Lesion	Build-up of atheromatous debris on the internal walls of the artery that can be stable and unstable.
MINAP	Myocardial Ischaemia National Audit Project: a national clinical audit of the management of heart attacks.
MRA	Mineralocorticoid receptor antagonists: a group of diuretic medicines, whose main action is to block the response to the hormone aldosterone, which promotes the retention of salt and the loss of potassium and magnesium. MRAs increase urination, reduce water and salt, and retain potassium. They help to lower blood pressure and increase the pumping ability of the heart.
NACRM	National Audit of Cardiac Rhythm Management
NACSA	National Adult Cardiac Surgery Audit
NAHF	National Audit of Heart Failure
NAPCI	National Audit of Percutaneous Coronary Intervention
NCAP	National Cardiac Audit Programme
NCHDA	National Congenital Heart Disease Audit
NHS	National Health Service
NHS BT	National Health Service Blood and Transfusion
NIAP	National Infarct Angioplasty Project: a feasibility study looking at how primary angioplasty could be rolled out as the main treatment for heart attack in place of clot-busting drugs.

NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence: the official body in England that provides national guidance and advice to improve health and social care.
NICOR	National Institute for Cardiovascular Outcomes Research
NSF	National Service Framework: a ten-year strategy, published in 2000, setting quality standards for coronary heart disease care, aiming to reduce coronary heart disease and stroke-related deaths.
NSTEMI	Non ST-elevation myocardial infarction: a heart attack that occurs without ST-segment elevation on the ECG. It usually means a coronary artery is partly blocked, so emergency treatment to restore the blood flow may not be needed, but the long-term prognosis is actually worse than for STEMI.
OHCAO	Out of hospital cardiac arrest outcomes
Pacemaker	A small electrical device used to treat some abnormal heart rhythms.
PEDW	Patient Episode Database for Wales
PCI	Percutaneous coronary intervention: a technique to reopen a blocked coronary artery, also called angioplasty. Primary PCI means it is carried out as an emergency treatment for a heart attack, in which case it must be performed as soon as possible after the STEMI is diagnosed to prevent loss of heart muscle.
PHA UK	Pulmonary Hypertension Association
PPCI	Primary percutaneous coronary intervention (also known as primary angioplasty): used as an emergency treatment for patients who have had a heart attack.
PRAiS2	Partial Risk Adjustment in Surgery 2 model
RCT	Randomised controlled trial: a type of scientific (often medical) experiment which aims to reduce bias when testing a new treatment.
Revascularisation	The restoration of perfusion (blood flow) to a body part or organ that has suffered ischemia (inadequate blood supply). Cardiac surgery and angioplasty are the two primary means of revascularisation.
Reperfusion	The treatment that improves the blood supply to the heart, including PCI or thrombolysis, when a vessel has been suddenly blocked by a blood clot.
SCP	Surgical care practitioner
SCTS	Society for Cardiothoracic Surgery in Great Britain and Ireland
Sinus node disease	A group of abnormal heart rhythms (arrhythmias) caused by a malfunction of the sinus node, the heart's primary pacemaker; also called sinus node dysfunction, or sinoatrial disease.
STEMI	ST-elevation myocardial infarction: a heart attack characterised by a specific abnormal appearance on the ECG (ST-segment elevation), which usually means a coronary artery is completely blocked.
Stents	Metal mesh tubes used to open up a narrowed or blocked coronary artery to restore or improve blood flow to the heart.
TAVI	Transcatheter aortic valve implantation: a non-surgical alternative to open heart surgery to replace the aortic valve.
Tertiary centre	A hospital that provides tertiary care, which is healthcare from specialists with specific expertise in a given field, in a large hospital after referral from primary and secondary care. All major paediatric and adult heart surgery, and most new transcatheter procedures are undertaken at tertiary centres.
TGA	Transposition of the great arteries: a condition characterised by the aorta arising from the right ventricle and the pulmonary artery from the left ventricle; often associated with other cardiac abnormalities (e.g. ventricular septal defect). Newborns with transposed great arteries are very likely to die without an arterial switch operation. The operation, as the name implies, involves switching the aorta and pulmonary arteries back to their correct positions.
TGA-IVS	Transposition of the great arteries with an intact ventricular septum
Thrombolysis	An intravenous medication used to break down a clot in a coronary artery to restore the blood flow to the heart. Formerly the standard treatment for STEMI but now primary PCI is preferred as it is more effective.
Unstable angina	A sudden episode of chest pain, caused by a lack of oxygen supply to the heart, which is unpredictable and can occur when the patient is at rest. It is a type of acute coronary syndrome and should be treated as an emergency.
VLAD	Variable life adjusted display