



Aortic Dissection Awareness ANNUAL PATIENT EVENT

Birmingham | 18 Sept 2026



PROGRAMME

8:15 **Registration and coffee** – Join us early to meet your fellow members, patients and clinicians.

9:15 **Welcome** – Welcome from The ADA Chair and Michael Sabetai

OMG, What just happened?

9:25	Beginnings – a patient and surgeon narrative [Mr Amit Modi & Simon Gawthorne] A personal account of a medical emergency with a balanced surgical commentary from a leading aortic surgeon.
9:50	From Heart to Toe – Your aorta explained [Emma Hope, Aortic Nurse] A deeper explanation of aorta with examination of what key functions the organ performs, plus how and what can go wrong. We'll look at how an aorta is built, why it fails and we'll examine what an Aortic Dissection is and review the different types.
10:15	Spotting an Aortic Dissection [Prof Arun Pherwani] We'll look at the symptoms and discuss how do they feel? We'll discuss the role of the scan in diagnosis and review which types of scans are used, and ask why has the CT Scan become so important. How are clinical decisions made and what are the impacts?
10:30	A medical detective story [Prof Arun Pherwani] Understanding the numbers so that we can answer the question: How many dissections take place? This medical detective story takes us through an investigation into statistics, epidemiology, coding, problems, data and implications.
10:40	A patient story – 'Me and my type B' – Fireside Chat [Rachel Martin, Patient & Simon Jones, Patient] We'll hear what it's like to live through a Type B dissection, the post care and eventual surgery at Liverpool Heart & Chest Hospital.

11:05 BREAK FOR REFRESHMENTS

What can we do about it?

11:35	Safe transfers – [Dr Alistair Hellewell, A&E Doctor Helicopter South West Ambulance] A broad overview of transfer medicine with a focus on aortic dissection. Going beyond getting the patient from A to B, we'll look at how to get the patient stable. We'll delve into the teamwork resource coordination, and examine some of the difficult choices facing medics.
12:00	Acute Aortic Syndrome – what happens when they decide to operate [Ms Karen Booth] Information session reviewing the surgical options and methods available for AD surgery, including grafts, stents, valves. We'll discuss important coordination between multiple teams and how decisions need to be made quickly, with serious consequences if it's not done right. Research has moved treatment forward from simple cube grafts replacing a section of the Aorta.
12:25	Meet your anaesthetist, don't forget the perfusionist! ICU and beyond [Dr Martin Lees] Anaesthesia, perfusion and ICU. How patients are kept pain free and how protecting the brain is considered. We look at the objective of keeping the patient safe, and our responses to the challenges of emergency major surgery, requiring a cool head and flexible clinical skills.

12:50 BREAK FOR LUNCH

13:50 **In Memory – Remembering friends [Lisa Skinner, Bereavement Lead]**

Options for change?

14:00	Pathways and SoPs – do we need them? [Mr Marcus Brooks] A leadership view about bringing together staff and hospitals to improve service.
14:20	The Virtual Ward – using technology to support patients at home [Dr Tara Mastracci] Better early care at home, plus a general look at projecting technology into the home environment to improve consistency and quality of care.
14:40	Aftercare – do we need a patient manifesto? [Prof Rob Sneyd] Emergency aortic surgery is more than just surviving; it's the beginning of a lifetime commitment to follow-up scans, blood tests, appointments and managing the possibility of further interventions. Often patients find it difficult to keep track of what is going on and what happens next. Let's look at what we could do better.

15:00 BREAK FOR REFRESHMENTS

Living with it – life after a dissection

15:20	DVLA – driving [Dr Nass Lamprakis] We'll look at the confusing landscape around driving with a dissection, referencing DVLA rules, guidance and advice.
15:45	Benefits [Sarah Nuttman, patient] How to navigate the benefits system and understanding what is available to Aortic dissection sufferers.
16:05	Complications and expectations [Mr Michael Sabetai & Clare Davis, patient] A surgeon and patient partner to share a challenging outcome and its impacts on a spinal cord injury patient, and then questions from the floor!
16:50	Closing Remarks – Chair [Anne Cotton] and Vice-Chair [Prof Rob Sneyd] Closing Remarks, Announcement & Preview/Handover of UK AD Awareness Day, UK 2027, Chair & Vice-Chair, wrap up & look ahead.
17:00	Close

Speakers 2026

(in order of appearance)

Mrs Anne Cotton,

BA Hons, PGCE, Chair of Aortic Dissection Awareness, UK & Ireland

Mr Michael Sabetai,

MD, PhD DIC, FRCS, Consultant cardiac and aortic surgeon at Guy's and St Thomas', CHAIR of UK-AS.org

Mr Amit Modi,

MBBS, MRCS, FRCS, Consultant Aortic Surgeon, Southampton, Treasurer of UK-AS.org. Cardio Thoracic medical advisor for Aortic Dissection Awareness UK & Ireland

Mr Simon Gawthorne,

Type A Patient from Southampton

Emma Hope,

RGN, BA Hons, Aortic Specialist nurse, Aortic Dissection Awareness UK & Ireland.

Professor Arun Pherwani,

MBBS, MS, MPhil, FRCS, Consultant Vascular Surgeon, University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust UK

Rachel Martin,

Patient Type B

Simon Jones,

Trustee of ADAUKI. Comms, Brand & Marketing lead, Aortic Dissection Awareness, UK & Ireland

Dr Alistair Hellewell,

MB BS FRCA Anaesthetist, Exeter and Medical supervisor of the South of England medical transfer service

Ms Karen L Booth,

MSc FRCS, Consultant Aortic Surgeon & UK-AS secretary

Dr Martin Lees,

MBBS, FRCA, BSc. Consultant in Anaesthesia & Cardiac Intensive Care, Clinical Director, Barts Hospital, London

Mrs Lisa Skinner,

BSc Hons, PGDip in OHS, Bereavement Support, Aortic Dissection Awareness UK & Ireland

Mr Marcus Brooks,

MA, MB BChir (Cambridge); MD (London, 2004); FRCS; FRCS. Consultant vascular and endovascular surgeon at North Bristol NHS Trust. Also, president elect for the Vascular Society. Vascular medical advisor for Aortic Dissection Awareness UK & Ireland

Dr. Tara Mastracci,

MD, MSc FRCSC, Consultant complex aortic surgeon at Barts Heart Centre

Professor Robert Sneyd,

MD, MA, MB, BChir, FRCA, SFHEA, DL, PhD, Vice-Chair, Aortic Dissection Awareness UK & Ireland and Emeritus Professor Faculty of Health, Plymouth

Dr Nass Lamprakis,

MD, MBA, Senior DVLA doctor and advisor

Miss Sarah Nuttman,

BA Hons, 1st UK Thoracafto Patient in UK, Social Media manager for Aortic Dissection Awareness UK & Ireland



Our photographer will record the day. Photos will be featured on the AD Awareness UK & Ireland website, communications and social media. Any delegate not wishing to appear in photos or videos should take a X cross sticker and place it on their top. (Available at the check-in desk.) We will then edit you out of any public photos.