

Mexichem - Runcorn

“It was purely by chance that I even had my NHS Health Check, but it saved my life!” - Kath Fleming

The Halton Health Improvement Team approached me in the summer of 2017 about offering on-site NHS Health Checks to our staff in Halton. The scheme is free and can flag up early warning signs of many potentially serious diseases. As part of my role as Interim HR Manager, I had been asked to consider what we could do differently at Mexichem and this fitted perfectly. I believe that improving and protecting the health and wellbeing of all employees has benefits not just for the individual, but for the organisation too. A healthier workforce means less absenteeism and cost savings in the long term.

During the first session, Health Trainer Colin had a couple of free appointments so asked if I'd like to have a check myself.

I knew I had high blood pressure and was on medication for it but frankly, I was feeling fit and well. However, during my appointment, Colin suggested I should make an appointment as soon as possible with my doctor because my blood pressure and heart rate were much higher than they should be!

Feeling rather worried, I did just that and managed to get an appointment with my GP that same day.



It took a while but after seeing a couple of different doctors and a referral to my local hospital I was diagnosed with Atrial Fibrillation or AF - an abnormal heart rhythm. It can be very serious if left untreated and increases your risk of having a stroke.

Symptoms can include palpitations (being aware of your heart beat), tiredness, shortness of breath and dizziness or feeling faint. But I had none of these! Surprisingly though, that's not that unusual, some people never have any symptoms, while others may only have quite mild ones. I'm now taking medication to prevent a stroke and control my heart rate.

To find out I had this potentially serious condition was a bit of a shock but also a wake-up call. I cannot thank Colin and the team enough - without the NHS Health Check I may never have found out I had AF.

Mexichem and Halton Health Improvement Team are continuing their work to develop health and wellbeing services for staff not only at Mexichem itself, but also for other organisations who are based at the Heath in Runcorn.

For details of our Workplace Health Solutions call 0300 029 0029 or email HIT@halton.gov.uk