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| **Module** | Management of VKAs (HCP) |
| **Topic** | Introduction to patient self-monitoring of oral anticoagulation |
| **Content** | Extra content – safety of self-monitoring |
| **Audience** | Healthcare professional |
| **Version** | 1 |

**Is patient self-monitoring of oral anticoagulation safe?**

When considering the safety of self-monitoring, researchers have tried to answer two main questions:

i**) Will self-monitoring improve INR control compared with attendance at a conventional anticoagulant clinic?**

Randomised controlled trials published over the last 24 years have looked at the safety of patient self-monitoring of oral anticoagulation (PST or PSM). Most studies did this by following two groups of people – one group who were self-monitoring and another group who were attending an anticoagulant clinic – over a period of time and then compared how often people in these two groups were at the correct INR.

These studies found that the INR control of those who were self-monitoring was at least as good as, if not better than, the INRs of those attending an anticoagulant clinic.

**ii) Is patient self-monitoring less likely to result in thrombosis or haemorrhage?**

This type of evidence is important as it measures actual clinical events.

Three large reviews that have collected together between 14 and 22 oral anticoagulation self-monitoring trials. These reviews included trials where people were self-managing and also trials where they were self-testing. The results of these trials were then combined to identify if self-monitoring causes less bleeding or clotting than conventional care. These reviews found that those who were self-monitoring their INR were less likely to have a blood clot, and also less likely to suffer from a minor bleed.

If you would like to explore the evidence for self-monitoring in more depth, please click on the links in the reference list below to access some key published papers that are freely available. *[link to supplemental content –09\_hcp\_operational processes\_extra content\_safety of self-monitoring\_ver3]*