Cardiac Care scenario

Polly is a 46 year old female, she called this morning for an on the day appointment due to central chest pain. The GP who triaged Polly over the phone has booked her in for an ECG with you (the practitioner).

Take a history from Polly:

The information you have is:

Sudden onset chest pain. The pain has been coming and going over the last two days and Polly rated it a six out of ten. Polly has described the pain as a dull ache and feels it is getting more frequent. Polly has no radiation of this pain. The pain is worse in the evening. Polly has been taking paracetamol for the pain with little effect.

Polly has no past medical history apart from a slightly raised cholesterol.

No medications listed.

No Allergies.

Polly smokes 20 a day and drinks 12 units a week, she does not take any recreational drugs.

Polly works as a teacher.

She lives with her husband and 2 children in a house.

Polly is fully independent, has no carers and is fully mobile.

With this history what would you do?

The GP who triaged Polly over the phone has booked her in for an ECG and blood test with you (the practitioner).

Do you have any concerns with this?

Do you check all your patients on your list at the beginning of the day?

You are working through your list of patients for the day and the receptionist knocks on your door to inform you that a patient who you are due to see later today has attended early and she doesn’t look ‘very well’.

What do you do?

By very well the receptionist tells you the chest pain is getting worse and the patient is very agitated and uncomfortable.

After identifying the patient on your list and reading the GP notes from the triage this morning you ask her to come straight in for the ECG and notify the GP that spoke to her that she was here.

Polly was able to walk into the consulting room but upon entering the room you see her face and she is grey in colour; she is clammy and sweaty and by her facial expressions she is in significant pain.

What is the next actions?

Vital signs:

Blood pressure- 110/82

HR- 62

SATS: 96%

Temp: 37.5

RR: 20

Cap refill <2 secs

You ask the receptionist to call an ambulance and to explain the situation- adult female with central chest pain.

Polly is finding it hard to speak now and is gesturing that the pain is going down her left arm.

You do the ECG and can see clear STEMI waves.

What do you do? What may help you- NICE.

GTN spray is given with 300mg Aspirin and oxygen.

Whilst waiting for the ambulance you do a trop.

The ambulance arrives and the patient is taken to hospital with your trop sample.

This has taken 40 minutes and you have a queue of patients waiting- what would you do?

A week later the GP comes to you with a discharge summery from the hospital and says that the patient had to have five stents inserted but is now doing well.

Reflect on this

How does it make you feel?

Are you frustrated?

Are you proud of your actions?

What would you do differently next time?

Did you feel supported?