Table 1

Summary of new key recommendations in the updated NICE guideline

- Refer patients with suspected heart failure and previous MI to have echocardiography and a specialist opinion within two weeks
- Measure serum natriuretic peptides in patients with suspected heart failure without previous MI and refer according to level (see figure 2, p30)
- Offer both an ACE inhibitor and a licensed beta-blocker to all patients with heart failure due to left ventricular systolic dysfunction
- Seek specialist advice if the patient remains symptomatic despite optimal therapy with an ACE inhibitor and beta-blocker
- All patients with heart failure require monitoring
- When the patient is admitted to hospital with heart failure specialist advice should be sought on their management
- Patients should be discharged from hospital only when stable and the management plan has been optimised
- Offer supervised group exercise-based rehabilitation to all patients with heart failure