

Patient Information

Stroke - our role in stroke care

It can take an unspecified length of time to recover from a stroke.

Recovery may not restore the individual to their previous level of ability. Each person is an individual and a stroke affects people differently.

Quality stroke care which promotes optimum recovery and outcome for the individual following a stroke relies heavily on teamwork. This is due to the complex nature of a stroke.

All members of the stroke team play vital roles. At the heart of this team is the individual and their family, friends and/or carers.

Each week the stroke service team meets to discuss the individuals' progress and the way forward for the following week. This allows a co-ordinated approach to stroke recovery.

Assessments

The Stroke team will assess the individual. This helps to establish what has occurred and what the priorities should be.

This leaflet is designed to clarify the roles of the team involved in stroke care:

- **Doctors** work in teams but will be headed by a consultant. Individuals will be reviewed regularly throughout their stay by these teams. Contact with a consultant can be arranged via the consultants' secretary through the hospital switchboard.
- The **Specialist Nurse in stroke** will liaise with the multidisciplinary team. The nurse is available to provide a wide range of support and advice including health education and stroke care information

Conquest Hospital - Telephone: (01424) 755255

Ask for the Specialist Stroke Nurse on extension 7028 or 2734 or ask for bleep 2645 or by asking on Egerton Stroke Unit.

Eastbourne District General Hospital - Telephone: (01323) 417400

Ask for the Specialist Stroke Nurse on extension 3112 or ask for bleep 3112 or by asking on Wilmington Stroke Unit.

- The **Nursing Staff** consist of qualified nurses and healthcare assistants. These staff are knowledgeable in stroke care. The nursing staff will provide care and assistance with all aspects of individual nursing needs. The nursing staff will also be happy to answer questions.
- **Physiotherapist (Physio)** - Following your stroke you can experience a variety of problems. These may include some of the following:
 - Muscle weakness.
 - Muscle tightness.
 - Balance problems.
 - Loss of sensation.
 - Difficulties with co-ordination.

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Physiotherapy treatment will take place either in the gym or on the unit. Involvement of family / carers during rehabilitation is encouraged and may include assisting with individual exercise programmes. Practice between formal physiotherapy treatments is encouraged. Please ask the physiotherapist for advice.

- **Occupational Therapists (OT)** – The aim of occupational therapy is to maximise independence in your daily life. An Occupational Therapist will conduct specialist assessments and then work with you to design a programme of treatment based on your individual lifestyle and preferences, to improve your ability to participate in activities of daily living e.g. personal care tasks, drink/meal preparation etc.

An Occupational Therapist will assess your physical, cognitive and social needs and identify your strengths and the activities you may now find difficult. We often complete cognitive assessments to look at the way your stroke may have affected skills such as memory, concentration, vision, safety awareness, problem solving and the way you interpret your environment.

Occupational Therapists also help to assess and plan your discharge from hospital. You may need an assessment of your home environment. A “Home Visit” is where the Occupational Therapist takes you home for a visit to assess your safety and functioning. The OT will work with you to identify and agree any equipment or support that you will need to help maximise your independence. Alternatively if you are unable to attend, with your permission, an “Access Visit” may be arranged where you nominate a person to accompany the Occupational Therapist to assess your home environment for equipment needs.

Throughout your hospital stay your OT will support you to regain as much independence as possible and facilitate the hospital discharge process.

- A **Speech and Language Therapist** can assist with providing information, advice and support regarding the best way to communicate with the individual following a stroke, as they may have difficulties understanding speech and writing as well as expressing themselves. It is also the speech and language therapist’s role to assess and manage swallowing difficulties that often occur following a stroke. These difficulties may resolve in the early stages of recovery, but for some people the difficulty remains and requires close management to reduce the risk of aspiration (when food or drink enters the airway, causing choking, chest infections or pneumonia).
- The **Dietitian** will advise on nutrition support during your hospital stay if you have been referred by your doctor or nurse after completion of the malnutrition screening tool. All inpatients should be screened for malnutrition on admission to hospital and weekly throughout their hospital stay. Nutrition support includes any method of feeding that aims to improve or maintain the level of nutrients in your body. It could mean the use of special nutrient-rich foods, fortified foods and nutritional supplements, as well as artificial feeding using a dedicated feeding tube which passes into your stomach. More information about artificial feeding is available from your Dietitian.
- The **Discharge Nurse**, can help facilitate discharge from hospital through liaison with the individual and relevant members of the stroke care team.

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- The **Social Worker** may carry out an assessment to ensure that social needs are met on discharge. The social worker has a wide variety of resources available and can assist in arranging packages of care or finding a placement in a rest or nursing home. The social worker will guide you and your family, friends and/or carers through the process of funding the care you need with your consent.
- The **Hospital Chaplain** is available to discuss many issues and provide support to both you and your family. The issues you wish to discuss need not be of a religious nature. If you have religious issues you wish to discuss, the chaplain can arrange for the appropriate denomination to visit.

To arrange to see a chaplain please ask any member of the stroke team to notify the chaplain.

Sources of information

Stroke Association

Helpline: 0845 30 33 100
www.stroke.org.uk

Your GP**NHS Direct**

Telephone 0845 4647
www.nhsdirect.uk

Conquest Hospital

Egerton Stroke Unit, Telephone: (01424) 755255 ext 7028 or 2734

Eastbourne District General Hospital

Wilmington Stroke Unit, Telephone: (01323) 417400 ext 4712

Care for the Carers

There is a Hospital Liaison Worker Laura Rickaby, Telephone: (01323) 738390

Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) – details below.

Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

This information is available in alternative formats such as large print or electronically on request. Interpreters can also be booked. Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offices, found in the main reception areas:

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Conquest Hospital

Email: **palsh@esht.nhs.uk** - Telephone: **01424 758090**

Eastbourne District General Hospital

Email: **palse@esht.nhs.uk** - Telephone: **01323 435886**

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The multi-disciplinary stroke team have developed this patient information leaflet. All individuals within the team have been consulted throughout the development of the leaflet.

Date agreed: December 2011
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Responsible clinician: Dr M Rahmani
Lead Consultant in Stroke for East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust