

## Case Study: Identifying and supporting patients with mood disturbance after stroke at Charing Cross Hospital

### Challenge:

Provide high quality emotional support to patients after their stroke

### Solution:

- Held monthly team meeting to review and interpret SSNAP data and understand the current level of service being provided to patients with mood and cognition problems
- Adopted a 'bottom to top' approach where members of the MDT formed QI groups who worked autonomously on a specific area of care which needed improving searching for solutions independently
- Ensured the QI projects were driven by patient experience- 'How are you feeling?'
- Developed a patient leaflet on emotional issues after stroke which is available to all patients
- Wrote a piece on psychological issues after stroke for the trust magazine to spread awareness
- Carried out staff training about the importance of understanding a patients emotional state after stroke so the team are better equipped to handle problems related to mood and cognition
- Invited a stroke survivor to talk about the psychological impact of stroke to ensure all members of the MDT appreciated the complexities of the conditions
- Incorporated mood assessments on electronic documentation

### Impact:

- Team are now much more aware of emotional problems after stroke and understand importance of asking 'How are you feeling?' question
- Number of referrals to psychology have increased
- More cross team collaborations, whereby other members of staff such as nurses and doctors contact the psychologist to discuss a patient needs

If applicable, screened for mood by discharge from inpatient care Charing Cross HASU

2013/2014 – 54.5%

2016/2017 – 81.3%

*"I'm only 40 years old, yet the threat of having another stroke is constant. I have made a lot of progress but I still need regular cognitive behavioural therapy. If my state of mind hadn't been picked up by Ismalia and I hadn't been referred to Graham, I dread to think what emotional state I'd be in today"- Stroke Patient at Charing Cross Hospital*

*"A form of relief came the day Ismalia, a clinical nurse specialist in stroke, asked me: 'How are you feeling?' I burst into tears. With this simple question and the time given for me to explain, I told Ismalia about my anxious state of mind. She referred me to Dr Graham Jensch, the clinical psychologist for stroke patients".*

This case study was submitted by Ismalia De Sousa, clinical stroke nurse specialist at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

**Top tips**

- 1) Communicate updates to the wider MDT team and involve them
- 2) Think about who are your key members of the team
- 3) Involve your local communications team.
- 4) Share your project with others and celebrate them. There are so many great things that healthcare professionals do every day but we don't talk about them. Instead with tend to focus on what's not good enough.