Stroke therapies: East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust

Stroke therapies (SLT, OT, Physio & Assistant Practitioners) are delivered by an integrated stroke specialist team working across the whole stroke pathway including a 23 bedded acute stroke unit (ASU), 24 bedded rehabilitation stroke unit, and the East Lancashire community.

Up until the end of 2015, the trust was consistently at level E on SSNAP. During 2016 a stroke improvement programme crossing medicine, nursing and therapies was developed which included:

- Cross divisional bi-monthly operational and data meetings
- Detailed data analysis to scrutinise performance and reasons for poor results
- Dedicated data inputting support
- The development of a stroke booklet, following the patient's journey from ED, containing detailed clinical and activity recording guided by SSNAP domains and standards across all disciplines
- Increased staff awareness of SSNAP

These actions led to much more robust data capture and reporting and a detailed understanding of the quality of services being provided. Therapy staffing levels were well below recommended levels and a temporary increase in funding was made available. The robustness of the data capture enabled the demonstration of a direct correlation in improvement of therapy scores with the increase in staffing and this improvement was not maintained when staffing returned to core levels.

Working with a business analyst, a therapy workforce modelling tool was developed to determine the increase in staffing needed to improve patient care in terms of responsiveness, amount of therapy per day, and number of days of therapy provided. The metrics from the relevant SSNAP domains were used together with therapy job planning modelling and skill mix review to create the business case for a six day therapy service on ASU which has now received executive approval.

Crucial to the success of the business case was the ability to demonstrate no further significant improvements could be made without staffing changes, clear workforce modelling based on SSNAP metrics and testing the impact of changes in therapy workforce levels.

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