

Case Study: Improving the Six month Post Stroke Review process for service, patients & carers.

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Background:

The local Community Stroke Rehabilitation Team is already nationally recognised for providing both Early Supported Discharge (ESD) and Six Month Post Stroke reviews. As part of ongoing service development, both the process and outcome required for effective six month reviews was commenced.

The locally agreed Six Month Post Stroke model provides a comprehensive review by a Qualified Allied Health Professional (AHP) within 4-8 months of stroke to assess progress and identify any unmet needs across recognised health, psychological, leisure, social and work domains. Choice of telephone or face to face (home or clinic environment) is given to support varying mobility requirements, transport and communication or cognitive difficulties.

What happened and how?

The work has been led by Stroke Coordinator and CST Team Lead:

- Robust examination of SSNAP data and detailed breakdown of the number of patients receiving, declining or not receiving a six month review was undertaken to fully understand the service.
- Random sampling of completed reviews obtained more detailed feedback regarding processes and preferred review model from both service and patient / carer perspective.
- Training / competencies required for reviewers

Anonymised Patient case study:

John, 52 year old gentleman who lives alone, keen athlete and works as HGV driver was admitted with diagnosed Stroke in October 2016. John received 6 weeks of intensive ESD rehabilitation; home and gym based activities. Discharge outcome was full mobility, return to everyday activities of daily living and driving which he reported satisfaction with. Unable to return to his previous job role, he was being supported by his employers in finding new opportunities.

Six month review outcome:

Initial telephone contact with John identified domains of low mood and social issues with face to face visit provided by AHP within two days to discuss further. John reported he felt that the real impact of stroke occurred much later. He described a changed perception of self of *'no longer fit and strong'* had *'hit him like a hammer'*.

The domains identified were used as basis to explore impact of stroke and progress achieved with self-management advice and support as well as signposting to gym and Stroke Association. A further telephone review in four weeks demonstrated an increased confidence in self and feeling more *'like himself'*.

John's feedback:

- *Thank you for the support, it came at the right time as needed to talk things through with someone who understood stroke. It was great to see the same person who had worked with me previously and helped me realise how far I'd come and potential for further recovery. Life doesn't seem so bleak now'*

Reviewer's feedback:

- *'Having the potential to re-visit John further down his stroke journey enabled me to consider the impact of stroke longer term and how this can change over time. Knowing John from before helped in that I could reinforce progress made, discuss his concerns and support with developing new coping strategies. Having the potential to support patients and influence change at a later stage demonstrates how important 6 month reviews are'*

Project Results so far:

- Local and national metrics evidence improvements with increase seen in numbers of completed six month reviews as well as confidence of staff completing reviews.
- Essential to have robust systems in place to collate submit and analyse data as well as support from Trust Audit Department.

Benefits from the CST Six Month Post Stroke Review model:

- ESD service supporting over 40% of patients provides prior knowledge of the patient / carer. Provides background to compare new or ongoing environmental, physical and / or psychological difficulties that may arise
- Provides consistency and continuity to service as well as to patient / carer
- Immediate access and strong networks built within local stroke pathway, primary and secondary care services and agencies
- Access to hospital systems i.e. to provide background / additional information as required regarding patient health since discharge i.e. patient deceased, hospital admissions & / or investigations / clinic reviews etc.
- Specialist knowledge and experience of reviewer working within local stroke pathway with ability to provide further reviews as appropriate to patient / carer needs.
- Impact to reduce risk of re-admission / referral to other services through immediate action of issues identified
- Strong interdisciplinary approach within team with specialist training and competency framework in stroke care

Options for further service review and developments identified:

- Continue to use SSNAP to monitor data and enable user friendly audit processes
- Continued focus on developing 6 month service and outcomes
- Development of vocational role within Six month review model
- Supporting scope for further reviews and options for long term rehabilitation within CST service