

Are in-patients with stroke in the UK getting enough therapy? Data from the national stroke registry for England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Introduction

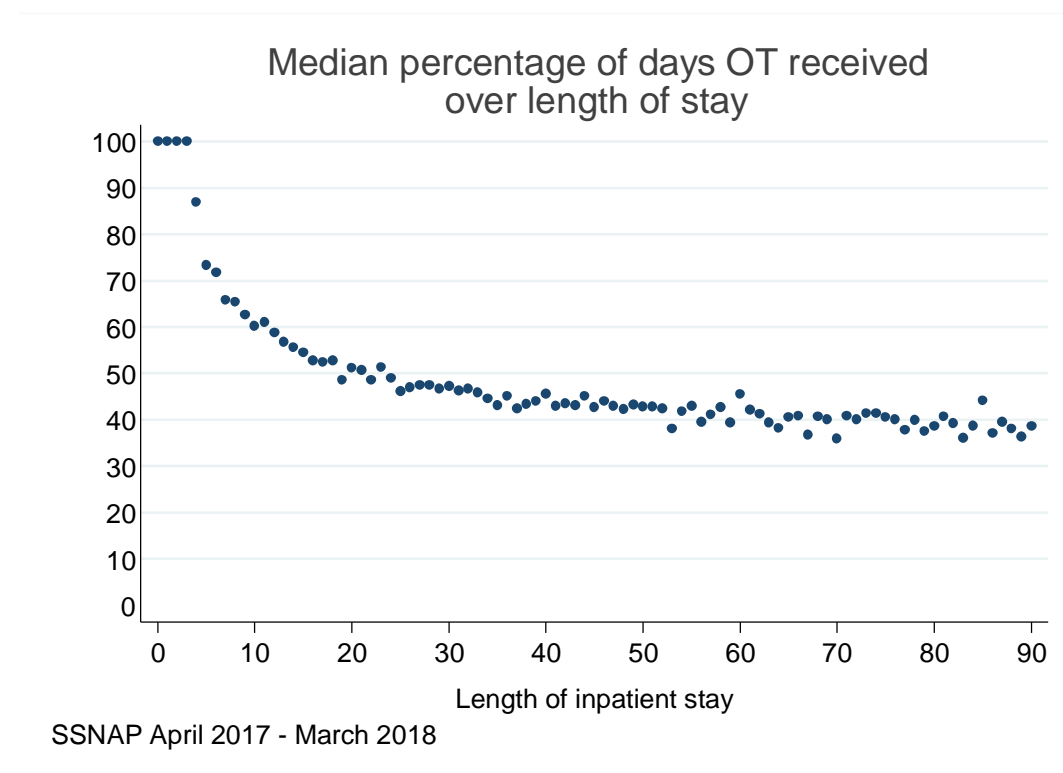
Occupational therapy (OT), physiotherapy (PT), and speech (SLT) are integral to stroke rehabilitation. National Clinical Guidelines for Stroke 2016, recommend a minimum of 45 minutes per day of each appropriate therapy, for a minimum of 5 days per week where it can be tolerated.

Methods

Data from 82,190 patients discharged between April 2017-March 2018 were analysed from the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme (SSNAP). Number of days therapy was applicable, median average number of minutes per day and percentage of days therapy received were calculated using OT as the exemplar.

Results

Median length of stay was 7 days (IQR 3-23). The proportion of days therapy was received decreases after 4 days from 100% to 60% after 14 days. Over 90 days median minutes of therapy given on the day treated remained unchanged at about 40 minutes, as did the proportion of days on which patients were considered well enough to be treated.



Conclusion

Our findings indicate the intensity of therapy declines sharply after the first 5 days. This decline particularly affects the more disabled patients with longer lengths of stay, when they may be the very patients for whom maximising therapy input would make the greatest difference to outcome. Data not presented show a similar pattern for PT and SLT.