

STROKE WELLBEING SERVICE NEWSLETTER

The quarterly newsletter produced by the
North Cumbria Stroke Wellbeing Service



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Introduction

Welcome to the second edition of the Stroke Wellbeing Service Newsletter. In this issue we will be updating you on the past 3 months in the service and have some articles that we hope you will find useful.

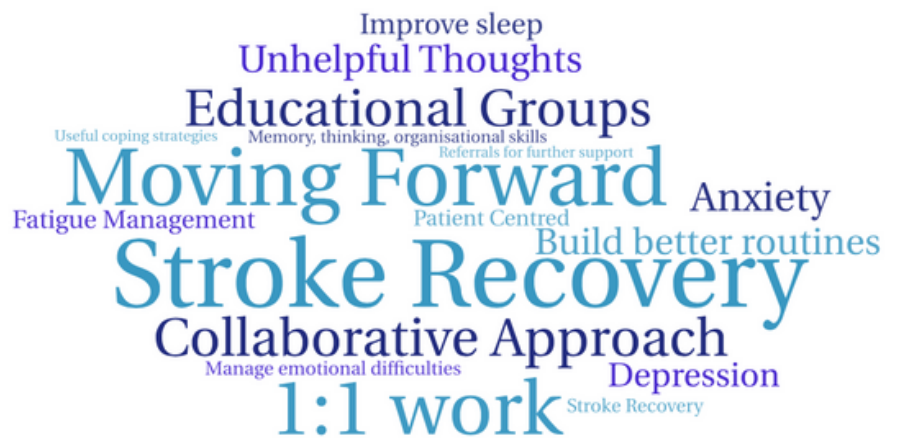
See you in the Winter for our next issue!

- The Stroke Wellbeing Service

Service update

It has been an interesting three months for the Stroke Wellbeing Service since our last newsletter!

On the 1st June we started working on the ward and are now present on the ward as a team 6 days a week, seeing patients on both the Hyper Acute Stroke Unit and the Elm A Neurorehabilitation Ward.



We are now offering one to one rehabilitation and treatment as well as starting to run some groups (within the social distancing guidelines).

In July we also started working over on Ward 3 at the West Cumberland Hospital in Whitehaven to ensure continuity and equity of care throughout North Cumbria.

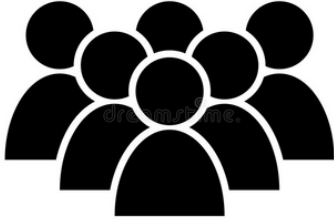
We continue to offer ongoing work with patients following their discharge from hospital, carrying out interventions on the telephone and through video calls.

It's been an interesting and busy 3 months, with lots of change but we have really enjoyed working with our patients on the wards and we would like to thank the MDT and medical staff on the HASU, Elm A and Ward 3 for welcoming us so warmly and helping us to settle in to our new team!



Service Developments

Groups



Our aim has always been to run groups with people who have experienced a stroke. We know that there can be a huge benefit in facilitating groups as it allows people to share their experiences.

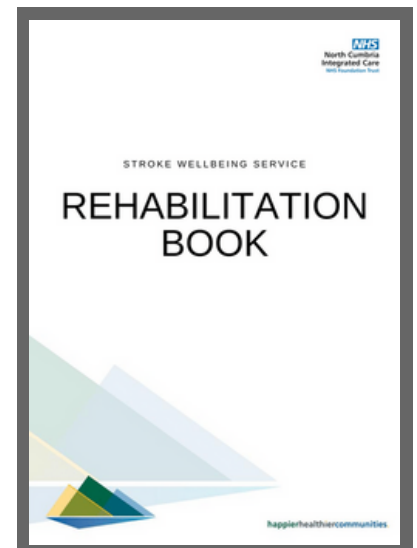
With the social distancing rules we have not been able to offer the community groups we would have liked at this time but we have started to run groups on the ward.

Our groups so far have focused on relaxation and cognitive rehabilitation, but we aim to add to this with groups on stroke, mood, anxiety and other common difficulties after stroke. We are also working on starting the community groups, and with the help of technology we should have these up and running soon. Get in touch and let us know what groups you would like to see.

Rehabilitation booklet

We have now introduced a rehabilitation booklet we are using with our patients during their time as an inpatient. The booklet is a way that we can help you to set goals and work towards them as well as keep a track of your time on the ward and your progress.

The booklet also allows us to learn more about you and helps us to work with you to understand what will happen after you leave the hospital. We hope you enjoy the booklet, We would love to hear your feedback and you can speak to one of the team or contact us on the email address at the back of this newsletter.



Mood problems after a stroke

Depression is a common difficulty after a stroke, with a stroke an often life changing event. It is normal to feel low in mood or down as you might be experiencing a lot of life changes or a long road to recovery.

Depression is what happens when those feelings don't go away. Depression can affect people in many ways. They can feel low in mood and experience less pleasure or interest in doing things they used to enjoy.

There are often changes to sleep patterns and people can feel more tired than usual and it can affect your appetite.

People also report negative thoughts about themselves or the situation they are in and report feeling hopeless about the future. Sometimes people might also have thoughts of hurting themselves or ending their life.



Because depression can affect your motivation it might be harder to work with your therapy team and this can get in the way of your recovery. This means that it is important to act quickly if you suspect you might be depressed so that you can get the right treatment as soon as possible.

Seeking help

It is important to seek help if you think you are depressed. Your GP can be a good source of help and they might recommend medication or talking therapy. If you are still an inpatient on the ward, you can talk to your doctor, a nurse or one of your therapy team who might recommend an anti depressant, or refer you to the Stroke Wellbeing Service if you are not already working with us.



The Stroke Wellbeing Service can offer you help with your mood in the early weeks after your stroke. We know that if people have access to this early support it can help them to recover in the longer term. Sometimes though, depression can happen weeks, months or years later and it is important to get in touch with your GP early.

If you have thoughts about harming yourself or ending your life it is important to take this seriously and contact your GP right away so they can arrange the right sort of help and support for you. Out of hours you should call NHS Direct on 111 for help, and the Samaritans are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on 116 123.

In order to manage symptoms of depression, it is important to take part in meaningful activities, stay connected to other people and live a healthy lifestyle. This involves a healthy diet, quitting smoking, reducing alcohol intake and taking part in regular exercise where possible.

Different kinds of stroke

There are different kinds of stroke and it can be confusing to understand the medical terminology.

An ischemic stroke is the most common type of stroke. This is when a blood vessel in the brain is blocked, stopping the blood from getting through. This can be caused by a blood clot. If you have an ischemic stroke, you might have something called thrombolysis. This is a clot busting treatment that breaks down the clot in your brain. Some people will have a thrombolectomy which is where the clot is removed with surgery.



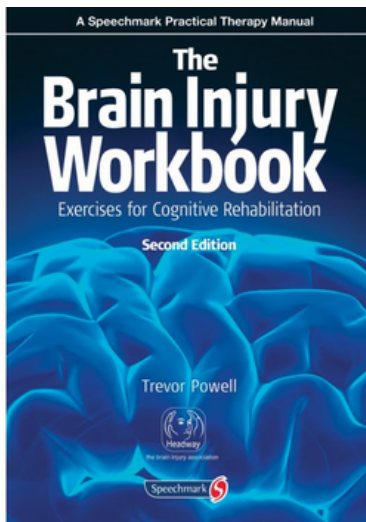
A haemorrhagic stroke is a bleed in or around the brain. This is a less common type of stroke. It can be intracerebral (when an artery inside your brain bursts) or subarachnoid (when bleeding occurs between the brain and the skull). A haemorrhagic stroke can be caused by things like high blood pressure or an aneurysm.

A TIA is also known as a mini stroke. TIA stands for Transient Ischemic Attack. This means that it is just like an ischemic stroke, but the blockage is temporary. Usually the clot causing the blockage will break down on its own or moves, allowing the blood flow to return. A TIA will have symptoms like a stroke but they will not last. It is however a medical event that should be treated seriously. A TIA is a warning sign of a full stroke and you should seek immediate medical help.



Book review

The Brain Injury Workbook – Trevor Powell



The Brain Injury Workbook is a book used by professionals as well as those who have experienced a stroke or brain injury. If you are working with the Stroke Wellbeing Service, you might be familiar with some of the exercises in there.

The workbook is a compilation of different worksheets designed to be worked through after a stroke or brain injury. It contains information in an easy to read way with no jargon or medical terms.

The workbook has three sections to work through. Part one, Living with a Brain Injury contains information sheets on different kinds of brain injury, including stroke, as well as the common after effects such as memory problems, fatigue and behaviour changes. Part two, Cognitive Rehabilitation Exercises is full of worksheets of various exercises that can be used to improve the cognitive (thinking) changes following a stroke. Part three, Emotional Adjustment Exercises focuses on awareness and insight, adjustment and coping, and acceptance and growth.

The workbook is available on Amazon though it is often expensive to purchase new. Speak to your key worker in the Stroke Wellbeing Service for more information.



Get involved

We would love to hear from our readers. What do you think of our newsletter? Get in touch and let us know what kinds of features you would like to see.

We'd also love to feature some of our success stories. So if you've had a positive outcome working with the stroke wellbeing service and want to share it in the next issue, let us know!

Email: strokewellbeingservice@ncic.nhs.uk

Further Resources

<https://php.cumbria.nhs.uk/patients/resources/neuropsychology> - This website has been designed to give you some extra information on things you can try yourself to manage the problems most commonly reported by the people we see

<https://php.cumbria.nhs.uk/about-our-services/neuropsychology/strokewellbeingservice> - Our new service webpage

www.stroke.org.uk - The Stroke Association support people to rebuild their lives after stroke

Stroke Association Helpline: 0303 3033 100



Further information

Confidentiality

'The Trust's vision is to keep your information safe in our hands.' We promise to use your information fairly and legally, and in-line with local and national policies. You have a right to understand how your information is used and you can request a copy of the information we hold about you at any time.

For further information contact the Information Governance Team on 01228 608998
or email: Information.Governance@cumbria.nhs.uk

Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback, which helps us to improve our services. If you have any comments, compliments or complaints to make about your care, please contact the Patient Experience Team. Email: PET@cumbria.nhs.uk Tel: 01228 602128 Freephone: 0800 633 5547

If you would like this leaflet in another language or format, for example Braille, large print or audio, please call: 01228 603890, Email: communications.helpdesk@cumbria.nhs.uk or write to Engagement and Communications Voreda House | Portland Place | Penrith | CA11 7QQ

Contact Us

If you would like any additional information about the support we can offer please contact us via phone or email using the details below.

01768 245 954 | strokewellbeingservice@ncic.nhs.uk

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