

For immediate release

Clinical leadership: Creating value in South London cardiac rehabilitation services

12 July 2011: The South London and Cardiac and Stroke Network (SLCSN) and its partner organisation, St George's Healthcare NHS Trust (SGH), presented on the value of clinical leadership and the advances that had been made in cardiac rehabilitation (CR) services in South London at a national event on 4th July 2011.

Michelle Bull, SLCSN Assistant Director for Cardiac, presented with Caroline Sutherland, SGH Lead Nurse Specialist for Cardiac Rehabilitation at the event, which was hosted by the NHS Improvement Programme. Together they discussed the clinical benefits that cardiac rehabilitation provides patients in addition to the financial savings that it offers the National Health Service.

'The CR pilot done by the SLCSN in Wandsworth has immensely impacted patient outcomes in the borough,' Michelle Bull said. 'With Caroline's clinical leadership, we are helping to ensure that everyone in the borough has access to quality rehabilitation services – which can lead to improved quality of life and reduced mortality for patients.'

The advantages of strong clinical leadership within the NHS flow both ways. Through her role as clinical lead for CR, Caroline Sutherland provides an in-depth understanding of clinical challenges as the SLCSN creates improvements in services. In return, she is at the forefront of discussions on new technologies and developments and is more engaged with like-minded healthcare professionals who value her clinical experience and opinions – leading to greater job satisfaction. Her employer, SGH, reaps further benefits in allowing their employee this opportunity. The Trust receives greater visibility of its cardiac services and is viewed as a clinical leader and early implementer of new developments in CR.

'I thoroughly enjoy serving as clinical lead for CR to the SLCSN,' said Caroline Sutherland. 'There is a great sense of satisfaction and achievement in being a major contributor to building stronger relationships between the Trust and commissioners. It's clear that we're all in this together and for the same reason – better outcomes and experiences for our patients in South London.'

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Notes to editors:

- Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a major cause of premature death and is a top priority amongst healthcare organisations in South London.
- According to the Strategic Commissioning Development Unit, a quality cardiac rehabilitation service can result in a 20 per cent reduction in all causes of mortality and a 27 per cent reduction in cardiac mortality at 2-5 years.
- Good CR offers a significant 28 per cent reduction in acute readmissions for heart failure due to cardiac rehabilitation and thus, direct financial cost savings.
- The South London Cardiac and Stroke Network (SLCSN) undertook a National Priority Project with the Heart Improvement Programme in 2010/11. The project aimed to increase uptake of cardiac rehabilitation services, ensure equitable access and provision, establish appropriate funding channels for CR services and secure robust commissioning arrangements across South West London.
- The presentation, *Developing cardiac rehab services in South London*, is available on the SLCSN website, www.slcsn.nhs.uk.
- For more information please contact Andrea Marlow, senior communications manager on 020 8812 5953 or info@slcsn.nhs.uk.