

PATIENT AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

*Initial summary from PPE events across South East
and South West London*

In October 2009, the South London Cardiac and Stroke Network (SLCSN) hosted two cardiac patient events, one in South East London, the other in South West London. The purpose was to better understand patient and public views on cardiac care within the NHS and to identify areas of improvement as determined by those who would know best – the people who have received that care.

South London Cardiac and Stroke Network

October 2009

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During the cardiac patient events, participants identified four key areas of importance:

Pathways – getting patients in for treatment as quickly as possible, minimising waits, and ensuring that information and guidance is readily available to all. Priorities in the participants' words included:

- Clear pathways in which the patient and family know where to go and what to do
- Minimal waits; no one ill should wait
- Recognition of the psychological and emotional aspects of the patient pathway
- The need for clear information to be available to patients along the pathway

‘Supporting a healthy lifestyle and delivering world-class rehabilitation services...’

Prevention and rehabilitation – supporting a healthy lifestyle (to avoid potential health problems) and delivering world-class rehabilitation to ensure that patients maximise their quality of life – both must be of the highest priority.

Communication – ensuring that patients, their families, hospital clinicians, carers and staff are fully informed about their treatment and the services available to them.

- Communication between organisations needs to improve. This includes general practitioners (GPs), hospitals and patients.
- Hospital discharge should be discussed with the patient and family. The GP must also receive timely and accurate information of the patient's treatment and future care plans following hospital discharge.
- Help lines are viewed as effective. These already exist in some organisations such as St George's Hospital and the British Heart Foundation. Thus, it may be that the availability of help lines needs to be more widely promoted.

Primary care – aligning hospital services and aftercare so that our patients achieve the best possible outcomes.

- GPs need to be more linked in with hospital services and involved in aftercare. One suggestion was to have a key GP in each practice serve as lead for all cardiac patients.