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The South London Cardiac and Stroke Network (SLCSN) works with patients, carers, clinicians and other healthcare professionals to create high quality cardiac and stroke services that focus on the patient and are available to all. Patients are always our top priority and are the driving force behind everything we do.

London Cardiovascular Project - Update

Advancing cardiovascular care for all Londoners

As discussed in our last patient newsletter the London Cardiac and Stroke Networks have been tasked with the implementation of the London Cardiovascular (LCV) Project. Work is now underway developing pan-London quality standards being for each of the work areas: Cardiac surgery; Cardiology; and Vascular services. These will be used for assessment at local level which will lead to the development of implementation plans. Full implementation is expected by March 2012.

As the project progresses we are focused on local engagement to ensure patients, the public, staff and other stakeholders understand the model, clinical evidence and changes to services. The South London Cardiac and Stroke Network team have begun to engage with LINKs, local authority representatives and voluntary groups through existing meetings. We will continue reach out



Stay informed!
Sign up for our
London
Cardiovascular
Project newsletter

WHEN STROKE STRIKES, ACT F.A.S.T

Learn about the signs of a stroke through the NHS Choices website.

www.nhs.uk

My NHS Alerts

Register now to receive personalised updates for the NHS in London.

www.mynhsalerts.london.nhs.uk/

Let us know!

Submit your ideas:

e-mail -

People@slcsn.nhs.uk

phone - 020 8812 5950

with other groups across South London through the coming months. In addition to this regular newsletter, a new pan-London newsletter will be produced on behalf of all London Cardiac Networks covering all news and project updates in the capital. We are already encouraging people to sign up to receive the LCV newsletter through the LCV website www.slcsn.nhs.uk/lcv or by emailing info@slcsn.nhs.uk or calling us on 020 8812 5950.

NHS London have recently launched NHS Alerts as a new way of keeping healthcare professionals, patients and interested groups informed of health news across London via email. The SLCSN will be utilising this tool to publish our news. You can sign up for emails of the topics and areas of London you're interested in at www.mynhsalerts.london.nhs.uk/.

Stroke news

Key questions on post stroke care

Professor Anthony Rudd, Consultant Physician in Stroke Medicine at Guy's at St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, answers GP Dr Pam Brown's questions on risk factors, antiplatelet drugs and managing post stroke pain. Read the article featured in 'Pulse Today' on the 11th May 2011 at www.improvement.nhs.uk/stroke/.

HASU nursing competencies distributed

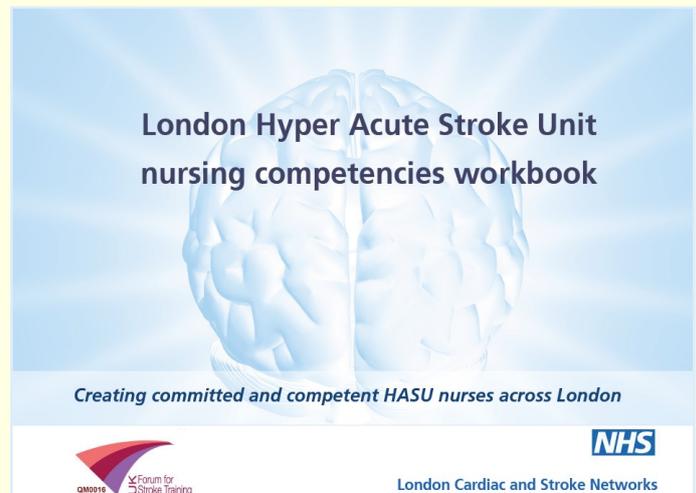
The competencies, developed by the London Stroke Networks, encompass all of the key areas of Hyper Acute Stroke Unit (HASU) nursing care and are underpinned by a training and development framework including workbooks and online learning packages.

Managed by SLCSN senior project manager Vanessa Brunning, the HASU nursing competencies has earned endorsement from the UK Forum for Stroke Training (UKFST) and adhere to the standards set out in the Stroke-Specific Education Framework (SSEF). The UKFST team stated "the areas covered are comprehensive and include important areas that may be new to practitioners who have not previously worked in stroke care. The section on complications of stroke is particularly impressive."

HASU update

St George's Hospital and St Thomas' Hospital have passed all HASU (Hyper Acute Stroke Unit) assessments and are now fully accredited.

Princess Royal University Hospital passed its first of four assessments on 18th May and is now operating its Hyper Acute Stroke Unit (HASU). The HASU will initially run with six beds. Work is continuing aiming to open an additional eight beds to create a 14-bedded HASU in the autumn. Read the SLHT press release at www.slh.nhs.uk.



Six month review after stroke guidance

There is strong onus on commissioners to establish robust review processes for stroke survivors. Researchers at King's College London have found that individual needs change over time, particularly in regard to emotional well being and physical activity. However, how these reviews will be given remains unclear. Therefore the SLCSN have produced a guidance document which seeks to answer these questions, focusing primarily on the six month review following a stroke.

This work has been informed by Network patient and carer engagement activities in South London, combined with feedback from service models piloted and implemented elsewhere, and work undertaken by the national Stroke Improvement Programme (SIP) team.

The report can be viewed on www.slcsn.nhs.uk/stroke-network.html.

Care Quality Commission review of stroke services

The SLCSN stroke team have analysed the results of the January 2011 Care Quality Commission review of stroke services, together with local intelligence to better understand stroke services in each of the individual Primary Care Trusts in South East London and South West London.

The CQC reviews looked at the pathway of care for patients with stroke (or transient ischaemic attack) and their carers from the point where they prepare to leave hospital through to long term care and support in the community.

The reviews are available on the SLCSN website www.slcsn.nhs.uk.



Implementing the DH Cardiac Rehabilitation Commissioning Pack – What it means to you

The Department of Health recently released its Cardiac Rehab Commissioning Pack. The SLCSN organised an event to help providers and commissioners understand what it means to their services, to address these issues and to answer their questions and concerns.

A total of 55 providers, managers and commissioners attended. The speakers featured a number of successfully running services and shared how they overcame the challenges of change. The wide range of speakers included those from East Coast Kent, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust stroke rehabilitation teams and from our pilot projects in Kingston and Wandsworth. Everyone left the event with a readiness to act and clearer ideas of how to improve their cardiac services. The event was a huge success!

Engaging with stakeholders

SLCSN team members attended the South East London Bexley, Bromley and Greenwich Stakeholder Reference Group to discuss the London Cardiovascular Project. The group consisted of representatives from the LINKs, local authorities and voluntary organisations. A patient representative from the project's patient panel also attended the session and explained to the group the vital role the panel had in the cardiovascular review. She described the input they had on the model of care and upcoming quality standards. The group was very impressed with the level of involvement by the patient panel. The stakeholders also agreed with the main aims of the project - improved care and better outcomes.

The team will be attending similar stakeholder groups in South West London and Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham.

Anticoagulation patient advisory panel

Atrial fibrillation (AF, the most common form of arrhythmia or abnormal heart rhythm) can increase the risk of stroke. Those patients with AF most at risk of stroke are typically treated with blood thinning drugs. This reduces the risk of blood clots and decreases the potential for a future stroke.

Currently warfarin is the most common treatment for preventing strokes in AF patients. People taking warfarin undergo regular monitoring in anticoagulation clinics or primary care to ensure that the blood is thinned to just the right amount. However, new oral anticoagulants (NOACs) are now being developed which will remove the need for this regular monitoring.

The next panel meeting will focus on dabigatran, the first of the NOACs, which recently received the first stage in approval for use in the UK. The group will be discussing the clinical and financial impact this may have for South London. Participants will also be asked to inform the Network's draft recommendations regarding the use of dabigatran.

For more information please visit the arrhythmia section of our website www.slcsn.nhs.uk/cardiac-arrhythmia.html.

Primary PCI targets

Primary percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) is a world-class treatment for heart attacks. Heart attacks occur when an artery in the heart becomes blocked. In a primary PCI, the cardiac team at hospital insert a small tube into the groin or arm and inject dye to identify the blockage. A small balloon on the end of the catheter (tube) is inflated which unblocks the artery and then a stent is inserted.

The Heart Attack Centres (HAC) in South London are now meeting their Acute Trust National Target Times for primary PCIs. The target is for >75% of all eligible patients to have a Door to Balloon time (the time from arriving at the hospital to receiving treatment) of less than 90 minutes. This demonstrates a high quality of care for this patient group across South London.

Cardiac news

Short Break in Hartington

The Ashley Jolly SAD (Sudden Arrhythmic Death Syndrome) Trust are offering a subsidised break for families and people living with cardiac conditions.



The three night break in Hartington, Derbyshire in the Peak District is from 26th -28th July. The subsidised break is open to adults and children and the trust are hoping families will come along to enjoy this time away and meet other families who may be living with a cardiac condition.

For more information contact SADS UK on 01277 811215 or email: info@sadsuk.org



LAS Stroke Care Event

On 24th May, the London Ambulance Service (LAS) held a stroke care event for patients. Presenters included Medical Director Dr Fionna Moore and Assistant Medical Director Neil Thomson. They discussed how LAS is increasing the rate of recovery for stroke patients through the London stroke model and working with the London Stroke Networks.

A stroke survivor named Andre (pictured) provided an account of his recent stroke. As Andre was driving to work, he began to feel dizzy. Remembering the FAST campaign (Face, Arms, Speech, Time to call 999), Andre dialled LAS. The responders took him to a hyper acute stroke unit, where Andre received rapid care from specialist staff. He noted that the responders' firm understanding of the London stroke model filled him with confidence that he would receive the best care possible. Three months later, Andre is back at work and is doing the same daily life activities that he'd done before his stroke.

The SLCSN had a stand at the event, along with LAS and the Stroke Association. This gave Network staff the opportunity to speak with members of the public on the great improvements that have been made in stroke care through the London stroke model. Many people signed up for the People Bank to continue their involvement in improving care in South London.



SLCSN People Bank

Join us!

If you know of others who would like to improve cardiac and stroke services in South London, please encourage them to sign up to our People Bank by emailing People@slcsn.nhs.uk.

People Bank members receive our newsletter and are invited to join events and participate in projects. There are several levels of involvement to accommodate every schedule.

Events

Aphasia Awareness Month

June 2011 is Aphasia Awareness Month, and Connect, the communication disability network, is launching the **Fantastic 50 challenge**. This is your chance to spread the word about aphasia and to raise funds for Connect.

Aphasia is a communication disability which occurs when the communication centres of the brain are damaged. It is usually caused by stroke, but can also be caused by brain haemorrhage, head injury or tumours.

Connect is a charity that relies on individual donations to support people with aphasia. Every penny you raise helps them to provide services, information and support to people with aphasia. Connect are asking people to pledge to raise £500. You can raise the money at a one-off event, or by doing a number of challenges over the next year. Not everyone can run a marathon or climb a mountain so there are some simple fundraising ideas for everyone on their website at www.connect.co.uk.

To get involved fill in the [Fantastic 50 form](#) or contact Rose Grissell by email on rosegrissell@ukconnect.org or on 020 7367 0865 for more information.



connect
the communication disability network

KNOW YOUR PULSE - Heart Rhythm Week 6th – 12th June 2011

Heart Rhythm Week is a national event which gives anyone with an interest in heart rhythm disorders the opportunity to raise awareness and promote better understanding of arrhythmic conditions.

Pulse checks are not currently routine practice in GP surgeries. Many people are unaware that 'Knowing Your Pulse' is the easiest way to detect an underlying heart rhythm problem early. Many more are unsure how to check their pulse correctly, and when pulse rates may need further investigation.

The theme for Heart Rhythm Week 2011 is '**Putting Pulse into Practice**', using the week to promote routine pulse checks in GP surgeries.



More information about Heart Awareness Week or Arrhythmia in general can be found on the Arrhythmia Alliance's webpage at <http://www.hearrhythmcharity.org.uk/>.

It is important to 'Know Your Pulse' because in the UK:

- More than 2 million people have an arrhythmia (diagnosed and undiagnosed)
- 1.2 million people have an irregular heartbeat (atrial fibrillation), both diagnosed and undiagnosed
- 120,000 people experience unexplained loss of consciousness each year
- There are 100,000 sudden cardiac arrests every year; the equivalent of 250 people each day
- 30% of adults and 39% of children are misdiagnosed with epilepsy when in fact they have a heart rhythm disorder
- The number one killer is sudden cardiac arrest (caused by arrhythmias), which leads to more deaths than breast cancer, lung cancer and AIDS combined
- 1 in 4 stroke patients are admitted in AF
- Over a 40 year time period, AF nearly doubles the risk of death

Croydon Health Services NHS Trust

**Have a heart...
have a ball**

Charity red tie ball

Saturday 18 June
Selsdon Park Hotel

To book your place email
georgina.parker@croydonhealth.nhs.uk

Time: 7pm - late
Tickets: £60 per person
Includes three course meal and wine

Live music and disco
Charity auction and raffle

In support of Croydon Heart Centre
Croydon University Hospital

Croydon University Hospital Charity Ball

The Croydon Hospital Ball is being held on Saturday 18th June, raising funds for the Croydon Heart Centre.

The evening will include a three course meal, live music and a charity auction. Tickets are £60 per person and the event will be held at Selsdon Park Hotel.

For more information please contact Georgina Parker on georgina.parker@croydonhealth.nhs.uk.

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