

## IN THIS ISSUE...

- **New London Stroke Strategy**
- **SLCSN stroke news**
- **SLCSN cardiac news**
- **Government White Paper released**
- **Join our People Bank**
- **New anticoagulation patient advisory group**
- **Events**

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.

### New London Stroke Strategy provides world-class care

A new system for providing world class stroke care in the capital went live on 19th July. The London Stroke Strategy creates a new, efficient pathway for all patients with a suspected stroke or Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA, or 'mini stroke'). These patients are now quickly transported to a Hyper Acute Stroke Unit, or HASU, where they receive 24/7 access to specialist stroke staff and advanced scanning technologies.

There are eight HASUs located across greater London. At the HASU, patients are stabilised and receive the best stroke care possible. In most cases, patients stay in the HASU for up to 72 hours. After they are stabilised, patients are transferred to a Stroke Unit (SU). The Stroke Unit will provide ongoing stroke care and rehabilitation for a longer period.

Time is of the essence when dealing with stroke. The new London system allows for all patients – no matter their location in the capital – to be transferred to one of the HASUs quickly. London Ambulance Service has been working closely with NHS staff since February to implement the new system. Already the Service has reported that they are transporting patients from scene to HASUs in under 15 minutes on average.

If you would like more information on the London Stroke Strategy, please see our website, [www.slcsn.nhs.uk/lss](http://www.slcsn.nhs.uk/lss) or call us on 020 8812 5950.

#### Lower your risk!

Learn how to lower your risk of high blood pressure and stroke through the NHS Choices website.

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

#### Let us know!

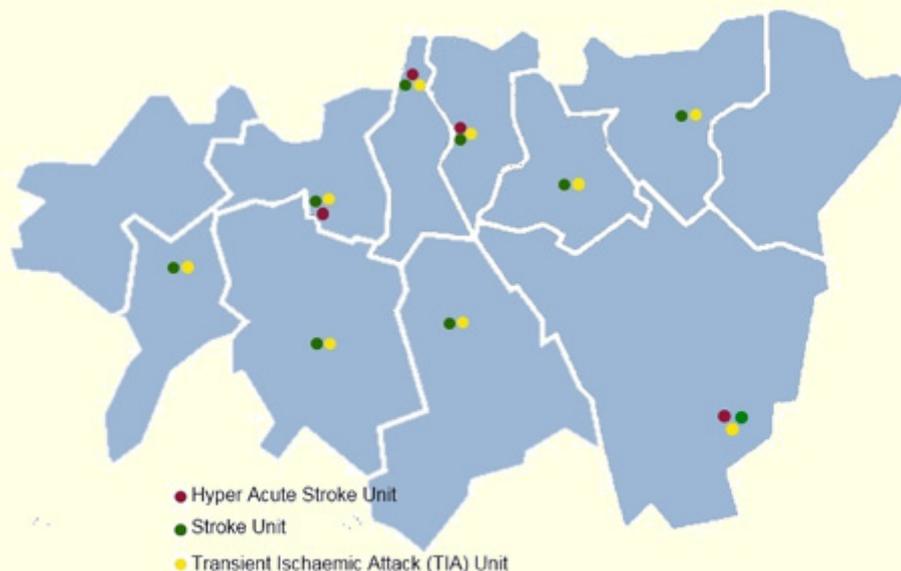
Submit your ideas:

e-mail:

[People@slcsn.nhs.uk](mailto:People@slcsn.nhs.uk)

phone: 020 8812 5950

### South London boroughs showing HASU and SU locations



The eight HASUs are listed inside.

## Stroke news



### Stroke patients and carers get involved to improve stroke services

The South London Cardiac and Stroke Network held an extremely successful event on 28th July for stroke patients and carers. The purpose was to find out their thoughts on the support needed by stroke patients six months after a stroke, in line with Quality Marker 14 of the National Stroke Strategy.



After receiving an overview of stroke services in London, participants broke into seven groups to give their input into the various kinds of support that might be required six months after a stroke: medical, physical, emotional, leisure and work and social. All participants had strong views, which are now being collated by the Network team. The team will be analysing the feedback this month and then working with both patients and healthcare commissioners to implement service specifications during the rest of 2010/11.

More than 25 people signed up to be part of the SLCSN People Bank. This is a virtual group that offers opportunities to take part in SLCSN activities such as events, surveys and focus groups. People Bank registrants receive a newsletter with updates on SLCSN projects, upcoming involvement opportunities and clinical information as it is released.

If you would like to register for our People Bank, please email [people@slcsn.nhs.uk](mailto:people@slcsn.nhs.uk) or call 020 8812 5950.



### The eight HASUs in London

#### **Charing Cross Hospital**

Fulham Palace Road  
London W6 8RF

#### **King's College Hospital**

Denmark Hill  
London SE5 9RS

#### **Northwick Park Hospital**

Watford Road  
Harrow HA1 3UJ

#### **Queen's Hospital**

Rom Valley Way  
Town Centre, Romford RM7 0AE

#### **The Royal London Hospital**

Whitechapel Road  
Whitechapel E1 1BB

#### **St George's Hospital**

Blackshaw Road  
Tooting SW17 0QT

#### **St Thomas' Hospital**

Westminster Bridge Road  
London SE1 7EH

#### **University College London Hospital**

235 Euston Road  
London NW1 2BU

## National Priority Projects in heart failure

Recently, the national NHS Heart Improvement Programme selected two of the Network's projects as National Priority Projects in heart failure. The projects will be located at Mayday Hospital and King's Health Partners (KHP). KHP is a collaboration between King's College London, Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital, King's College Hospital and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trusts.

Both projects seek to increase the links between hospitals and community heart failure services. Stronger ties between them would bring about a smoother transfer of care for patients. We will keep you updated as these projects progress.

### Cardiac news

'With patients empowered to share in decisions about their care, with professionals free to tailor services around their patients and with a relentless focus on continuously improving results, I am confident that together we can deliver the efficiency and the improvement in quality that is required to make the NHS a truly world class service'.

- Andrew Lansley, Secretary of State for Health



## Improving cardiac rehabilitation through harnessing patient opinion

The Network is developing a questionnaire to ask patients about their experiences with cardiac rehabilitation services in the community. We will use those views to inform and improve rehabilitation services in South London.

We first asked patients who have used local cardiac rehabilitation services to explain whether or not the service they received matched up to their expectations. From the answers we received we were able to identify common themes.

The new follow up questionnaire will be used to measure cardiac rehabilitation outcomes. We will test the questionnaire in certain hospitals in London to verify that services provided are meeting the needs of patients. After testing, we hope to roll out the questionnaire across South London and then the nation.

## National audits for heart attack patients

The network is taking part in two national audits that are looking at the quality of care for heart attack patients.

One audit involves measuring what factors are key to delivering a quality service, which include clear pathways and processes, regular staff training and continuous feedback.

The other audit looks at data submitted to the Myocardial Ischaemia National Audit Project (MINAP). Myocardial Ischaemia (MI) is a disease characterised by decreased blood flow to the heart caused by constriction or obstruction of an artery. Hospitals may be judged on their performance using MINAP data. The data measures the number of patients experiencing MI across the country, the treatment they receive and how speedily they receive that treatment.

The Network is working with Trusts to make sure that the data used for the audits is accurate. The better the information, the truer the picture of patient service and experience.

## Government news

The Secretary of State for Health, Andrew Lansley, set out the Government's ambitious plans to reform the NHS during this Parliament and beyond. His White Paper, *Equity and Excellence:*

*Liberating the NHS*, details how power will be devolved from Whitehall to patients and professionals.

Mr Lansley believes that patients should share in the decisions made by clinicians about their health, and have more choice and control over their care. The underlying message is 'no decision about me, without me'.

Three main points are clearly stated in the white paper:

1. **Patients must be at the heart of everything we do.** They 'will have more choice and control' and 'will be in charge of making decisions about their care'.
2. **There will be a 'relentless focus on clinical outcomes.'** Success will be measured by results that matter, such as stroke survival rates.
3. **We will empower doctors and nurses** to use their professional judgment about what is right for patients. Front line staff will have more control and 'healthcare will be run from the bottom up, with ownership and decision making in the hands of professionals and patients'.

The White Paper, draft reform plan and other associated documents are available on the Department of Health's website, [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk).



Join us!

## SLCSN People Bank

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.



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.

*See the enclosed flier for details.*

## Anticoagulation patient advisory panel

The Network is creating a new patient advisory panel which will consist of patients who have been diagnosed with atrial fibrillation and have been prescribed warfarin.

New oral anticoagulants intended to prevent stroke will soon be released in the UK.

The Network is working to understand the potential implications – both clinical and financial – of the new medications.



*See the enclosed flier for details.*

## Events



### Arrhythmia patient event – 3 October

Atrial Fibrillation Association (AFA) Patient Day at the Heart Rhythm Congress will be held on Sunday 3rd October. This event for arrhythmia patients provides informational presentations, access to the Patient Exhibition and the opportunity to ask questions to a panel of leading arrhythmia specialists and meet fellow AF patients.

To register, you may contact AFA on 01789 451837 or PO Box 1219 Chew Magna Bristol BS40 8WB. Those who register through AFA will receive the reduced delegate rate of £25.

### Know your (blood pressure) numbers!

The Blood Pressure Association (BPA) will hold its annual **Know your numbers!** week on 13-19 September.

**Know your Numbers!** is the UK's biggest free blood pressure testing event, designed to raise awareness of high blood pressure - the leading cause of strokes and heart attacks.

Help spread the word about the campaign. Learn where the nearest free blood pressure check is in your area. Find out more on the BPA website, [www.bpassoc.org.uk](http://www.bpassoc.org.uk).



### Home blood pressure monitoring

Using a home blood pressure monitor can help you to learn more about your blood pressure. However, buying and using a good home blood pressure monitor can seem confusing. Find out the benefits of home monitoring, how to choose a good blood pressure monitor and how to get the most from it on the BPA website, [www.bpassoc.org.uk](http://www.bpassoc.org.uk).

### Volunteer spotlight : Lynn Scarth, The Stroke Association



48-year-old Lynn had a stroke in 2007. She was left with aphasia, which made it impossible to return to her job. Now she volunteers at The Stroke Association's local Life After Stroke Communication Support group, helping stroke survivors in Merton and Sutton with their communication skills. Lynn knows only too well how the group's members feel, 'because I've had a stroke people think "something's not right". They talk over my head.'

Lynn first came across the group after her stroke. 'At first I thought 'oh my god it's an old people's home, what am I doing here?', but she came back and soon loved it. After a year, she was asked to stay on as a volunteer. 'I was so pleased', she recalls. 'These groups are brilliant – everyone gets to say their piece. We're all in the same situation and we have a laugh. If I could do this seven days a week I would do it.'

To learn more, contact The Stroke Association on 020 7566 0300 or [www.stroke.org.uk/volunteering](http://www.stroke.org.uk/volunteering).

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