

Stroke Adjustment Group for Stroke Survivors at St George's Healthcare NHS Trust

Project background overview

In alignment with the ASI metric 'increasing access to psychological support', the trust facilitated a stroke adjustment group for stroke survivors living in the community. The group has an educational and therapeutic focus and includes presentations and group discussions with stroke survivors. The purpose of the group is to both inform and educate patients about stroke and the management of risk factors and provide psychological support to enable people to emotionally adjust to life after stroke and manage low mood.

Goals and Objectives

Participation in the group is expected to have a beneficial effect on participants' mood and understanding of their disability and psychological needs. Improvement in patients' emotional functioning is anticipated to have a beneficial effect on carers' experience. It is hoped that a group space will allow people to gain perspective but also talk to others who share similar experiences.

Project highlights

The data obtained is not large enough for valid analysis at this time however it is expected that some change has occurred in un-measured areas of patient life e.g. quality of interaction between patients and their families / friends, self esteem and confidence. The educational component of the group will improve understanding of stroke and risk factors, therefore reducing recurrent strokes.

Preliminary Results

The study found:

1. A significant improvement in mood and social functioning.
2. Participants also reported increased knowledge about stroke, risk factors and increased self-efficacy in managing the risk factors.
3. The majority also found the resources (handouts, discussions & exercises) useful and found the practicalities of the group satisfactory.
4. Participation in the group is expected to have a beneficial effect on participants' mood and understanding of their disability and psychological needs. Improvement in patients' emotional functioning is anticipated to have a beneficial effect on carers' experience. It is hoped that a group space will allow people to gain perspective but also talk to others who share similar experiences.



Lessons learned

- Facilitating a homogenous group in terms of disability and lifestyle
- Preventing attrition
- Refocusing patients who are struggling to cope
- Securing space
- Preparation very time consuming

Achievements

- An assistant psychologist was funded for 12 months to run the project.
- Motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioural principles were used to engage participants
- Using relevant case examples
- Using pictorial aids for stroke education
- Facilitating group discussion and interaction

Contact

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