Royal College of Physicians

Supporting the effective commissioning of stroke services in England – the Royal College of Physicians Stroke Programme

The Royal College of Physicians (RCP) Stroke Programme provides the single source of data for stroke services in England through national comparative audit, and acts as an authoritative source of evidence for stroke. Below you will find details of the scope of the Programme's work and how this can support new Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to meet national standards and improve the quality of their local stroke services.

Evidence based commissioning of stroke services

The 2012 fourth edition of the RCP Clinical Guideline for Stroke provides a comprehensive coverage of the evidence base for stroke care, encompassing the entire pathway from acute care to long-term rehabilitation, including secondary prevention. It has a detailed section on the commissioning of stroke care. A copy of the commissioning guidance is contained in this pack and the full guideline can be downloaded from the RCP website www.rcplondon.ac.uk/stroke/guidelines. For the first time, the guideline is available as an App for mobile devices http://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/update/new-apps-bring-stroke-guideline-palm-your-hand.

National Stroke Audit

Data from national audits hosted by the RCP Stroke Programme have been used for national performance indicators and targets since 2004. Guided by a multidisciplinary working party including clinicians and patients, the RCP stroke audit was one of the first to put named hospital data in the public domain.

From 2013, the stroke programme includes the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme (SSNAP), a new longitudinal prospective audit which collects a minimum dataset for every stroke patient to measure processes, outcomes (at 6 months) and care in the community. The 5 stroke indicators from the CCG Outcome Indicators Set are all included within SSNAP, which also provides data for the NICE Quality Standard, the NHS Outcomes Framework, and metrics aligned with those in the Cardiovascular Disease Outcomes Strategy.

As part of SSNAP, an acute organisational audit was conducted in 2012, including data on every eligible acute hospital in England (based on services on 1 July 2012). Data for named hospitals within your region are presented in this pack in tables and point maps with CCG boundary overlays.

Between 2010 and 2012 the stroke programme conducted prospective clinical audit of the first 72 hours of stroke care (SINAP) in 77% of English acute hospitals, including the care of over 85,000 people with stroke. This pack contains benchmarked SINAP data which is contemporaneous for hospitals serving your CCG.

Additional reports can be downloaded from our website www.rcplondon.ac.uk/stroke/regional-results including historical data from the National Sentinel Stroke Audit, the final round of which was completed in 2010, demonstrating substantial improvements in the organisation and process of stroke care over a 12-year period, but with significant persisting variations in service quality.

Peer Review of Stroke Services

The Stroke Peer Review Scheme has been hosted by the RCP for six years in a collaboration with the British Association of Stroke Physicians and the Stroke Association. The peer review scheme sets out to support local health services in responding to national audit results, promote good practice and facilitate quality improvement in stroke care in the UK. Stroke services are visited by a multidisciplinary review team of expert clinicians, managers and patient representatives, with detailed feedback and action planning to guide service change and improvement. Further information can be found in the peer review flyer in this pack and on the RCP website www.rcplondon.ac.uk/stroke/peer-review.

Members of the RCP Stroke Programme and Key Contacts

Associate Clinical Directors

Professor Tony Rudd, Associate Clinical Director and Chair of Intercollegiate Stroke Working Party, National Clinical Director for Stroke (England), Consultant Stroke Physician, Guy's and St Thomas NHS Trust, London, Professor of Stroke Medicine, Kings College London

Dr Geoff Cloud, Associate Clinical Director – Consultant Stroke Physician, St George's Healthcare NHS Trust, London

Professor Pippa Tyrrell Associate Clinical Director – Consultant Stroke Physician, Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust, Salford

Dr Martin James Associate Clinical Director – Consultant Stroke Physician, Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust, Exeter

RCP In-House Team

Alex Hoffman, Stroke Programme Manager
James Campbell / Sara Kavanagh SSNAP Project Managers

Further information and resources

If you would like further information on any the audit data contained in this pack or would like to use the Peer Review Scheme to support the development of stroke services in your area, please contact us.

Email: stroke@rcplondon.ac.uk Tel: 0203 075 1318

The information in this pack is also available on the RCP website: www.rcplondon.ac.uk/stroke/ccg