Welcome to the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals Stroke Service

Information for patients
Stroke Services
Being admitted to hospital with a stroke can be a stressful and confusing time for you, your friends and relatives. This leaflet will help you understand what may happen during your hospital stay.

Treatment will vary depending on the type of your stroke, and the effect it has on you. The stroke service is made up of a number of specialist areas.

**Ward L1 - Neurological Assessment Unit (NAU)**

This is where most patients who have suffered a suspected stroke are admitted to hospital. Here you will be assessed by the stroke specialist team. During your time on NAU you may have a number of tests, including blood tests and a brain scan.

After your assessment, dependant on your diagnosis and / or condition, you may be discharged home or transferred to one of the following wards.

**Ward L2 - Hyper Acute Stroke Unit (HASU)**

Here you can be closely monitored whilst your condition stabilises. You will be reviewed by stroke specialist doctors, and other members of the stroke team.

From L2 you may be discharged home, or if you require further treatment you may be transferred to the Acute Stroke Unit (ASU).

**Wards Q1 and Q2 - Acute Stoke Unit (ASU)**

Here your acute care continues and your rehabilitation begins. Ongoing assessment and treatment by stroke specialist doctors, nurses and therapists will occur.

You may be discharged after a short period of rehabilitation or - dependant on your individual needs - you may be transferred to one of the rehabilitation services in the community; either Beech Hill
Community Rehabilitation Unit at Norfolk Park to continue with your rehabilitation, or the Community Intermediate Care Service, known as CICS. This is a service which provides rehabilitation in your own home or care home and involves therapy and nursing staff visiting you in the community.

**Who's who?**

Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Pharmacists, Social Workers, Speech Therapists and other people. Some will be wearing uniforms and others won't. However, all hospital staff are obliged to wear identification badges and will introduce themselves to you. If you are not sure, it is okay to ask them who they are and what they do.

**Key people that you may meet during your admission**

**Nurses**
From stroke specialist nurses to ward staff. All the areas you may visit are staffed by nurses trained in stroke care. They will support and care for you during your stay.

**Doctors**
Stroke specialist consultants and their teams will see you regularly throughout your stay.

**Occupational Therapists (OT)**
The OT will help you function as independently and safely as possible.

They can help you find ways of carrying out everyday activities that may have been affected by your stroke.

OT's can address a wide range of stroke related issues including physical, memory, attention, vision, sensation, anxiety and mood problems.
Physiotherapists (PT)
Physiotherapy following stroke involves techniques and exercises to improve control and movement of the body.

The aim of treatment is to enable you to become as functionally independent as possible.

Speech and Language Therapists (SALT)
A stroke can lead to problems with speaking, understanding speech, reading and writing. The ability to swallow food and drink may also be affected by a stroke. SALT will assess you and help you overcome these issues if affected.

Dietitians
The Dietitian will provide you with advice and information to keep you well nourished and prevent weight loss. Following a stroke some patients may initially experience difficulty with swallowing. As the swallow recovers, food and fluid consistencies are altered to suit individual needs. If swallowing difficulties persist the Dietitian can advise you about tube feeding if necessary, in order to help you maintain good nutrition.

About your stay
Members of the stroke team will see you regularly. The specialist doctors work predominantly Monday to Friday, and then at the weekend on-call doctors from the team look after your care if required. Appointments can be made for you or your family to speak with a senior doctor. Please speak to the nursing staff to arrange this.

Nurses will provide care for you 24 hours a day on the ward. If you have any questions about your care please speak to the nurses on the ward.

Therapy staff work seven days a week to help you with your rehabilitation.
Visiting

The hospital operates a restricted visiting policy. Visiting times are 2.00pm - 3.30pm and 6.00pm - 8.00pm from Monday to Sunday. We do allow visitors outside of these times in exceptional circumstances by arrangement with the Nurse in Charge. However, please bear in mind that patients can often experience fatigue and periods of rest are important.

A maximum of 2 visitors per patient are allowed at any time.

Please do not bring children under the age of 12 onto the ward, unless previously agreed by the Senior Sister.

Please do not bring flowers or plants onto the Acute Stroke Unit.

Infection control

We take this very seriously! You can be reassured that we have very low levels of cross-infection, and our aim is to stop all spread of infection. In order to achieve this we have the following measures in place:

Screening: When you come into hospital we will take swabs from your nose and groin to test them for MRSA. We do this for everyone because we need to identify and treat all traces of MRSA immediately.

There are bottles of hand rub at the entrance of every bay, every door and at the bottom of every bed. We want everyone who has contact with you to use this - if they don't please remind them! This is to protect you and other patients on the ward. We also ask that your visitors use it.

If any of your visitors feel unwell (cold, flu like symptoms, coughs, sore throats or upset stomachs), or have recently been unwell, they should not visit the ward.

Visitors are required to sit on the chairs provided and not on your chair or bed.
What do I need to bring with me?
You will need toiletries, night clothes, comfortable day clothes and appropriate footwear.
Please do not bring a lot of money or valuables into hospital. However, you may need a little loose change for papers, magazines etc. A trolley selling such items will visit daily.

Telephone enquiries
We fully understand that your loved ones will be concerned about you when you are in hospital, and will want to know how you are getting along. However, we are quite limited with the information we can give over the telephone. Also, if you belong to a large family we ask that one person is nominated as 'spokesperson' so the ward does not receive repeated enquiries at busy times such as mornings and mealtimes, as this can affect patient care.

Useful telephone numbers
Ward L1 (NAU) - 0114 271 2118
Ward L2 (HASU) - 0114 271 2419
Ward Q1 (ASU) - 0114 271 3638/3639
Ward Q2 (ASU) - 0114 271 3824 - 0114 226 8471
Beech Hill - 0114 2261766
Going home from hospital

We aim to discharge all patients from hospital as soon as it is safe to do so, and with appropriate support if required.

You will receive an information booklet about your discharge during your stay.

On discharge you will receive a discharge letter for your General Practitioner, plus any information required specific to your needs.

Getting it right

If you are satisfied with the care you received in hospital please tell your friends - if you are not, please tell us!

We all try hard to get it right, but if our standards fall below what is expected of us then please let us know. We will listen to your concerns and take them seriously. Most issues raised can be resolved immediately. If you wish, you can discuss any matters regarding the care you have received with the Senior Sister, either during your stay or on the telephone after you have gone home. In the unlikely event that you remain unhappy we can put you in touch with the Patient Partnership.

Useful stroke information

Factsheets are available from www.stroke.org.uk

Detailed information on a range of health conditions can be found at: www.nhs.uk

Donations: Sheffield Stroke Unit