

***Your care in the best place
at home, in your community and in our hospitals***

Consultation 30 November 2017 – 9 March 2018

Summary sheet on proposals for stroke

Some relevant facts

- Stroke is the fourth most common cause of death in the UK.
- A stroke is a brain attack, which happens when the blood supply to your brain is cut off. For around 85% of cases, this is because of a blood clot. In around 15% of cases, this is because of a burst blood vessel causing a brain haemorrhage.
- The recommended treatment for cases involving a blood clot is rapid assessment and, for around 20% of these patients, the administration of a drug to help dissolve the clot – a treatment known as thrombolysis, ideally within three hours of the start of symptoms.
- It is also possible with specialist vascular surgery to remove a blood clot, which may be a beneficial treatment for some patients. This requires advanced technology, specialist scanning equipment and specialist surgical expertise, which is usually only available in a specialist stroke unit.
- Care provided by a specialist stroke unit is associated with better patient outcomes than general hospital settings.
- There is emerging clinical evidence that suggests very little difference in outcomes between patients going straight to a specialist stroke unit and patients going to their nearest A&E for assessment and initiation of treatment, if appropriate, followed by transfer to a specialist stroke unit.

What happens now and what we propose in mid and south Essex

- Currently, all three hospitals in Southend, Chelmsford and Basildon treat people for stroke.

- Given the size of our population, this means we have three relatively small stroke teams, compared with some of the larger specialist stroke units that have been established elsewhere, such as in London and Manchester.
- Each local stroke team provides excellent services, but our stroke specialists propose that we could improve stroke care by joining these services together as one team. This would create a network of services and facilities, working to the same high quality standards.
- By joining the three teams together, it would be possible to establish a specialist stroke unit to lead the network. This would be in addition to continuing stroke care in each of the three hospitals.
- The proposed location for the specialist stroke unit is Basildon Hospital, close to the specialist skills associated with the Essex Cardiothoracic Centre.

Benefits of proposed change

- A network with a specialist stroke unit would ensure the highest quality specialist expertise instantly available 24 hours a day, which is not always the case currently.
- By working together, stroke specialists have the opportunity to improve rapid assessment, diagnosis and treatment at each hospital and in the proposed new specialist stroke unit.
- The benefits of the proposed specialist stroke unit itself come from there being a larger team to provide intensive care and rehabilitation, particularly for those patients who may not be eligible for thrombolysis (some 80% of cases where there is a blood clot).
- The proposed specialist stroke unit offers the opportunity to develop a specialist stroke endovascular service for treatment where a clot is physically removed from a blood vessel. This type of treatment is not currently available to all patients in Essex.
- The proposed new network would also help to improve wider stroke services, such as links with GP and community services and new developments in ambulance services.

What this means for patients

- Under the proposals for stroke care describe above, if it were suspected you were having a stroke, you would be taken by ambulance to the nearest hospital A&E.

- The A&E team would be able to assess the nature of your condition and make a diagnosis. If appropriate the A&E team could initiate treatment, in consultation with the specialist stroke team.
- If necessary, you would be transferred to the proposed new specialist stroke unit in Basildon.
- Your stay in the specialist stroke unit would be up to 72 hours, after which you could go home if you made a good recovery, or return to a local community service for further rehabilitation.
- For some families, we acknowledge it may be difficult to make the journey to Basildon Hospital to visit their loved one in hospital during this part of their care. We propose to invest in a free bus service between our hospitals, or possibly other locations; and we are keen to hear your views on this.
- The major potential benefit is that future stroke care in mid and south Essex could improve patients' chances of survival and making a good recovery.

Have your say

During our consultation on proposed hospital changes, we are keen to hear your views on proposals for stroke. Please visit our website for full details on this and other proposals, and the various ways to feedback, including a list of events where you can join the discussion.

There is a feedback survey online at www.surveymoz.com/s3/90059489/NHS-Mid-and-South-Essex-STP

Or you can contact us at:

meccg.stpconsultation@nhs.net

Tel: 01245 398118

References for further information

To see national information on best care for stroke, please visit:

www.england.nhs.uk/rightcare/products/

To see an independent report from UCL Partners on national and international clinical evidence on stroke care, please visit our website at

<http://www.nhsmidandsouthessex.co.uk/background/further-information/>

For further information on all proposals for consultation, please visit our website at

www.nhsmidandsouthessex.co.uk