

Essex Stroke Review

Update for Essex, Southend and Thurrock Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees (HOSCs)

21 August 2013

Summary

We have been in contact with your Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee since July of last year to keep members informed about a review of stroke services that is underway across Essex, Southend and Thurrock.

The current position is that the seven Clinical Commissioning Groups in Essex, Southend and Thurrock have agreed to a joint project to investigate how nationally recommended changes to stroke services could benefit stroke patients and how best to make changes work.

The CCG Boards are due to consider in September the findings of four review groups (Clinical Group, Finance Group, Commissioners Group and Communications Group) and decide whether to take proposals to the next stage, which would include public consultation. Should the seven CCGs agree that there is case for change, further work, including public consultation, would start in October and conclude in January 2014.

This paper provides a short recap and update on the process so far.

Background

- The Essex Stroke review was part of a region-wide review that the Midlands and East SHA cluster started in 2011.
- Performance across the region is variable and we know from national and international clinical evidence that there is scope to improve.
- Stroke services in Essex have performed well in recent years, but we now know from comparisons with performance in London and other areas that we could achieve better chances of survival from stroke and lower risks of long-term disability.
- Since we started the Essex Stroke Review in 2011, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) has updated its guidance on good practice and expected standards for stroke care.

- In February 2013, a regional External Advisory Group, with national clinical leaders in stroke care, determined from a detailed options appraisal that, as part of the range of stroke services for the population of Essex, Southend and Thurrock, there should be three hyper-acute stroke units (HASUs) in addition to acute stroke units in each local general hospital.

The Essex Stroke Review

- The Essex Stroke Review is looking at the entire pathway of stroke care from prevention, hospital services, rehabilitation and quality of life following a stroke. We know from clinical evidence that the quicker we can respond with specialist care, the greater the chances of recovery following a stroke. We are also aiming to ensure the best possible patient experience throughout the patient journey.
- While all services involved in the stroke pathway are important, such as; GP services, community nursing teams, rehabilitation services, specialist hospital services and ambulance; a major feature of better stroke care is the availability of a higher level of acute hospital services – the so-called *hyper acute stroke unit (HASU)*.
- In the Essex review so far, four of the five acute hospitals in Essex currently have demonstrated the potential to provide a hyper acute stroke unit. These are:
 - Basildon & Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
 - Colchester Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust
 - Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust
 - Southend University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- The options appraisal process that was overseen by external experts in 2012 led to a recommendation in February 2013 that the three hyper-acute stroke units for Essex, Southend and Thurrock should be run by the hospital Trusts in Colchester, Chelmsford and Southend, but with close collaboration between all five acute hospitals in Essex.
- The Essex Stroke Review has been investigating in much more detail, the potential benefits for patients and how a new stroke pathway would work clinically, operationally and financially.
- Specifically the Essex Stroke Review is currently working on:
 - An analysis of potential improvements in survival rates and patient outcomes
 - Implications for ambulance services and journey times for patients
 - Collaboration between clinical teams and hospitals in Essex
 - Issues from the perspectives of service users, families and carers
 - Costs and affordability

Process update

- The four working groups are due to report to an Essex Stroke Review Board in September.
- The Essex Stroke Review Board will determine recommendations for the consideration by the CCG Boards in September.
- If the CCGs agree to proceed, public consultation will be from October to December, with an outcome report in January 2014.
- The Communications Group has publicised the Essex Stroke Review and invited service users and other public representatives to get involved. This has identified around 15 volunteers from across Essex Southend and Thurrock to work alongside the project and help to steer the consultation process.
- Healthwatch and CCG patient reference groups are in close contact with the project and considering organising public discussions during the consultation period.
- With the help of the Stroke Association, 16 venues have been arranged for open public drop-ins and workshop sessions during the consultation period.

Conclusion

This update to be noted by Members and we welcome views on the consultation process.

Wendy Smith

Chair of the Communications Group, Essex Stroke Review

(A joint project for all seven clinical commissioning groups in Essex, Southend and Thurrock)

Ends.