

ESSEX STROKE REVIEW
Update for Southend Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)

Committee: Southend Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)
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1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. We have been in regular contact with the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee since 2012 to keep members informed of the stroke services review across Essex, Southend and Thurrock.
- 1.2. This document provides a brief update on the project and summarises the most recent developments.
- 1.3. Last year, it was decided that each of the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) for Essex, Southend and Thurrock would lead the stroke review in their area, rather than the county-wide approach that had previously been in place.
- 1.4. This meant that action taken has been slightly different in each CCG locality and at different times according to each area's particular situation.
- 1.5. Most recently, Basildon and Brentwood CCG and Thurrock CCG announced their decision to invest £1million in the Stroke Unit at Basildon University Hospital to help deliver better care and high quality outcomes for patients.
- 1.6. The announcement, made in early March 2013, has been misinterpreted in the local media.
- 1.7. The reality, however, is that no long term decision on the future configuration of stroke services across south Essex has been made and the proposal to upgrade some units to Hyper Acute Stroke Units (HASUs) remains.
- 1.8. As with any major reconfiguration, a full public consultation will be carried out to give local people an opportunity to have their say and influence how stroke services in south Essex are delivered. The date of the consultation, once determined will be shared with partners, stakeholders and the general public to give everyone a chance to contribute.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. In February 2013, a regional Expert 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 recommendation was that the acute trusts in Colchester, Chelmsford and Southend should host the three hyper acute stroke units (HASUs).
- 2.2. The proposal was suggested after careful consideration of key factors including:
- 2.2.1. *Strong clinical evidence to show that stroke outcomes for people in all parts of Essex have the potential to improve in a way that could give patients:*
- ⇒ *Better chances of survival*
 - ⇒ *Lower the risk of long term disability*
 - ⇒ *Achieve shorter recovery times*
 - ⇒ *Improve care at all stages of illness*
 - ⇒ *Increase success in prevention*
- 2.3 Measured against recommended national standards in terms of outcomes, best practice and staffing levels, services across Essex have room for improvement.
- 2.4 The ideal model to achieve this improvement is for the patient who may be experiencing a stroke to be transported within an hour by ambulance to the nearest hyper-acute stroke unit, where a top specialist team is ready and waiting to diagnose and treat immediately.
- 2.5 With the recommended configuration - 94.5% of Essex population are within 45 minutes of HASU (99.99% are within 60 minutes)
- 2.6 Improvements would be achieved across the entire Stroke pathway and there would be 24/7 access to dedicated Stroke consultants
- 2.7 There would be faster access to imaging, expertise and thrombolysis around the clock (even with longer ambulance journeys).

3. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1. The main areas for development to take the proposals forward are:
- 3.1.1. *An increase in the resources and capacity of ambulance services.*
- 3.1.2. *Agreements about which hospitals in Essex will provide a “hyper-acute stroke unit”, how hospitals will recruit staff and work together as a network of stroke services.*
- 3.1.3. *Expansion and development of “early supported discharge”, where specialist rehabilitation teams give joined up health and social care to people at home.*
- 3.1.4. *Improvements in what service users and carers have highlighted e.g. better information and communication and improvements in after-care.*

4. SERVICES IN SOUTHEND

- 4.1. Southend CCG has always supported the stroke service in Southend and the excellent service it provides for local people.
- 4.2. Stroke services delivered in the area are already achieving some of the best outcomes in the region and compare well with the best in London. Even so, there is still room for improvement and development to achieve national standards.
- 4.3. As a local clinical commissioning group and part of the wider health community, our focus is always on providing the best treatment, service and outcomes for patients and the reconfiguration of stroke services across the region is no exception.
- 4.4. While we continue to support our excellent local services, we are committed to working in partnership with our colleagues across south Essex to find the best way to deliver first class stroke services for patients across the county.