



Durham Stroke Recovery Service

The Stroke Association has delivered a Stroke Recovery Service in the County Durham and Darlington area for the last 9 years providing vital support for people affected by a stroke. The service works closely within the stroke services pathway, an received 800 referrals of new stroke survivors each year and continued to actively support over 1000 stroke survivors and carers living with the impact of stroke in county Durham. The service provide support from hospital to home, proving people with assessment, and support to meet short and long terms goals, plus information needs, sign posting, and most importantly emotional support. The service also provide communication support for those with aphasia, this involves Group work and one to one work

The stroke recovery, and communication support service has been acknowledged as highly effective in supporting stroke survivors, carers and easing the pressure on the rest of the system as people leave hospital and seek to recover from their stroke. Carers particularly value what we are able to provide as they take on the burden and anxieties of caring for someone, often with complex disabilities. The CCGs Commissioners have never identified any service delivery concerns

Why the service is under threat?

For the past 9 years we have been funded by Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield CCG, North Durham CCG , following the CCGs completing what they have termed an impact assessment that has not in any way taken into consideration user or carer, and stroke professional experience, The impact Assessment has been purely a paper exercise completed by a commissioning manager who had no knowledge of the service which has resulted in clinical executives making a decision to decommissioned the service. We strongly feel after viewing the impact assessment that a lot of the detail included is inaccurate and misleading, Evidence for this can be provided to the committee

What would be in place without the service?

The CCG's currently are planning to expand the existing Easington community stroke team (CST) to cover the gap left by our service. We feel this isn't sufficient as a CST won't be able to provide the medium to long term care and there is not enough time to implement this properly before our service ends. We are concerned about what will happen to our existing caseload and the welfare of those who will now go on to have a stroke as the existing system is already under pressure. It is worth noting that Durham already has poor after stroke support services compared

to every other area in the NE, and indeed the Country, this decommissioning will only make this worse.

What our request is

Due to the way the impact Assessment has been completed by the CCG, and the misleading information included, we have requested that CCG changes its decision to Decommission until they have completed a full service review and impact assessment, that will enable clinical decision makers to make a decision based on evidence and true and accurate information.

Although we commend the CCG for wanting to implement a CST across County Durham we are aware from in-depth work we have done in other Stroke localities that this needs in-depth planning that can take anywhere from 6 months to a year to implement properly, to try to do this in a hurry would be a mistake, we certainly don't think this could be done in 2 months, and therefore request that any consideration of service decommissioning is not implemented until a CST is fully implemented and working.

Questions for the Regional Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

Was Durham Council aware of the decommissioning notice served by the Durham CCGs to the Stroke Association? We provide long term support which cannot be offered by extending the role of the current CST, therefore stroke survivors living in County Durham will be disadvantaged even more than they are present due to the lack of funding Durham CCGs give to stroke services. With this in mind will the council work with us to ensure the quality of care for stroke survivors is not deprioritised?

Will the health scrutiny Committee support our Campaign to save this service, and request the CCG to withdraw the decommissioning notice until a full review takes place that involves the views of Users, carers, and professionals?

General stroke and Stroke Association info

Stats:

- There is a stroke about every three minutes in the UK, and it's the leading cause of complex disability
- About 1 in 50 people in the UK is a stroke survivor - there are over 1.2 million stroke survivors in the UK
- Over a third 41% of stroke survivors in the UK are discharged from hospital requiring help with daily living activities
- Stroke can cause a wide range of disabilities and causes a greater range of disabilities than any other condition

- Stroke can affect walking, talking, speech, balance, co-ordination, vision, spatial awareness, swallowing, bladder control and bowel control
- Stroke also affects people psychologically – about a third of stroke survivors experience depression
- Over a third of stroke survivors in the UK are dependent on others – 1 in 5 are cared for by family and/or friends
- Stroke is more likely to affect those from a socially deprived background, and also those who are black or South Asian

The Stroke Association:

- We are the leading stroke charity in the UK
- We have three main strands to our work – research, services, and campaigning and influencing
- Over the last 20 years, we have awarded more than £40 million through 400 research grants and nurtured a strong community of stroke researchers
- Our services are a bit part of what we do – help to support those who have been impacted or disabled by their stroke

We face many challenges to our work, including local authority funding cuts, devolution of NHS decision-making and the proposed changes to charity regulation, which – as a charity trustee – she will know a