

EXPANSION OF THE PORTSMOUTH COMMUNITY STROKE REHABILITATION TEAM

The Community Stroke Rehabilitation Team (CSRT) has been delivering services since February 2005. It provides stroke rehabilitation services to patients in their own homes. These patients are registered with GPs in Portsmouth City and the south east of Hampshire, including Hayling Island, Emsworth, Waterlooville and Cowplain.

It currently does not provide a service to those patients registered with GP's in Portchester, Fareham, Gosport and in the north of the area around Clanfield, Petersfield and Liss. These patients receive stroke rehabilitation either within Collingwood Ward at Gosport War Memorial Hospital or Cedar Ward at Petersfield Community Hospital.

The expansion of the CSRT, will take place during October and will ensure all stroke patients in the Portsmouth Hospitals catchment area including those from Portchester, Fareham, Gosport, Titchfield, Whitely, Locks Heath and in the north of the area around Clanfield, Petersfield and Liss, will have access to the same service Portsmouth city patients receive.

This model is an equitable service of the very best standard, resulting in shorter hospital stays and improved rehabilitation outcomes. Within the model, patients are transferred home, once medically stable, to continue rehabilitation in their own home environment supported by a team of nurses and therapists. The team visits from 2pm on the day of the home transfer, then as often and as long as intensive, specialised stroke rehabilitation is required. They then continue to visit the patient every day, again as often as is required, between the hours of 07.30 and 21.00. The team works to ensure the patient is at the centre of all decision making.

The CSRT provides a comprehensive package to ensure consistent stroke rehabilitation. We do not expect family members to become involved in care or rehabilitation until they request to do so and are willing to be involved. Our experience has demonstrated that this consistency enables both the patient and their family to learn about stroke and how it has affected them.

The team provides support with long term decision making related to future equipment, therapy and care needs, so that appropriate support is in place on discharge from CSRT. The average length of stay with CSRT is 32 days, with a large range depending upon individual requirement.

This model, which is internationally regarded as best practise, follows National Stroke Strategy requirements and ensures our patients receive their care in the most appropriate setting. There are significant advantages of being treated at home as it improves patients' recovery rate and the rehabilitation process.

Inpatient stroke rehabilitation will continue to be provided in Queen Alexandra Hospital for those patients with more complex needs. They are then offered support from the Community Stroke Rehabilitation Team once they become medically stable.

The Portsmouth CSRT is recognised nationally as a centre of excellence for stroke rehabilitation and has just completed a project aligned to the national Stroke Improvement Programme reviewing the quality of service and patient outcomes. This report can be found on the Stroke Improvement web site www.improvement.nhs.uk