Focus on Stroke
Events Summary 2012

What was the event about?
Last year we held the first ever ‘Focus on Stroke’ event in Devizes which aimed to provide a focus on stroke in Wiltshire for patients, carers, health and social care professionals, and voluntary organisations. The day was very successful, so based on feedback from attendees we decided to host two events in 2012. Once again organised by the Stroke Association, supported by Public Health funding, the first event was in Wilton on 24th October and the second in Melksham on the 31st October. The total number of attendees was 107 which was even more than last year.

Presentations

John Goodall, Public Health - Focus on Stroke
This presentation provided us with an update on improvements that have been made by NHS Wiltshire especially in regard to public awareness of stroke, and free NHS Health Checks for people aged 40-74 to assess their cardiovascular disease risk.

Stephen Harris (Wilton)  Alison Sullivan (Melksham)
Wiltshire Voices
Stephen & Alison gave us a brief overview of the project which aims to find new ways of reaching out to people who do not or cannot attend Council meetings. They shared with us some of the film that had been made with Wiltshire Stroke Survivors and Carers. The film provides an insight into the day to day experiences of someone affected by stroke.

Dr Mari Shaw GP - Primary Care
Dr Shaw gave an overview of primary care, prevention and the support given to patients post stroke. The presentation also gave information on Atrial Fibrillation, its link to stroke and how GP’s are trying to increase patients knowledge on this and other risk factors.

Leigh Boxall (Wilton) - Stroke Research Network
This presentation highlighted the work of the Research Network in Clinical Trials and ways in which people could get involved. Leigh showed how trials saved millions of pounds and meant that these advances meant improved quality of life for those affected by stroke now and in the future.

Judy Cronan (Wilton)  Dr Lindsey Dow (Melksham)
Acute & Rehabilitation
Judy Cronan - Stroke Nurse Coordinator at Salisbury District Hospital spoke about the 24/7 thrombolysis service and also the development along with neighbouring trusts of a 7 day TIA service. Dr Dow - Stroke Consultant Physician at Royal United Hospital shared news on new drug therapies available in the treatment of Atrial Fibrillation and how research has shown that only 1/3rd of people with the condition are on the medication they need.

Diane Barkham (Wilton) Alison Crangle(Melksham)
Carer Support Wiltshire
Carer Support shared news on the Carers health break prescription available via GP’s for those carers whose health is being affected and how they have 2/3rds of 63 GP surgeries signed up to an Accreditation Scheme where they can apply for a gold, silver or bronze level dependant upon the amount of support they offer to carers.

Trish Cowie - Exercise after Stroke
Trish gave us an insight into the developments and the positive the outcomes that have been made in the Exercise After Stroke programme. Some of the results after the initial starter classes showed large improvements in physical function and also in participant’s perception of their recovery from their stroke. The pilot programme has been so successful that it is now being evaluated by Glasgow Caledonian University.

Anna Mead - Information Review Project
Thanks to feedback from Stroke survivors, carers and healthcare professionals Anna was able to update us on the work the association is doing on behalf of NHS Wiltshire to make information provision on discharge from hospital as consistent and good as it can be.

Claire Shuttleworth - Stroke Association
Claire talked about changes to the local support services funded by Wiltshire Council and NHS Wiltshire and the Stroke Associations new look. She also shared news on her role in developing peer and group support across Wiltshire.
We asked for your thoughts on the stroke pathway:

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**Information**
Still not getting the right information when discharged - want to know what support is available!

**Feeling Abandoned**
Lack of guidance, support and information once all the therapies have finished.

**Need more Physiotherapy**
Right amount at the right time! Brilliant when you got it - but ended too soon. No community follow up for 4 months

**Carers needs**
“no help at the time, just assumed that I could cope but I didn’t know what to ask”. Carers also need Stroke training

**Psychological Support**
We need more of it - it needs to be easily accessible at any stage of your recovery - depression a big issue!

**Communication difficulties**
Loss in confidence, need more understanding of what we face - A&E asked if I was drunk, More Speech therapy

**Hospitals & GP**
Admission to Salisbury excellent, RUH quick scan and great care. Recent TIA– GWH were great. Community Hospitals good discharge. GP very supportive, practice nurse visited regularly

**Therapy Support**
Physio’s are great. Community Speech Therapist always available when needed, Occupational therapists were great — got me the equipment I needed

**Community & Voluntary Support**
Local community helped out, Stroke Clubs good - a big need for them, Communication groups great, Carer Support offered

**Physical**
FES - very beneficial & good experience, Exercise after Stroke very good, getting legs and arms working, exercise bike! Balance classes.

**So what next?**
All of the feedback you have given us will be taken back and used to develop the pathway. We want to ensure that all stroke survivors, carers and their families have the support they need at every stage of their journey to a life after stroke.
We can already tell you that due to your comments Stroke Association and Carer Support Wiltshire will be working together to provide training to carers. Stroke Association are also still working with hospitals to ensure the information given at discharge is what you need.

**Need further help or information?**

Wiltshire Council: 0300 456 0100
NHS Wiltshire Stroke Coordinator: 01249 456541
Carer Support Wiltshire: 0800 181 4118
Exercise after Stroke: 01722 434722 or 07825609331
Stroke Association Information, Advice & Support: 01722 329053
Stroke Research Network: 01392 406 977

If you would also like to know more about the Wiltshire Voices project or view the entire film please visit:
www.wiltshire.gov.uk/communityandliving/wiltshirevoices

**Our thanks to:**
We would like to thank all of the presenters who gave their time and expertise to both events, also those who held information stands including Wiltshire Involvement Network, Gilbert Wheeler - Wiltshire Cardiomyopathy support, Mary Baker - Carers Emergency Card Scheme, Wiltshire Blind, Carer Support Wiltshire, Nadine Wardman - Speech Therapy (SDH), and Stroke Research Network. We would also like to thank all the professionals who attended, assisted in facilitating and gave their valuable input to the events. We would also like to give our special thanks to our volunteers and those special people (you know who you are) that assisted in the kitchen at the Wilton event. Lastly and most importantly a BIG thank you to all the stroke survivors, carers and family members who attended and participated in the feedback sessions.