Development and evaluation of tools and an intervention to improve patient- and carer-centred outcomes in Longer-Term Stroke care and exploration of adjustment post stroke: the LoTS care research programme

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Plain English summary

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Plain English summary

There have been important steps forward in the treatment of patients soon after a stroke. However, longer-term recovery can be challenging. Our research focused on the needs of patients and their carers after hospital discharge and in the longer term. We previously developed a system for longer-term stroke care that includes structured assessment questions. These are based on problems that are of importance to patients and their carers, linked to information about treatment options and action plans.

Our research included four interlinked projects:

1. Based on a comprehensive review of the evidence we provided clear treatment guidance for health professionals based around individual patient and carer problems.
2. We evaluated our new system for longer-term stroke care in 29 centres in the UK involving community-based health professionals. Stroke patients in half of these centres received the new system of care. Patients in the other centres received care as currently delivered. We found no differences between the two groups in a range of outcomes assessed for 800 stroke survivors and 208 carers 6 months after joining the study.
3. We demonstrated the robustness of a monitoring tool to identify unmet needs after stroke by testing it with 850 stroke survivors.
4. Through in-depth interviews we explored how stroke survivors and their carers adjust and adapt to the consequences of stroke.

We have developed systems of care and assessment tools and gained insights into patients’ needs and experiences. All will inform improved care strategies after stroke.
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