

Event Report

Health Matters Event: Stroke Awareness: Wed 12 May 2021, 3pm-4.30pm

Health Matters: Stroke Awareness was an event organised by the Membership Team and the Stroke teams at UHBW in order to raise awareness of the impact of strokes on individuals and families and the support available, as part of National Stroke Awareness Month.

Around 30 people attended the event, including stroke survivors, members of the public, Foundation Trust members, governors, and members of staff. It was an online event held using Cisco Webex Meetings and took the form of presentations by a panel of speakers followed by a Q&A session.

Event programme

The programme followed the patient journey from beginning to end, as follows:

3-3.15pm – Signs and Symptoms of a stroke and arrival at A&E: Pauline Baker, Stroke Specialist Nurse, explained what a stroke is, and different types of stroke, warning signs, and what to do if you spot one. She then talked people through what would happen if they arrived in ED with a stroke.

3.15-3.30pm – At the Stroke Unit - what to expect on the ward: Lauren Caris, Speech and Language Therapist, described the teams that people would meet on the ward, and gave an overview of the kinds of support and treatments that they would offer, including speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, dietetics and psychological support. She showed several videos to demonstrate what happens during a stroke and to illustrate the effect of a stroke on speech and swallowing.

3.30-3.45pm – Planning for discharge: Helen Ellis, Occupational Therapist, Early Discharge Team, UHBW explained the work of the Early Discharge Team in preparing the person to go home and supporting them to take control of their own recovery, including the provision of any help or aids that they might need to re-establish their life at home.

3.45-4pm – Returning Home and support after discharge: Rebecca Sheehy, Chief Executive of Bristol After Stroke, described the support that her organisation can provide to Bristol stroke survivors in their homes and further sources of support and advice. Joining her for this session was Verity Aldous from the Stroke Association, which provides support and advice to stroke survivors and their families who live in North Somerset.

4-4.30pm – Q&A session. This was facilitated by Sarah Murch, Membership Manager. Attendees put written questions into the Chatbox and these were read out to the panel members, who responded verbally. The main themes of the question included:

- the process at Weston General Hospital and whether it differed from the BRI
- links between strokes and various other conditions, for example migraines, dementia, an irregular heartbeat or hypertension
- nutrition and diet advice
- the proportion of men, women and children affected by strokes
- physiotherapy visits after leaving hospital
- the way in which the Stroke Association and Bristol After Stroke work with Sirona to provide care in the community
- the proportion of stroke survivors who go on to have another stroke
- whether screening was available for risk.

Feedback from attendees

While feedback was not formally sought, four attendees emailed the Membership Team afterwards with very positive feedback. Their comments included:

“I just wanted say a big thankyou to both you and Rachel for organising yesterday’s Health Matters event on Stroke Awareness and to the experts who gave up their valuable time. I found it very informative.”

“Thank you for a very enjoyable presentation about Strokes. So good to hear from those actually doing the work and to learn of the sterling work being done by the local charities. Webex was very stable and on our very large TV screen we could see the videos and slides perfectly!”

“A very interesting session. I was particularly impressed by Pauline Baker and Helen Ellis. I would feel safe in their hands. They came across as very competent.”

“Thanks for the reminder, it was most helpful and so easy to join the meeting. Thank you ever so much for arranging this session and contributing to it. I thought it was very successful and very helpful. Well done.”

Conclusions

Attendees clearly appreciated hearing from the experts about the condition itself and the care they could expect at our hospitals as well as hearing about support provided by others outside our Trust, and having their questions answered.

The technology worked well with no issues that could not be overcome, people did not appear to have difficulties accessing the event, and both the presentations and Q&A session ran smoothly.

In terms of improvements, perhaps attendance could have been higher, and the Membership Team will consider whether anything can be done to increase this for future events.

However, it can be concluded that the event achieved its aim of raising awareness of the impact of strokes on individuals and families, including how to be aware of the symptoms of a stroke, how to reduce the chances of having a stroke, and treatments and rehabilitation.