



Issue 1

West Midlands Stroke Research Network Newsletter

Welcome to the first edition of the quarterly WMSRN Newsletter!
We aim to update you on our work and the people in our region who make it happen.

Each edition will include details on which NHS organisations are taking part in studies and how they are getting along with recruiting patients.
Also, we will focus in on one study in each edition to let you know a bit more about it in detail.

We will also be meeting some of the people who have made an important contribution to our work. We have news from some of the staff and news from the world of stroke research.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and would very much appreciate your suggestions and feedback.

Kind Regards to All,

Kate Wilde

West Midlands Stroke Research Network Manager

Meet the Team at Headquarters!

HQ is hosted by North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust.



Clinical Lead – Dr Christine Roffe

Christine is a stroke physician, caring for patients at the North Staffordshire University Hospital. She is also a prolific researcher into the early care and prevention of stroke. She took up the helm of clinical lead in April 2006 when the Department of Health commissioned the Local Research Network.

Consultant Lead: Dr Christine Roffe. Network Manager: Dr Kathryn Wilde
Enquiries: Telephone Number: 00 44 (0)1782 553369. Fax Number: 00 44 (0)1782 552138
<http://westmidlands.uksrn.ac.uk>

The West Midlands Stroke Research Network is part of the National Institute for Health Research and is funded by the Department of Health



Network Manager – Dr Kate Wilde

Kate joined the team in October 2006 from the North West Strategic Health Authority and has previous experience in Stroke research.



Administrator – Jean Leverett

Jean has worked in administration within the NHS for some 30 years and was Dr Roffe's PA prior to taking up post September 2006.

The team at HQ work together to:

- promote our portfolio of research studies to all
- support NHS organisations through the research governance processes
- deploy the research facilitators employed by the network to recruit patients throughout the West Midlands.
- Ensure staff are trained and supported to deliver best research

Research Facilitators

The West Midlands Stroke Research Network employs a number of research facilitators throughout the West Midlands. Two full time members and one part time member of staff have been deployed to work at North Staffordshire University Hospital to support a number of ongoing research projects. Support is also given to Mid Staffordshire hospital by these facilitators on an ad hoc basis.

Sheila Sills

Sheila has worked as a research nurse for Dr Roffe for over ten years and joined the network April 2006.

Holly Maguire

Holly worked previously as a nurse in the medical assessment unit at North Staffordshire University Hospital before taking up post December 2006.

James Rushton

James worked previously as a cardiac specialist nurse at North Staffordshire University Hospital before taking up post in November 2006.



Additional Support

Katie Roebuck – Katie provides at present 1 day a week management cover for Kate Wilde so that Kate can develop a programme of activities to involve patients, carers and the public in the work of the network.

Janet Butler – Janet helps out for a few hours every week with database development and management.

Nicola Edwards – Nicola helps out for a few hours a week with the production of this newsletter, posters, and pamphlets and with the website.

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Trials in WMSRN Area

CLOTS (Clots in Legs Or Teds after Stroke?)

- Does early and routine application of compression stockings reduce the risk of above knee deep venous thrombosis (DVT) in the weeks after an acute stroke? Are full length graduated compression stockings more effective than below knee graduated compression stockings in reducing the risk of DVT?
- There are 8 hospitals participating in the West Midlands (Birmingham Heartlands, Burton-on-Trent, Mid Staffs, North Staffs, Coventry(UHCW), Warwick and Worcester) and several more preparing to join. So far 177 patients have been recruited. More detail on this trial can be found in the Trial in Focus section of this Newsletter.

COSSACS (Continue Or Stop post-Stroke Antihypertensives Collaborative Study)

- In the early days after a stroke has occurred, should we continue or stop antihypertensive medication?
- There are three hospitals in the West Midlands participating in this trial (Birmingham Heartlands, North Staffs and Coventry (UHCW)). 26 patients have so far been recruited onto this complex trial.

ENOS (Efficacy of Nitric Oxide patches and blood pressure reduction regimens after Stroke).

- This study also questions whether blood pressure should be actively reduced after a stroke but additionally explores whether a Nitric Oxide patch is more efficacious than use of an oral antihypertensive. This patch can be used even when a patient has swallowing difficulties.
- There are four hospitals participating in this trial in the West Midlands (Mid Staffs, North Staffs, Coventry (UHCW) and Wolverhampton). 17 patients have been recruited so far.

IST3 (International Stroke Trial 3)

- This trial is looking at extension of the time frame and the age range for use of alteplase in thrombolysis of cerebral infarcts (Clot busting drug). The drug is currently only licensed to be used up to 3 hours after the onset of stroke symptoms. This trial looks at the merit of extending this to 6 hours.
- There are four hospitals participating in this trial in the West Midlands (Birmingham Heartlands, North Staffs, Coventry (UHCW) and Worcester). 47 patients have been recruited so far

VITATOPS (VITamins TO Prevent Stroke study)

- Individuals who have had a stroke take a combination of high dose B6, B12 & Folate or placebo to see if this reduces the chances of further vascular events.
- So far only North Staffordshire University Hospital is participating and has recruited 40 patients but two other hospitals will be joining the trial soon.

PERFORM

- Phase 3 clinical trial of an alternative to aspirin in secondary stroke prevention. This study closed to recruitment March 2008.
- Three sites were chosen by the commercial company to recruit to this trial (George Eliot, North Staffs and Worcester) and 35 patients were recruited altogether.

BSWISS (British Siblings With Stroke Study)

- DNA study into sibling pairs under 70 yrs who have had strokes.
- Three centres are participating in this trial (Birmingham Heartlands, North Staffs and Coventry(UHCW) and 5 stroke survivors have been recruited so far.

BUCS (The Birmingham Cognitive Screen)

- This research is looking into a questionnaire tool that assesses attention and executive brain function after brain injury.
- This study currently takes place at Selly Oak and Moseley Hall Hospitals only but will be extended to multiple centres across the West Midlands shortly. So far, 215 stroke survivors have been recruited.

RETURNS

- This study explores rehabilitation concentrating on turning co-ordination.
- 36 stroke survivors have been recruited into the pilot phase at the University of Birmingham.

MTS DOSE (Mobilisation and Tactile Stimulation Dose study)

- This study assesses what levels (dose) of upper limb mobilisation and tactile stimulation therapy achieve best limb rehabilitation.
- The study currently operates at North Staffordshire University Hospital and 30 patients have been recruited.



Trial In FOCUS

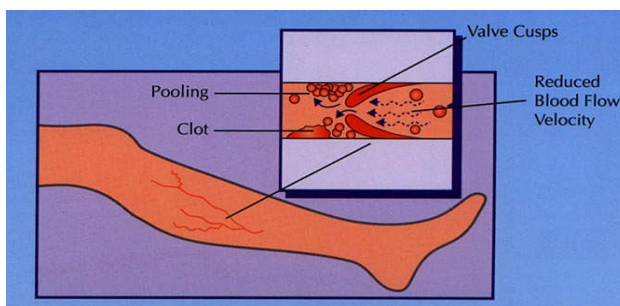


CLOTS – [visit <http://www.dcn.ed.ac.uk/clots/> for more information]

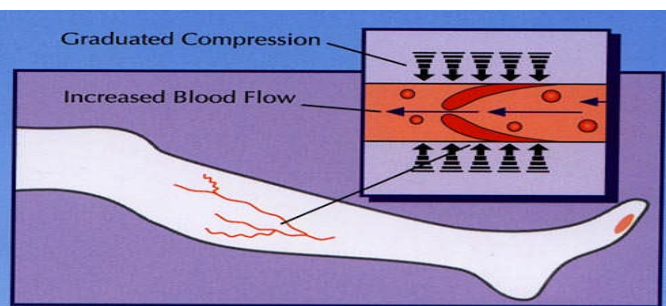
Several studies reported over the last 30 years have shown that deep venous thrombosis (DVT) is common in patients with a recent stroke. Those patients with significant weakness of the leg and who are immobile appear to be at greatest risk. A systematic review of all randomised trials of compression stockings has demonstrated that their use is associated with a 68% (95% CI 53-73%) reduction in the risk of DVT after surgery.

A recent survey of Physicians in the UK who manage stroke patients demonstrated a considerable variation in the use of compression stockings. It is clear therefore that we need to perform a large randomised trial to establish the effectiveness (or not) of compression stockings in prevention of DVT or Pulmonary Embolism in stroke.

Clot Formation



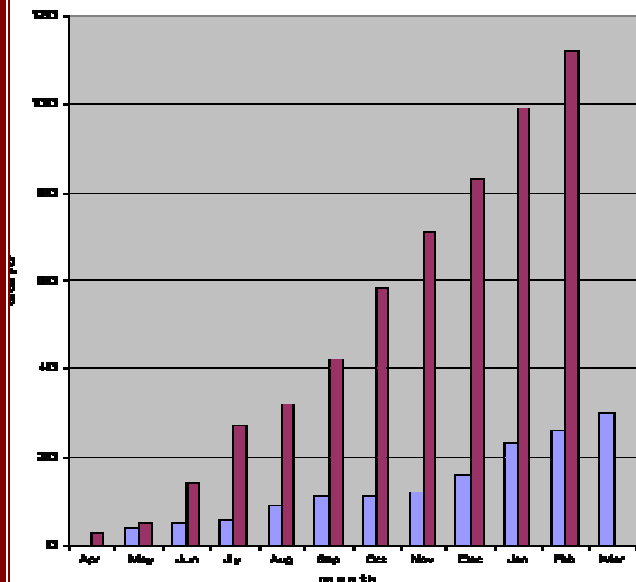
Increased blood flow with graduated compression



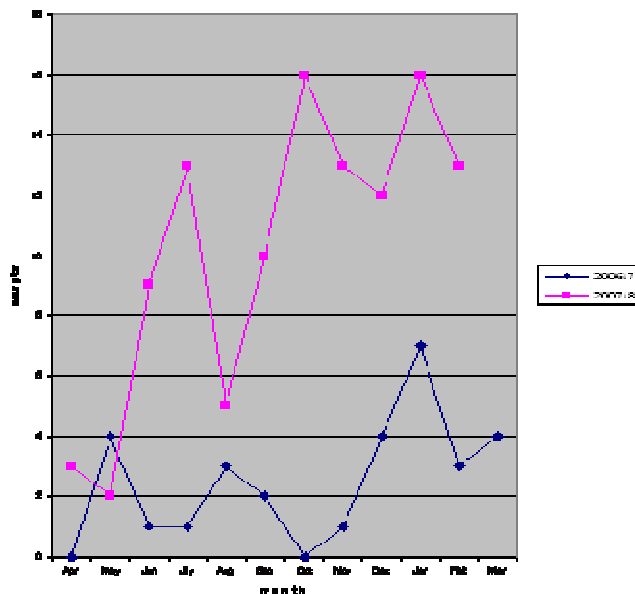
Update on West Midlands Recruitment into CLOTS.

The graphs below show how recruitment has increased since the involvement of the West Midlands Stroke Research Network in 2007. The impact of the network has been not only to increase the rate of participation at specific sites, but also to increase the number of active sites across the region. It is the aim of the network that every acute stroke ward in the region is able to recruit patients to this study. Data up to February 2008.

CLOTS Cumulative Accrual



CLOTS monthly recruitment rate



STAFF NEWS

Good Luck to Victoria Kean who left us to become a ward manager for George Eliot Trust, Nuneaton in December 2007. This is a promotion for Victoria and we know she will meet all the new challenges ahead. Thanks and good luck go also to Blanche Benouakhil who returned to Good Hope hospital after a three month training secondment with the network at the end of March 2008. Best Wishes for a successful career!

Welcome to Claire Randall who joined the network January 2008 to work with the team at Coventry. Welcome also to Katie Smith who commenced a three month training secondment in February 2008. We hope you get many benefits from the experience.

Congratulations to Jo McCormack on the safe arrival of Frances Grace. Mum and baby are doing well!



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News & Up and Coming Events



The University of
Wolverhampton, School of
Health

Conference - Innovations in Stroke Services

19th and 20th June 2008
£175

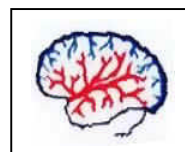
For more information, please tel:
01902 518615

email: strokeconference@wlv.ac.uk

web:

www.wlv.ac.uk/strokeconference

**EUROPEAN STROKE
CONFERENCE**
13 - 16 May 2008 Nice, France
see www.eurostroke.org



12th National CME Day Conference

Extreme Geriatric Medicine

17th July 2008,
Keele Hall
Staffordshire

Contact details

Jean Leverett 01782 553369

email:

jean.leverette@northstaffs.nhs.uk

**The SRN 2nd Annual
Conference**
25 & 26 JUNE 2008
Centre for Life, Newcastle upon Tyne

DAY 1

Training Event – Capacity, Consent & Stroke
Research

Evening Day 1- Conference Dinner
The Copthorne Hotel, Newcastle Quayside

DAY 2

SRN 2nd Annual Conference

This conference is aimed at SRN staff
nationwide, organisations affiliated with the
network, and those staff involved in trials
adopted by the network

£30

Register at www.uksrn.ac.uk

Contact Details

WMSRN Network Office: North Staffs
Combined Healthcare NHS Trust,
Springfield Unit, City General Hospital,
Newcastle Rd, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 6QG.

Website: <http://westmidlands.uksrn.ac.uk>

Administrator: Jean Leverett

Jean.leverette@northstaffs.nhs.uk,

Tel 01782 553369 Fax No: 01782 552138

Clinical Lead: Christine Roffe

Christine.roffe@northstaffs.nhs.uk,

Tel: 01782 552313

Network Manager : Kate Wilde

Kathryn.wilde@northstaffs.nhs.uk,

Tel: 01782 553368

The editorial team would welcome any comments you may have about this newsletter. Please forward your comments to the above address. Alternatively if you wish to contribute an item for future issues please send your article including your contact details for the attention of Jean Leverett

Strokes in Coventry

Drop in cafe

for help support and advice.

Every Friday 12-2pm .

contact strokesincoventry@googlemail.com

at Warwick Road United Reformed Church

Warwick Row

www.strokesincoventry.com