



**NHS**  
**National Institute for  
Health Research**

## Issue 2

### West Midlands Stroke Research Network Newsletter

Welcome to the second 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. This edition will show progress for the first quarter of the NHS financial year against our predicted expectations. We also have a number of new up and coming studies to look out for.

We will focus in on one study in each edition to let you know a bit more about it in detail. This edition will focus on BUCs

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*

### Meet the Team in Birmingham

The Birmingham Hub is hosted by The University of Birmingham.

#### **Deputy Clinical Lead – Dr Richard McManus**

Richard is a GP with a special interest in stroke. He is also a senior academic with Primary Care Sciences at the University of Birmingham.

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

**Strand Lead for Rehabilitation – Prof Glyn Humphreys**

Glyn is a clinical psychologist, specialising in brain injury and Head of Department for the School of Psychology at the University of Birmingham.

**Strand Lead for Training – Prof Cath Sackley**

Cath is a Physiotherapist and senior academic with Health Sciences at the University of Birmingham.

**Strand Lead for Governance – Dr Peter Mayer**

Peter is a retired Stroke physician with a continued interest in stroke research.

The team in Birmingham work together to:

- promote our portfolio of research studies to all
- support NHS organisations in the locality through the research governance processes
- deploy the research facilitators employed by the network to recruit patients across the Birmingham Hub.
- Ensure staff are trained and supported to deliver best research
- Develop relationships with Primary Care Research Network
- Support the HQ team to deliver network objectives via the SRN Governance Committee, which is hosted by the Birmingham Hub.

**Research Facilitators**

The West Midlands Stroke Research Network employs a number of research facilitators throughout the West Midlands. In the Birmingham Hub, the University of Birmingham employs 3 full-time research facilitators who provide support to NHS organisations across the Birmingham area conducting Stroke Research. At present the senior facilitator is on maternity leave.

**Jo McCormack**

Jo previously worked as a Stroke Co-ordinator/Specialist Nurse with Surrey and Sussex NHS Trust before joining the network as senior facilitator in March 2007. Jo is currently on maternity leave and due to return to work in the New Year.

**Emily Jones**

Emily worked previously as a Research Facilitator for the Pan Birmingham Cancer Research Network before taking up post March 2007.

**Kathryn Law**

Kathryn graduated with a first in Clinical Psychology from Oxford before taking up post in October 2007.

**Additional Support**

**Alison Hughes** – Alison has joined the network from Walsall NHS Trust, where she worked as a cardiac nurse consultant and is providing cover during Jo McCormack's maternity leave.

**Kathleen Waldron** – Kathleen helps out for a few hours every week with the administrative needs of the SRN team in Birmingham.

**Katie Smith** – Katie completed her 3 month secondment as trainee stroke research facilitator in May 2008. She found the training experience extremely useful and made a significant contribution to stroke research at Heartlands Hospital.

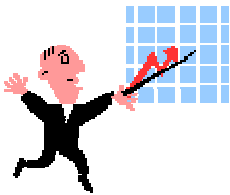
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## Recruitment In WMSRN

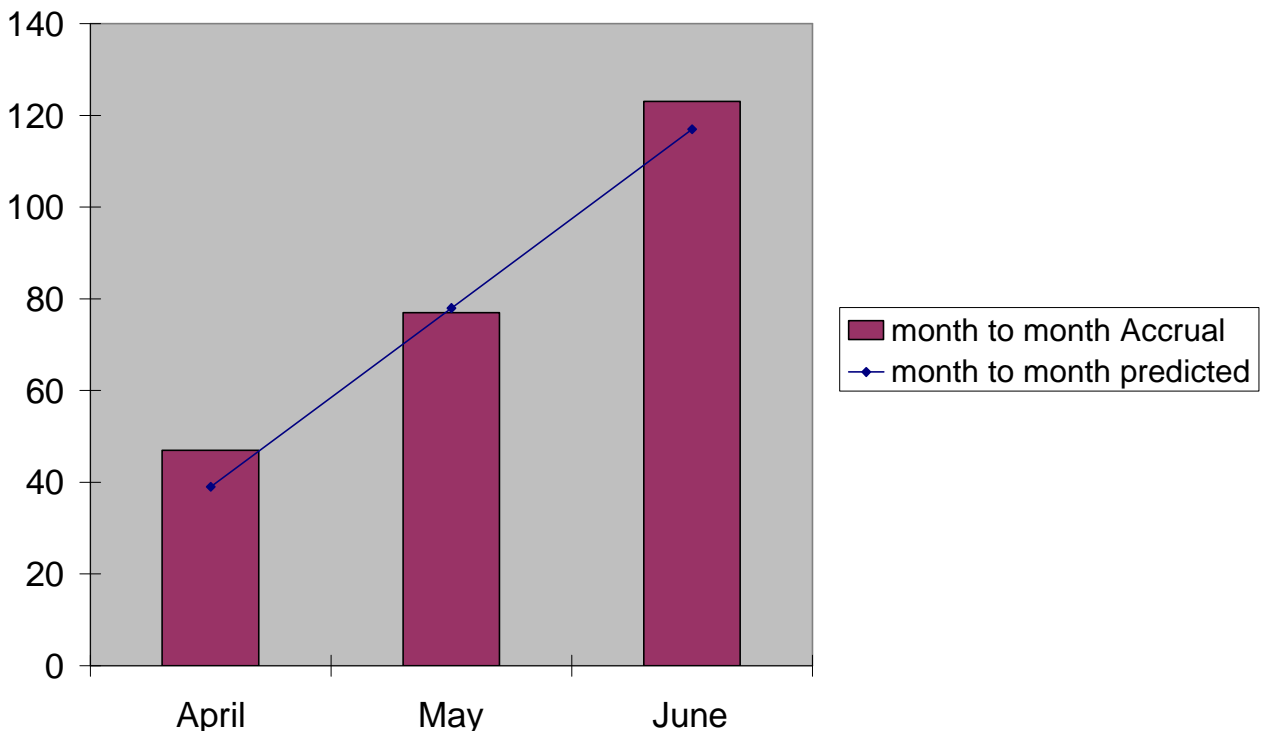
Last quarter we gave a brief overview of the trials conducted in the WMSRN. This quarter we will report on how recruitment is going.

The graph below shows the number of patients recruited to SRN studies in the first quarter and compares this with the monthly expectation of 39 patients a month. It can be seen that monthly recruitment can vary but WMSRN are confident at this stage that we will meet our target of 468 patients recruited to SRN studies by the end of March 2009.

CLOTS continues to recruit steadily at all its sites and we hope to open three new sites very shortly. COSSACS has shown some recent improvement in recruitment at Stoke-on-Trent and Coventry recruited their first patient onto IST3 in June. VITATOPS has had to suspend recruitment in June due to some problems with bottle labelling but we hope it will be able to reactivate soon.



### NUMBER OF PATIENTS RECRUITED QUARTER 1



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## New Trials

### SOS (Stroke Oxygen Supplementation study)

- This research is looking into whether early use of oxygen is beneficial to long term outcomes after a stroke
- This study currently takes place at University Hospital North Staffordshire only but will be extended to multiple centres across the West Midlands shortly. So far, 6 stroke survivors have been recruited.

### Stroke -INF

- This study explores prophylactic use of antibiotics to prevent chest infection after a stroke.

### LOTs Care Study

- This study assesses the benefits for stroke patients of long term care planning after discharge from hospital.



# Trial In FOCUS



## **BUCS– The Birmingham University Cognitive Screen**

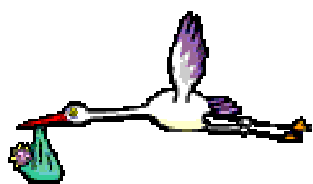
The Birmingham University Cognitive screen is a questionnaire and task-based tool used to assess attention and executive function after brain injury. The tool has been developed by Professor Glyn Humphreys and is applied to patients within 3 months of their stroke. Specially trained staff, usually from a psychology or occupational therapy background, spend around an hour with the patient asking a set of questions and testing their ability to perform a number of tasks. The tool simultaneously assesses memory, sequencing, attention, depression and a number of other cognitive brain functions in detail. The assessor then writes a consolidated report for the multi-disciplinary team caring for the patient to enable them to tailor the patient's rehabilitation and care. Existing practice in most cases is to do separate tests for different aspects of brain function, at different times and by different professionals. This research project explores the question of whether a consolidated approach, led by one assessor is preferable. The multi-disciplinary team at Selly Oak and Moseley provide assistance in answering this question. The intention of the tool is that it will improve the overall assessment of patients by providing multi-faceted information in one report.

The tool is currently being tested at Selly Oak Hospital and Moseley Hall hospital in Birmingham. The WMSRN provides two specially trained researchers to help recruit, assess and follow up patients. In the last year, since the network has been involved, recruitment onto this study has increased from 51 in 2006/7 to 157 in 2007/8. So far this year 39 patients have been recruited. It is hoped that this year BUCs will also start recruiting at City Hospital Birmingham, West Park Hospital Wolverhampton, Worcester Hospital and Walsgrave Coventry.

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## STAFF NEWS



Congratulations to Holly Maguire on the safe arrival of Faith Imogen on 19<sup>th</sup> June. Mum and Baby are both doing well.



Welcome to:  
Ian Massey who joined the Stoke team from A&E, Richard Miller who joins the Stoke team from MAU and Alison Hughes who joins the Birmingham team from Walsall cardiac team. All these new comers have joined us to cover maternity leave/secondment leave vacancies. We hope you all enjoy your time with us.



Thanks to Katie Smith who completed her training secondment in May. Good luck with your career Katie.  
Au revoir to James Rushton who has taken a secondment opportunity as a stroke co-ordinator in Stoke for 6 months.

## Events Feedback

Thanks to all for a successful and informative conference at The University of Wolverhampton 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> June. Organisers hope to make this a regular yearly event so please send in your comments and suggestions

All the WMSRN staff and their guests who attended the SRN conference in Newcastle, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of June would like to thank the co-ordinating centre for a useful and enlightening two days. The sessions on the Mental Health Capacity Act and MHRA inspections were particularly informative for our staff.

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## News & Up and Coming Events



### 13<sup>th</sup> North Staffordshire Annual Stroke Study Day

11<sup>th</sup> November 2008

£70

North Staffordshire Medical Institute

**Contact:** Nicola on 01782 553365 for details

**Email:** Nicola.edwards@northstaffs.nhs.uk



### Contact Details

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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

### 12<sup>th</sup> National CME Day Conference

## Extreme Geriatric Medicine

17<sup>th</sup> July 2008,  
Keele Hall  
Staffordshire  
£65

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#### Strokes in Coventry

Drop in cafe  
for help support and advice.  
Every Friday 12-2pm .

contact [strokesincoventry@googlemail.com](mailto:strokesincoventry@googlemail.com)  
at Warwick Road United Reformed Church  
Warwick Row  
[www.strokesincoventry.com](http://www.strokesincoventry.com)

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