

Stroke briefing – update 9 June 2010

The Trust outlined in February steps it had taken to strengthen the medical staffing in its stroke service.

Stroke services in the county are currently delivered from two acute units at University Hospital of North Durham and Darlington Memorial Hospital with a centre of excellence for rehabilitation at Bishop Auckland Hospital.

Action taken, and outlined in February:

- A locum care of the elderly consultant had been appointed to enable other consultants to spend more of their time managing stroke patients
- The Trust had recruited a doctor to work in the stroke service supporting the remaining consultants
- The Trust was looking to recruit a locum stroke consultant

Action since February:

- The Trust has appointed a new consultant, who is due to start with us in late summer and will work across sites
- Two consultants who announced plans to retire have agreed to come back to work in the stroke unit for 1 year in the first instance reviewed annually
- The locum elderly care consultant, and the locum stroke doctor continue to work at the Trust, and we have a further consultant locum in post
- The Trust will be going out to advert in the next few days to recruit up to three permanent consultant staff
- In addition, the stroke service is now supported by a new service manager.

- The Trust is also progressing the training of other doctors in the administration of thrombolysis. By the end of the training programme we will have trained 6 acute care physicians, in addition to the physicians in the stroke team who are able to thrombolysise patients

Since Seizing the Future, and the Trust's steps to strengthen the stroke service, our service quality has shown demonstrable improvement:

- For 2009/10, 74.9% of Trust stroke patients spent at least 90% of their stay in a dedicated stroke unit (most recent national figure for 2008/09 was 69%)
- 74.5% of patients received a brain scan within 24 hours (national performance in 2008/09 was 68%) putting the Trust in the upper quartile of performance.

For more information, contact Edmund Lovell at edmund.lovell@cddft.nhs.uk 07775 712713.