

Report to: **East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)**

Date: **19th March 2009**

By: **Chairman of the Review Board**

Title of report: **Review of Stroke Care in East Sussex – Final Report**

Purpose of report: **To present the final report of the Review Board and request the committee's support for the recommendations**

RECOMMENDATIONS

HOSC is recommended:

- 1. To welcome and endorse the report of the Review Board on Stroke Care in East Sussex.**
 - 2. To agree that responses to the recommendations should be requested from the organisations named in the report, for consideration at the HOSC meeting in July 2009.**
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1. Background

1.1 In June 2008 HOSC established a Review Board to examine stroke care for East Sussex residents. This topic had been identified as a priority for review by the committee at a work planning seminar.

1.2 Councillors Davies, Healy, Martin and Rogers were nominated to form the Review Board. The Board subsequently agreed to invite co-opted representatives from the County Council's Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee and the East Sussex Primary Care Trusts' (PCTs) non-executive directors to join the Board. It was felt that these perspectives would add to the review process and help ensure that these groups would gain increased awareness of stroke care issues and the developments required. Councillor Forster from the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee and John Barnes, Chairman of East Sussex Downs and Weald PCT therefore completed the Board's membership.

2. Objectives and scope of the review

2.1 The objective of the review was to assess and make recommendations on the stroke care provided to East Sussex residents, with particular focus on awareness and prevention, provision of acute services and the integrated provision of rehabilitation and long-term support.

2.2 To achieve this the review intended to:

- Research public and professional awareness of stroke prevention and care;
- Seek the views of patients, carers and professionals in relation to current stroke services and their views on how services can be improved;
- Examine how stroke services in East Sussex compare to regional and national best practice and;
- Research stroke prevalence and outcomes data for East Sussex, with particular reference to identifying areas of health inequality.

2.3 The Review Board met seven times between August 2008 and February 2009 and interviewed a wide variety of witnesses from health, social care and voluntary sector organisations

at these meetings. In addition, the Board visited stroke units at hospitals in Eastbourne, Hastings and Brighton and a rehabilitation unit at Bexhill Hospital.

2.4 In order to obtain views from patients and carers the Board held a patient and carer workshop (jointly with the PCTs) and publicised the review widely, prompting 35 people to contact the Board with their experiences. In order to research the public's awareness of stroke the Board undertook a survey of 1159 members of the public via the County Council's residents' panel.

3. Findings and recommendations

3.1 The Review Board's findings and recommendations are outlined in the report attached at appendix 1.

3.2 Overall, the Review Board is encouraged by recent progress in stroke care. However, the Board has heard directly from patients and carers that their experiences of care are inconsistent, and there are gaps in services and services that are stretched to capacity. Rehabilitation, in particular, requires priority attention to ensure a consistent county-wide approach, offering a range of options to cater for the widely varying needs of stroke patients.

3.3 The elderly profile of the East Sussex population demands that stroke care is treated as a priority and that the county should be at the forefront of best practice. The Board is concerned that previous reviews of stroke care have not produced sufficient change, but encouraged that there is now momentum, both nationally and locally.

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Chairman of the Review Board

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