

## Information for Patients

# Rehabilitation after Stroke

### Therapy Service



This leaflet has been designed to:

- Provide you and your family/carers with important information regarding your recovery after stroke.
- To answer some common questions that you or your family/ carers may have.

### **The Stroke Pathway**

Most people will be admitted to the Grange University Hospital in Cwmbran after having a stroke.

It may be that you are able to go home from this hospital without needing any further therapy. However it may be that you require ongoing rehabilitation in hospital. What hospital you go to will depend on where you live in Gwent.

These hospitals include Nevill Hall Hospital in Abergavenny, Royal Gwent Hospital in Newport and Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr in Ystrad Mynach.

There is also a Community Stroke team that can support you with therapy at home if this is appropriate. The therapists on the wards will be able to discuss with you and your family the most suitable option.

### **Who will be involved?**

The rehabilitation team is comprised of a number of healthcare professionals.

This team includes:

- Dietetics
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Speech and Language Therapy

**Every stroke has a unique presentation. As a result you may require the support of all members of the therapy team or only those specific to your presentation.**

## **Dietetics**

Dietitians are the only trained health professional that can assess a patient's nutrition and fluid requirements and develop treatment plans in artificial feeding, modified consistency diets/fluids and food first approaches. Our aims are:

- Ensure you receive enough nutrition and fluids to meet their needs
  - Assist with swallowing difficulties to look at different ways to give nutrition and fluids
  - Ensure all other nutrition related problems such as diabetes are considered
- Support you and your family/carers with all nutritional concerns throughout their recovery
- Offer secondary prevention Mediterranean diet advice

## **Physiotherapy**

After a stroke you may have difficulty moving around as you normally would. This is because a stroke can interfere with the messages that are sent from the brain to the muscles of the body.

You may experience symptoms such as muscle weakness, loss of sensation or reduced co-ordination. This can make everyday tasks such as walking or using your arm difficult.

Physiotherapy can help you to optimise your recovery, encouraging you to use both sides of your body again.

This can include:

- Strengthening exercises
- Balance exercises
- Sitting, standing and walking practice

## **Occupational Therapy**

Occupational therapy is an important part of your recovery and involves re-learning everyday activities and regaining the skills you need to complete tasks as independently as possible. These tasks are numerous but can include; washing and dressing, feeding yourself, walking, preparing a meal and a drink, returning to work or leisure activities.

Occupational therapy includes:

- Teaching new skills or providing strategies to complete everyday tasks
- Adapting activities to improve your independence
- Provision or advice regarding aids and equipment to enable you to complete tasks independently

## **Speech and Language Therapy (SLT)**

A stroke can cause difficulties with communication including:

- *Dysarthria* (Slurred speech)
- *Aphasia* (Difficulty understanding what is being said and / or difficulty in finding the words to be able to talk; can also impact reading and writing)
- *Dyspraxia* (A speech disorder resulting in difficulty in pronouncing words correctly and consistently)

SLT can assess and support people with communication difficulties by providing therapy, exploring alternative ways of communicating and supporting families via communication partner training.

A stroke can also lead to difficulties with swallowing (dysphagia) as a result of motor or sensory changes. SLT will assess these difficulties and provide recommendations/therapy to facilitate safer swallowing.

## **Getting the most out of your rehabilitation**

To best achieve your rehabilitation potential, the therapy team will need *you* to actively participate in each session.

The rehabilitation team will focus on working *with* you to help you achieve your goals.

We will support you to do as much as you can for yourself; this may seem frustrating and challenging at first but will help with your long term recovery.

Each profession will work with you to create personal rehabilitation goals.

Some people find it helpful to include their family/carers when thinking about what their goals may be.

It may be helpful to break these goals down into steps so you can see what you need to do to reach your goals.

## How can you help?

Try to maintain a normal daily routine as much as you can; for example sitting out of bed at meal times and ensuring you are ready for therapy sessions. The nursing staff are able to help you with this.

## How can your family/carers help?

- Ensuring you have a supply of comfortable day clothes that are suitable for therapy sessions.
- Making sure you have a pair of supportive footwear on the ward.
- Bring in any walking aids that you usually use or any other aids such as glasses or hearing aids

## Contact details

The therapy team will do their best to keep your family members/carers updated on your progress. They are happy to discuss this over the phone or if appropriate face to face.

Please do not hesitate to contact the appropriate ward and this can be arranged.

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|  | <p>Grange University Hospital<br/>Ward B4 01633 493998</p> <p>Royal Gwent Hospital<br/>Ward C5E 01633234593</p> <p>Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr<br/>Ward 2.2 01443802326</p> <p>Nevill Hall Hospital<br/>Ward 3/4 01873732798</p> <p>Community Neurological/Rehabilitation Service<br/>01495 363461</p> |
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