

Our key priorities and challenges

- Reviews have shown that acute stroke services can be improved (and are being improved) in many hospitals locally and nationally
- Not every patient is consistently receiving the same high standards of stroke care locally
- Our clinical teams are good, but our stroke services are inconsistent and standards vary between our two stroke units at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells hospitals.
- As a consequence we do not always meet national standards of care for everyone we see
- We do not provide the same level of service for patients with suspected strokes and mini-stroke (TIAs) out of hours and at weekends. This is a significant local and national challenge.
- We are making changes, seeing improvements and are committed to doing even better
- The standards of stroke care our patients receive can be seen online at www.mtw.nhs.uk
- We want to make the most of the opportunities we have to improve the quality and safety of patient care now and in the future
- Our aim is to ensure all stroke patients receive the highest standards of care, the best possible outcomes, and reduced long-term disability.

How can I help?

Hospital doctors and GP-leads are developing new care standards for stroke patients to improve outcomes and reduce long-term disability. These standards include, and will help ensure:



- All suspected stroke patients have a brain scan, and receive potentially life-saving medication, where clinically appropriate, within 60 minutes of reaching hospital.
- 90% of stroke patients are admitted to a hyper acute stroke unit within 4 hours of reaching hospital, and are seen by our teams of stroke specialists within 24 hours, seven days a week.

What do you think about these standards? What is important to you about the care you receive? Share your views and experiences with us by:

Email at: mtw-tr.myhealthcare@nhs.net

Write to us for free at:

Freepost RTKS – AKZZ - UCZZ
Stroke Services, Room 118
Service Centre,
Maidstone Hospital
Hermitage Lane
Maidstone, Kent ME16 9QQ

Write to us at the above address or go to www.mtw.nhs.uk for more information.

You can also share your views anonymously with Healthwatch Kent by telephone: 0808 801 0102 or

Stroke Care

have your say...



myMTW



Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells hospitals jointly provide acute stroke care and rehabilitation for patients in West Kent and north East Sussex.

National and local reviews of patient experience show that our hospitals, similar to many others locally and nationally, can greatly improve stroke outcomes for patients and reduce long-term disability.

In recent years, the NHS across the country has made very significant improvements to outcomes for people having a heart attack, patients with trauma injuries, and people with many types of cancer. Nationally and locally, the focus has now turned to stroke services.

In London, the mortality rate for stroke patients has been significantly reduced by the introduction of dedicated hyper-acute units for stroke. These diagnose and treat people in

the first 72 hours of having a stroke, known as the hyper-acute phase. We, along with hospitals across the country, are now considering how to achieve these sorts of improvements in patient outcomes.

Currently, not all of our patients are seen by dedicated specialist teams, who can diagnose their stroke and start appropriate treatment, in a timely way, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Our hospital doctors are working with GP leads on new key standards of care for stroke patients in West Kent and north East Sussex.

Our aim is to ensure all stroke patients have the same fast access to, and higher standards of, potentially life-saving and life-changing care, round the clock, seven days a week, and experience the same high standards in other areas of their on-going treatment and rehabilitation.

Our new standards are being shared with stroke patients, the public and many other stakeholders over the coming months to ensure their experience and knowledge helps shape these important improvements.

Dr Jim Milton, clinical lead for stroke services at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells hospitals, said: “The standards we are developing are quite rightly as high as we can possibly achieve for our patients and will ultimately improve their experience and outcomes in the future.

“Currently, overall, we are performing at a similar level to many other hospital trusts nationwide. We are ‘satisfactory’ but we aim to be ‘excellent’. We want to be performing at the level of the top hospitals, which will lead to better long term outcomes for patients and reduce their long-term disability.

“It has been shown that interventions, such as being treated on a specialist stroke unit and having timely access to medication, helps achieve this. Currently, not all appropriate patients we see in our hospitals are receiving the same high standards of care.

“In addition, we need to ensure that patients presenting at weekends and at night have access to the same level of expertise and treatment as those presenting during normal working hours.”