

## ASC NEWS—AUTUMN 2009 EDITION

1 June 2009

Issue 3

### ASC MEETING - 1ST APRIL 2009

On the 1st April 2009 the Australian Stroke Coalition met to discuss current activities and focus on deliverables for 2009. Members of the ASC are united by the common aim to advance stroke care in Australia. Working groups have agreed goals with identified deliverables.

The third meeting provided an opportunity for the member organisations to focus on the current activities of the Working Groups. Each group gave updates to the ASC and this newsletter will provide an overview of their status. A more detailed report can be found in the [Issues and Actions 2009 document](#).

Other points of discussion at the meeting were member organisation updates, ASC communication, Stroke Awareness and funding guidelines.

### Australian Stroke Coalition Working Goal Updates May 2009

#### Response to Acute Event

The Response to Acute Event Working Group, chaired by Dr Romesh Markus, is focussing on public awareness of stroke, pre-hospital systems and initial hospital response. The ASC has endorsed the 'FAST' campaign as the national stroke awareness message. Results from the national awareness campaign were presented at the face to face meeting. The way in which ASC members can support the FAST campaign will be communicated in the near future.

This group has collated a list of leading ambulance personnel in each state and territory as well as the different pre-hospital responses to stroke across Australia. The information will be available to all members.

ASC representative, David Dunbabin, attended a national meeting of ambulance in Hobart, with Ian Mosley from the National Stroke Research Institute. They presented on the importance of an organised response to stroke. This presentation was well received and further discussions are pending. One of the goals of this working group is to support the development of national standards for pre-hospital response.

#### Access to Stroke Units

The Access to Stroke Units Working Group, chaired by Dr. Andrew Granger, agreed that their goal should remain "Within 5 years, 80% of stroke patients will be admitted to a stroke unit within 24 hours and receive at least 50% of their care there." Although they agreed on the above, there was further discussion regarding direct admission to stroke units and whether this should be a goal of the ASC. It was decided that at this time, direct admission to a stroke unit would not be added, however should be considered in the future.

The Acute Stroke Services Audit results; to be released in October, will be the basis to gauge the state of stroke unit admission and care within Australia. Before this time Audit indicators can be reviewed and any improvements for future audits can be discussed.

#### Workforce, Training and Professional Development

The Workforce, Training and Professional Development Working Group chaired by Assoc Prof Christopher Levi has 2 goals. The first is "that 75% of stroke clinicians will be participating in nationally recognised training that furthers their specialisation in stroke"; and the second, "that all stroke units will have dedicated staff based on national benchmarks". This group has completed an initial scan of stroke specific PD and training and has drafted a report. They have now set the task of developing an outline for a national stroke curriculum.

At the face to face meeting, there was discussion about circulating information on stroke (such as information already available from the NSF) to all undergraduate courses. It was agreed this group would put together a simple pack of information with a supporting letter that could be mailed out to relevant health related courses.

Following a recent visit by Professor Roger Boyle it was noted that the UK are currently developing a [Stroke-Specific Education Framework](#) to establish strategies for stroke education needs. This educational framework may be worth investigating to establish transferable education and learning problems in stroke in Australia. Isobel Hubbard and Alistair Wright will be attending the June meeting to outline courses available at Newcastle University and an e-learning initiative.

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The Rehabilitation Working Group, chaired by Dr Susan Hillier, has the goal to ensure that all stroke patients receive a rehabilitation plan (are assessed for rehabilitation) and receive the right rehabilitation in the right place at the right time.

This group has met three times and has discussed the definition of rehabilitation and the breadth of this area of stroke care. One of the first tasks of this group has been to establish the scope of the group and understand how this group will interface with the Long Term Support and Recovery Group.

Before the face to face meeting this group drafted a project plan, which has now been circulated to the ASC for comment. The proposed project aims to establish the best practice elements of a rehabilitation plan. When this plan is finalised funding will be sought to employ a project officer to further this work.

### Long-term Recovery

The Long-term Recovery Working Group. A presentation on the National Stroke Foundation's Stroke Support Strategy was given by Rebecca Naylor, Divisional Director of Stroke Support at the NSF. This presentation was used as the basis for discussions about the establishment of this working group. It was acknowledged that there will be some overlap with work of the rehabilitation working group however the focus of this group will be on life after stroke and aspects of recovery once discharged from formal rehabilitation services.

Draft goals have been developed by the ASC and need to be finalised by the working group. Erin Lalor, National Stroke Foundation, CEO, will be the new chair for this Working Group. A number of potential members for this group were identified including the NSF, stroke survivors and carers, GPs, aged care providers, psychology, social work, other allied health and rehabilitation physician. The main tasks of this group are to form and set goals for 2009 and beyond.

The next full ASC meeting will be towards the end of 2009, depending on finance and progress on activities

### Useful Links:

[Stroke-Specific Education Framework](#)

[Canadian Stroke Network](#)

### Other Outcomes:

#### Communication

Feedback was received that more regular updates of the activities that members are engaged in would be useful. Therefore a quarterly ASC Newsletter will be circulated to provide a summary outlining ASC and working groups' progress against work plans. These updates will be posted on the webpage.

The [Australian Stroke Coalition](#) webpage can be accessed via the NSF or [SSA website](#). The website has information on the [aims](#) and operations of the ASC as well as information on members.

#### Funding

At the face to face meeting members discussed [funding guidelines](#) for acceptance of external funds. The ASC agreed that funds could be sort for projects identified by the ASC members where current resources mean the activities would not otherwise progress.

A draft of funding requirements were circulated for comment and discussed on the day. These guidelines have now been accepted and approved by the ASC Executive. Currently three projects have been identified that require funding. Project plans will be submitted to the executive for approval. Once approved funders will be approached.

#### Next Working Group Meetings:

Rehabilitation WG June 9<sup>th</sup> at 4pm  
Access to Stroke Unit on June 10<sup>th</sup> at 3pm  
Workforce, Training & PD on June 11<sup>th</sup> at 12 pm  
Response to Acute Events on June 11th at 4pm