

## ASC NEWS – WINTER 2011 EDITION

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Issue 6

### **ASC face-to-face meeting**

The annual face-to-face meeting of the Australian Stroke Coalition was held in Melbourne on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011. The meeting brought together 25 representatives from peak stroke bodies, state clinical stroke networks and professional organisations.

This, the fourth face-to-face meeting of this group provided an opportunity for the member organisations to review the previous years accomplishments and decide on the priorities in stroke care that the ASC would work on for the next twelve months.

Prior to the meeting, ASC member representatives and ASC working group members were surveyed about a range of topics including their views on current priorities for stroke care; existing goals and strategies; effectiveness of the ASC and the operations of the ASC and its working groups. A full report is available [here](#).

Six priority areas have been identified by the ASC members. These are:

1. Acute stroke care
2. Rehabilitation
3. Community (previously Long-term recovery and support)
4. Workforce, training and professional development
5. Data
6. E-health

Acute stroke care combines two of the previous priorities, Response to acute event and Access to stroke units. An additional two priorities were included—Data and E-health—and this recognises the increasing influence that these two topics have and will continue to have in coming years.

### *Current Projects*

#### **Stroke rehabilitation assessment tool for the acute setting**

The ASC has determined that every person who has a stroke will be assessed for their rehabilitation needs.

The ASC Rehabilitation working group commenced a project to develop a nationally consistent assessment process for post acute rehabilitation needs. The aim of this project is to document a recommended process and develop a tool to facilitate the assessment of stroke survivors' rehabilitation needs whilst still in the acute setting.

The project firstly assessed current practice and collated evidence from Australia and overseas for various approaches to facilitate rehabilitation. A survey was piloted in January 2010 and disseminated nationally in April 2010. The survey assessed the processes used for assessing a stroke survivor's rehabilitation needs beyond the acute setting. It was sent to all sites that participated in the 2009 National Stroke Audit Acute Services and answered "yes" to the question "Does your hospital routinely assess all patients for the need for further rehabilitation?" The results were collated and a report was written.

Secondly, a literature review was conducted to establish broad evidence for indicators for rehabilitation and the best practice models of service delivery being reported.

Using the information from these two sources and the input of the expert working group, the assessment process was developed incorporating a decision making pathway with supporting assessment tools. Currently the assessment tool is being piloted at a number of sites across Australia. We anticipate that the pilot evaluation will be completed by 30 June 2011. Depending on the results of the evaluation, further piloting or implementation of the tool will commence in the second half of 2011.

For more information contact ASC secretariat Leah Wright ([lwright@strokefoundation.com.au](mailto:lwright@strokefoundation.com.au)) or current Rehabilitation working group chairperson, Dr Susan Hillier ([susan.hillier@unisa.edu.au](mailto:susan.hillier@unisa.edu.au)).

### *My Stroke Care Plan*

Another priority of the ASC is to ensure that all patients experience a well coordinated and supported discharge and that stroke survivors have access to appropriate care that meets their needs.

My Stroke Care Plan is currently being piloted in a number of public and private hospitals across Australia. It is anticipated that evaluation of the pilot will be completed by 30 August 2011. Depending on the outcome of the evaluation, further piloting or implementation will occur in the second half of 2011.

It is likely that the care plan will form one component of a new comprehensive written resource for stroke survivors and carers which will be finalised and released by the NSF in 2011.

The new hard-copy consumer resource will provide evidence-based information that meets the needs of the stroke survivor and carers at Day 1, point of hospital discharge and whilst living in the community. The resource will:

- increase understanding of stroke and treatments
- encourage and facilitate survivor/ carer participation in decision making
- provide practical strategies for managing life after stroke.

For more information contact ASC secretariat Leah Wright ([lwright@strokefoundation.com.au](mailto:lwright@strokefoundation.com.au)) or Rebecca Naylor ([rnaylor@strokefoundation.com.au](mailto:rnaylor@strokefoundation.com.au))

### *Stroke Specific Education Framework*

The ASC has identified Workforce, Professional Development and Training as one its priority areas. Currently, Australia currently has no nationally agreed strategy or framework for stroke education needs.

The ASC has developed a Stroke Specific Education Framework which has the following aims:

- Assist education providers to develop consistent stroke training, programs and curriculum for all stroke clinicians.
- Increase the number of stroke clinicians participating in recognised training that furthers their specialisation in stroke.

- Encourage delivery of evidence based stroke care as outlined in the national stroke guidelines by encouraging stroke specific education.

The SSEF is based around the Stroke Continuum and relates to the 14 elements of care. It has been developed to promote strong inter-professional education and training and those who use the framework are encouraged to apply the framework in that context.

The SSEF has been circulated to all ASC member organisations for consultation. An implementation plan has been written and will be disseminated to promote use of the SSEF.

For more information contact ASC secretariat ([lwright@strokefoundation.com.au](mailto:lwright@strokefoundation.com.au)) or current Workforce, training and professional development working group chairperson, Andrew Lee ([Andrew.Lee@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:Andrew.Lee@health.sa.gov.au)).

### *Future Projects*

The ASC is planning to commence projects in the second half of 2011 relating to:

- Transient ischaemic attack (TIA) and minor stroke
- Access to stroke units
- Workforce planning

For more information contact ASC secretariat Leah Wright ([lwright@strokefoundation.com.au](mailto:lwright@strokefoundation.com.au))

### **Communication**

The ASC webpage hosted by the NSF is currently being updated to reflect the recent changes to the ASC strategy. For the first time we will be including real time information about the current projects being undertaken by the ASC. Check out the website at <http://www.strokefoundation.com.au/asc>

### **ASC Member Organisation reports**

Prior to the face-to-face meeting, ASC members reported on the work their organisations have been doing in stroke for the past twelve months:

#### *Consumer representation*

Consumers have been represented by Eleanor Horton and Paul Howells. Paul recently resigned after securing full-time work and his time has been appreciated.

The next ASC meeting will be a teleconference and will be held in November 2011.

The secretariat is provided by the NSF. Other information can be obtained by emailing [cprice@strokefoundation.com.au](mailto:cprice@strokefoundation.com.au) or calling 03 9670 1000.

Eleanor is a long standing member of stroke support groups and the carer of a stroke survivor for the past eleven years. Over the past twelve months, Eleanor has been a consumer representative on the Queensland State Stroke Clinical Network and has attended the stroke forum. Eleanor intends to facilitate at the upcoming SmartStrokes Conference.

#### *Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA)*

The APA is represented by Associate Professor Julie Bernhardt, Director, AVERT Early Intervention Research Program, National Stroke Research Institute.

The APA completed their first acute stroke training course in Sydney, March 2010. Another is scheduled for Perth, WA during 2011. For their full report [click here](#)

#### *Tasmanian Branch ASUN (TASSUN)*

The Tasmanian stroke network is represented by Dr Helen Castley, Head of Stroke Services, Royal Hobart Hospital.

TASSUN conducted a scientific meeting which brought together members of stroke units across Tasmania to facilitate a unified approach to referral and assessment of strokes to stroke units. For their full report [click here](#)

#### *Council of Ambulance Authorities (CAA)*

The CAA is represented by Dr Hugh Grantham, Executive Director, Clinical Services, South Australian Ambulance Service.

All ambulance services across Australia have agreed to respond to stroke as a high priority call. For their full report [click here](#)

#### *Australian College of Emergency Medicine (ACEM)*

The Australian College of Emergency Medicine is represented by Dr Anthony Cross, Chair of ACEM Scientific Committee.

ACEM endorsed the National Institute of Clinical Studies (NICS) care bundle. For their full report [click here](#)

#### *Stroke Services NSW (SSNSW)*

SSNSW is represented by Mark Longworth, Manager Statewide Stroke Services NSW, Agency for Clinical Innovation and Pip Galland, Stroke Liaison Officer, Westmead Hospital and Co-chair of SSNSW.

The Statewide Stroke Thrombolysis Project commenced on 9th March 2011. This is a two year project and is a collaboration between NSW Health, Ambulance Service NSW and SSNSW. The committee is responsible for providing strategic advice on state-wide opportunities for improving the way Stroke Thrombolysis services are provided within NSW. The key focus is on improving the acute stroke patient journey. For their full report [click](#)

#### *Occupational Therapy Australia (OTA)*

OTA is represented by Dr Louise Gustaffson, Undergraduate Program Coordinator, Division of Occupational Therapy, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, The University of Queensland

OTA is participating in an alliance of allied health and the medical profession to develop a National Rehabilitation Strategy. The first draft of this strategy was presented to the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing in March 2011 and received a favourable response. Work is to continue on this strategy. For their full report [click here](#)

#### *Speech Pathology Australia (SPA)*

SPA is represented by Christina Wilson, Senior Advisor Professional Issues.

Speech Pathology Australia is currently revising and updating the Clinical Guideline for Dysphagia. An Expression of Interest was in the April "speak out" for a project officer to review the Clinical Guideline: Modified Barium Swallow. For their full report [click here](#)

#### *Victorian Stroke Clinical Network (VSCN)*

The Victorian Stroke Clinical Network (VSCN) is represented by Sonia Denisenko, Manager, Victorian Stroke Clinical Network and Professor Chris Bladin, Director of Neuroscience and Head of Acute Stroke Unit, Department of Neurosciences, Box Hill Hospital.

The VSCN are partners in the Victorian Stroke Telemedicine (VST) Project, a \$1.2 Million initiative which commenced in Bendigo in 2010 for implementation of telemedicine for thrombolysis. For their full report [click here](#)

#### *Queensland Statewide Stroke Network*

The Queensland Statewide Stroke Network is represented by Greg Cadigan, Principal Project Officer and Dr Kong Goh, Rehabilitation Physician, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

The Queensland Rural Stroke Outreach Service has been granted project funding through the COAG Closing the Gap funding initiative to support the development of two Indigenous Stroke Units, one in the north of the state and one in the south. For their full report [click here](#)

#### *National Stroke Foundation (NSF)*

The NSF is represented by Dr Erin Lalor, Chief Executive Officer and Chris Price, Divisional Director – Stroke Services.

Planning has commenced to conduct three webinars during the Stroke Society of Australasia (SSA) conference as part of National Stroke Week. NSF is working with the conference organizers to hold one event on each of the conference themes of prevention, thrombolysis and recovery/stem-cell repair, to enable both health professionals and the general public to access the cutting-edge research being presented. For their full report [click here](#)

### *South Australian Stroke Clinical Network*

The South Australian Stroke Clinical Network is represented by Dr Andrew Lee, Regional Director of Stroke Medicine, Flinders Medical Centre, Repatriation General Hospital and Noarlunga Hospital and Dr Susan Hillier, Senior Lecturer - Biomechanics and Neuroscience, School of Health Sciences, University of South Australia.

The SA Network has submitted the Metropolitan Stroke Service Report to SA Health. The report provides advice to SA Health about the appropriate number of beds required for each stroke unit, the infrastructure to support the stroke unit and the workforce required to provide the service, for both acute and rehabilitation. For their full report [click here](#)

### *Royal College of Nursing Australia (RCNA)*

The RCNA is represented by Sandra Lever, Rehabilitation Clinical Nurse Consultant at the Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney.

RCNA activities have included ongoing monitoring of local, state and national issues relevant to stroke, monitoring opportunities to promote any nursing and/or nurse-led service delivery and innovations in relation to stroke, continued support for RCNA member representation on the Australian Stroke Coalition and openness to providing 3LP educational material and courses related to stroke as opportunity arises. For their full report [click here](#)

### *Stroke Society of Australasia (SSA)*

The Stroke Society of Australasia is represented by Professor Amanda Thrift, Head, Epidemiology and Prevention Unit at Monash University, Dr Mark Parsons, Senior Staff Neurologist John Hunter Hospital and Dr Erin Godecke, Post Doctoral Research Fellow, Speech Pathology at the School of Psychology and Social Sciences Edith Cowan University.

The SSA Annual Scientific Meeting is to be held in Adelaide from the 14th to 16th September. The theme for this 22nd SSA-ASM is: 'Challenges in the New Millennium: Prevention, Thrombolysis & Repair!' For their full report [click here](#)

### **Upcoming events**

#### **7th Australasian Nursing & Allied Health Stroke Conference "Smart Strokes 2011-4 - 5 August 2011 Holiday Inn, Surfers Paradise, QLD**

The theme for the 7th annual "Smart Strokes" is "Working Together: Stroke in Time". The visiting speakers for the conference will be health professionals from nursing, allied health and medicine who are specialists in stroke and include Jacinta Douglas, Sandy Middleton, Mark Parsons and Rohan Grimley. The conference will offer an excellent educational opportunity for networking and sharing of knowledge with colleagues working in the stroke speciality.

### **22nd Stroke Society of Australasia Annual Scientific Meeting—Adelaide Convention Centre—14-16 September 2011**



The theme for the 22nd SSA-ASM is: 'Challenges in the New Millennium: Prevention, Thrombolysis & Repair!' Keynote Speakers include Werner Hacke (Germany), Argye Hillis (USA), Stefano Pluchino (UK), and James Mick (USA). The SSA-ASM 2011 will build around these themes and speakers to cross all disciplines and interests, whether yours are clinical or scientific. There will also be three exciting satellite sessions: Tuesday afternoon 13th September on 'Comprehensive Stroke Care for All' that will target Nursing, Allied Health and Rehabilitation; Tuesday afternoon 13th September on 'Stroke Advocacy - getting the message across!'; and Saturday 17th September on 'TIA Stroke Prevention for Primary Practice'.

**Early Bird** registration closes: **4 July 2011**



### **National Stroke Week—12 - 18 September 2011**

1 in 6 people will have a stroke - behind these numbers are real lives. Strokes can happen to anyone so it is important to know your stroke risk. Every 6 seconds someone, somewhere regardless of age or gender will die from stroke.

The NSF is encouraging all Australians to remember this statistic and understand the six steps to work towards:

- Know your personal risk factor
- Be physically active and exercise regularly
- Keep a healthy diet
- Limit alcohol consumption
- Avoid cigarette smoke
- Learn the warning signs of stroke (F.A.S.T)

For more information about the activities occurring during Stroke Week go to [www.strokefoundation.com.au/national-stroke-week](http://www.strokefoundation.com.au/national-stroke-week)