



**Patient Feedback on Specialist Stroke  
Rehabilitation at Redcar Primary Care  
Hospital**

**January 2016**



## **What is Healthwatch?**

Healthwatch is an independent organisation which seeks to listen to the experiences and views of people who use health and social care services. We use this information to influence how services are planned and delivered in the future to make sure they meet the needs of those people using them.

Healthwatch Redcar and Cleveland is steered by a Board of volunteers, commissioned by the Local Authority and accountable to the public. We strive to work effectively with local health and social care providers to ensure the needs and preferences of service users are at the heart of the delivery of health and social care services.

## **Background**

Stroke rehabilitation was highlighted as a priority area for South Tees Clinical Commissioning Group through its IMProVE programme (Integrated Management and Proactive Care for the Vulnerable and Elderly).

From 1st April 2015 stroke services and rehabilitation teams have been centralised at Redcar Primary Care Hospital, making it a centre of excellence for stroke rehabilitation. Stroke patients who would previously have been sent to Carter Bequest and Guisborough Primary Care Hospitals are now being admitted to the specialist unit at Redcar.

The specialist stroke unit brings together community inpatient beds with specially trained nurses and rehabilitation services such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech and language therapy. This enables staff to work closely together and gives patients access to a wide range of experts on one site.

The stroke unit also has the added support of the Early Support Discharge (ESD) team.

## **What is Early Supported Discharge (ESD)?**

Stroke ESD is a service that is offered to people who have had a new stroke, are well enough to leave hospital and who have been identified as appropriate for further specialist stroke therapy at home. Therapy may include dietetics, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech and language therapy and is of the same intensity as that given in hospital.



Depending on the needs of the patient, therapists will visit for up to six weeks to set and agree goals. Patients are given a key worker who is their main contact for the duration of their care.

### **Healthwatch Involvement**

As this is a new specialist service operating from Redcar Primary Care Hospital, the NHS South Tees Clinical Commissioning Groups asked if Healthwatch would speak to patients, families and their carers to obtain independent feedback on the service.

### **Early Supported Discharge Feedback**

On 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015 staff and volunteers from Healthwatch Redcar and Cleveland spoke to 3 patients and their family members who had used the Early Supported Discharge Service. The patients came from different locations throughout the South Tees Area and were of varying ages.

Two of the patients had suffered severe strokes and had spent a long period of time in James Cook Hospital before being discharged on to the programme. The third patient had suffered a minor stroke and after a very short period in hospital was discharged to be supported at home.

All of the patients had been consulted and asked if they wanted to be on the Early Supported Discharge Programme. A full explanation was provided to those who chose to join.

The patients and their families agreed that they had been fully involved in the planning of their care. They also told us that they were always informed if there was to be any changes, such as changes in staff or times. They did say however that this was very rare and that the care provided was very flexible to their needs. One of the patients commented that it was 'nice to be treated as a patient and not a number' and 'they fit around you and not you fit around them'.

The patients were asked if any necessary additional equipment or adaptations to their home had been installed or carried out prior to their discharge. One patient commented that she had not received equipment enabling them to have a shower until a couple of weeks after discharge. Although the patient was not negative about this, it is recommended that these arrangements are carried out before discharge to ensure the patient receives the same level of care in their home as they would do in hospital.



All of the patients informed us that having care delivered in their own home had had a significant impact on their wellbeing. Being out of a hospital setting made them believe that they were on the road to recovery and gave them the opportunity to get back into a 'normal' routine.

The patients also commented that they had received fantastic support from the Stroke Association who gave them information and advice as required.

All of the patients were asked if they thought that the service needed any improvements but they were all highly satisfied with the current service and did not think any changes were necessary.

### **Stroke Patient Feedback**

On 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015 Healthwatch Redcar and Cleveland volunteers visited the Stroke Unit at Redcar Primary Care Hospital.

Healthwatch Redcar and Cleveland's first impressions of the Stroke Unit were very good. There is good access to the hospital by public transport and there is a car park on site for those travelling by car. The stroke unit appeared to be clean and welcoming to both patients and visitors. During the visit, Healthwatch Redcar and Cleveland spoke to a number of patients and their relatives to gather their views and experiences of their stay and treatment on the stroke unit.

One particular patient had explained that he had been transferred to Redcar Primary Care Hospital from The James Cook University Hospital, where he had been for the previous 6 weeks following a stroke. After the patient was transferred to Redcar Primary Care Hospital, they felt that the care received from the medical team was 'great' and that it 'can't be faulted'. The patient feels that his condition had improved considerably due to the nursing and physio care he was receiving during his stay. The patient was also very happy with the level of communication between himself and the staff, explaining that he was kept very informed of all issues and stages of his care.

Healthwatch Redcar and Cleveland received some more positive feedback from another patient and their relatives. After being transferred from The James Cook University Hospital to the stroke unit, the patient's relatives explained that the treatment received from Redcar Primary Care Hospital was 'fantastic' and that 'he is a different bloke' since being transferred. The patient stated to Healthwatch that the 'physio is excellent' and that he would rate his stay as '5 star'. Further



positive feedback also extends to the speech therapy team, a service which the hospital also delivers.

Another patient who Healthwatch spoke to, had Parkinson's syndrome and although she had not experienced a stroke, her needs and requirements were very similar so she was transferred to the stroke unit. The patient rated the care she had received as 'excellent' and also expressed that the food was 'superb'. The patient's relative also commented that the parking arrangements at Redcar Primary Care Hospital were 'far superior' compared to The James Cook University Hospital. Although the patient explained that her mobility was poor, she felt that she was improving daily, thanks to the physiotherapy she was receiving. In addition to her mobility, the patient felt that the improvement in her condition had been enhanced by the excellent care and attention from all at Redcar Primary Care Hospital.

All of the patients Healthwatch spoke to gave very positive feedback about their stay and experience of the stroke unit at Redcar Primary Care Hospital. When Healthwatch asked patients and relatives if they could think of any improvements to make, no suggestions were made as everyone was very happy with the level of care and the services provided by the hospital's stroke unit.

**Healthwatch Redcar and Cleveland would like to thank all patients, relatives, carers and staff at Redcar Primary Care Hospital who helped us carry out this work.**

