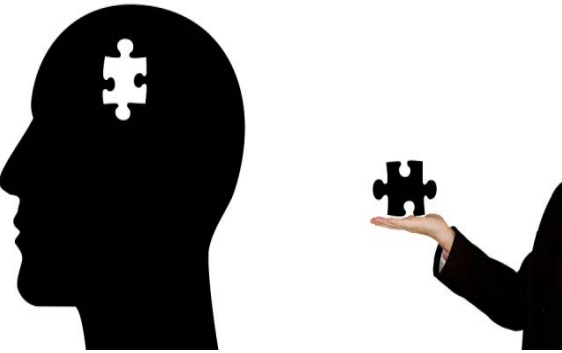


CLAHRCBITE

Brokering Innovation Through Evidence **Accelerating Delivery of
Psychological Therapies after Stroke (ADOPTS)**



The ADOPTS project aimed to increase access to psychological care for stroke survivors. This was aimed to be achieved through fostering collaboration between stroke and psychology services (including acute, rehabilitation, community, voluntary stroke services and mental health services), and through increasing staff skills and confidence. This was done in four areas in the North West.

Background

Psychological problems after stroke, such as depression and anxiety, can negatively impact stroke survivors. Patients with stroke-related psychological difficulties report this as an unmet need. Although general psychological services exist (e.g. Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)), there remains a lack of support for stroke survivors, which may be compounded by communication and cognitive problems experienced post-stroke creating barriers to accessing generic psychological support. Furthermore, healthcare staff in stroke teams report a lack of confidence in managing psychological distress.

Who was involved?

An active Patient, Carer and Public Involvement (PCPI) group for the project was established at the start and met regularly throughout to guide the project. The PCPI group provided input on which measurements we used to assess people's mood, the best way of recruiting patients and carers to the study, and helped develop materials for the psychological care pathway and training such as contact cards, manuals for staff, and leaflets for patients.

What did we do?

We conducted preliminary interviews with stroke and mental health staff, and stroke survivors and their carers, to determine the barriers to providing and accessing psychological support. We then used this information and worked with stroke and mental health teams to develop a pathway of psychological care in each area incorporating all the available services within the area. We established stroke champions for each area to facilitate signposting to relevant services and who could encourage communication between services. We also delivered training to staff in stroke and voluntary services to raise the profile of patients' psychological needs and promote the parity of this alongside physical needs, and to increase knowledge and skills in supporting people psychologically after stroke. IAPT staff also received training on the impact of stroke and how they may have to adapt therapy to increase their confidence in delivering therapies with stroke survivors.

What we found and what does this mean?

The pathway was successfully implemented in the four sites. Staff found the training beneficial and particularly liked the practical tips and suggestions of what to say and what not to say. They reported not being so worried about trying to address some of the issues around psychological distress. IAPT staff felt more able to adapt therapy materials to assist in communication with stroke survivors.

What next?

The training materials developed are likely to be useful resources for other stroke services and generic mental health services, so we aim to make these widely available for implementation. The research will be presented at key conferences in the UK and Europe and will be published in journals to allow wider dissemination of the findings.

Partners / Stakeholders



What is NIHR CLAHRC NWC?

The mission of the NIHR CLAHRC NWC is to work collaboratively with Partner organisations and other stakeholders including members of the public to co-produce and conduct high-quality, leadership enhancing, applied research designed to decrease health inequalities and improve the health of the population of the North West Coast.

Find out more

<http://www.clahrc-nwc.nihr.ac.uk/index.php>

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