

'Abandoned' stroke survivors need better longer-term care, expert says

October 29 2014

Stroke patients need better long-term support to ensure their health and social care needs are met and prevent them feeling "abandoned", a University of Leeds expert says.

Speaking on World Stroke Day (October 29), Professor Anne Forster, from the School of Medicine, one of the UK's leading experts in care for [stroke patients](#), suggests that although [survival rates](#) have improved significantly, with stroke mortality rates halving over the last 20 years, more needs to be done to safeguard the long-term welfare of stroke patients and their families.

Professor Forster said: "There are many stroke patients who feel abandoned and lost once they are discharged from hospital. In many cases, they may only receive three months of after-care, even though national clinical guidelines recommend a review of their condition after six months.

"But there is no defined care pathway for these patients and their families after a short period of post-hospital rehabilitation. The UK is very good at looking after patients in a hospital setting but it is the responsibility of clinical commissioning groups to make sure the longer-term needs of stroke patients and their carers are met."

In the UK, someone suffers a stroke every five minutes and one in five strokes is fatal. Strokes are caused either by a blockage on a blood vessel, which accounts for about 85% of cases, or bleeding in the brain,

which accounts for the other 15%.

A third of stroke patients suffer some physical impairment as a result of a stroke, with a third left prone to depression. Patients can require help with mobility, managing emotions and maintaining relationships.

Professor Forster leads on the Lots2Care programme, a research project which is working with centres in England to trial interventions to address the longer-term needs of [stroke survivors](#) and their families.

She added: "My research group, based in Bradford and Leeds, is trying to examine ways in which the longer-term unmet needs of stroke survivors can be identified and addressed, but that's just the tip of the iceberg. What's required is a nationally co-ordinated programme so that everyone, stroke survivors and health professionals, has a clearly defined longer-term care pathway to work to."

Provided by University of Leeds

Citation: 'Abandoned' stroke survivors need better longer-term care, expert says (2014, October 29) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-10-abandoned-survivors-longer-term-expert.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--