

Report predicts growth in stroke rates for UK

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Credit: King's College London

The number of strokes across the UK is likely to rise by almost half (44 per cent) in the next 20 years, according to a new report by researchers from King's College London.

The Burden of Stroke in Europe [report](#) is a comprehensive analysis of 35 European countries, published by the Stroke Alliance for Europe (SAFE) and the Stroke Association to mark European Stroke Awareness Day and the UK's national awareness month.

The report warns that throughout Europe the number of strokes could rise by 2035 due to our ageing population.

The report findings predict that by 2035:

- the number of new strokes across Europe is likely to increase by a third (34 per cent), and in the UK, this figure could jump by nearly half (44 per cent)
- the number of [stroke survivors](#) living in the UK is expected to rise by a third (32 per cent).

The report's authors caution that accurate comparisons between countries are extremely difficult, and advise that their predictions for the future have a significant level of uncertainty.

Professor Christopher McKevitt, an author of the report from the Division of Health and Social Care Research at King's College London, said: 'Our report shows that your chances of getting the best quality care when you first have a stroke vary widely across Europe, and within individual European states. It also shows that we know very little about what care stroke survivors get after discharge from hospital.

'As the population ages, more people will have a stroke, and more will survive with long-term disabilities. We need to ensure better access to the best acute stroke care for all; and we need to focus efforts on improving support for stroke survivors in the months and years after they are sent home from hospital.'

Juliet Bouverie, Chief Executive of the Stroke Association, said: 'The number of stroke survivors is set to rise by almost one million people, and that number in the UK is expected to increase by over 30%: that is one of the largest increases in Europe. These are shocking figures, and if they are borne out, health services will face a formidable challenge in tackling a stroke epidemic.

'There are alarming variations in delivering even the basic levels of treatment and care for stroke patients, such as access to stroke units and thrombolysis, not just across Europe, but across the UK. Without

reorganisation, [stroke patients](#) are less likely to receive the treatment and care which will save their lives and reduce disability. This could ultimately lead to greater costs on their Governments and economies.'

As part of its recommendations, SAFE is calling for each EU member state to have a national stroke strategy, actively supported and sponsored by Government that covers the whole stroke pathway. This should include awareness, prevention, treatment and long-term support.

Ms Bouverie continued: 'While it is good news that many more people are now surviving a [stroke](#), we also know that their needs are not currently being met after they've received initial life-saving treatment.'

More information: The Burden of Stroke in Europe:
www.stroke.org.uk/sites/default/files/2017-05-11-report-predicts-growth-in-stroke-rates-for-uk.pdf

Provided by King's College London

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