

NHS Lothian Post-Stroke Spasticity Management Collaborative Working Project

Executive Summary Format

Project Title	NHS Lothian Post-Stroke Spasticity Management Collaborative Working Project
Organisations Involved	NHS Lothian Merz Pharma UK Ltd
Purpose	Development and implementation of a standardised approach to earlier identification, referral and management of post-stroke spasticity across NHS Lothian services.

Summary

There is an opportunity across NHS Lothian to improve the identification, assessment and management of post-stroke spasticity through the development and implementation of a standardised, region-wide clinical pathway. NHS Lothian experiences approximately 1,100 stroke admissions each year and evidence suggests that around 15% of stroke survivors may develop severe or disabling post-stroke spasticity, equating to approximately 165 patients annually. Current referral levels to specialist spasticity services are substantially lower than the expected prevalence, indicating that a proportion of patients may not be identified and assessed at an early stage.

This collaborative working project will bring together acute stroke services, rehabilitation services, community teams, Health and Social Care Partnerships and relevant third-sector organisations to support earlier identification of patients, improve referral quality, strengthen multidisciplinary collaboration and promote consistent clinical practice across Lothian. The project aims to create a sustainable and integrated model of care that improves patient experience, supports earlier intervention, increases understanding of service demand and capacity requirements, and helps ensure that patients with post-stroke spasticity are identified and managed appropriately.

The project is expected to take two years from onset to completion.

Background

Current referral levels for post-stroke spasticity treatment are significantly lower than the expected prevalence data would suggest, indicating that a substantial proportion of patients may not have been identified or referred for assessment and intervention.

As a result, NHS Lothian Stroke Services have identified the need for a coordinated and standardised approach to the early recognition and management of post-stroke spasticity. The collaborative working project seeks to redesign the patient pathway across acute and community services to ensure timely identification, referral, assessment and ongoing management of patients who may benefit from specialist intervention.

Project Objectives

The primary objective of this project is the optimisation of post-stroke spasticity management across NHS Lothian, specifically contributing towards:

1. Development and implementation of a standardised post-stroke spasticity pathway across acute, community and rehabilitation services.
2. Enhancing and standardising education and clinical practice in both the assessment and management of post-stroke spasticity.
3. Earlier identification of patients at risk of developing post-stroke spasticity and improved referral quality to specialist services.
4. Improved consistency of clinical practice and decision-making across NHS Lothian.
5. Increased collaboration between stroke, rehabilitation, community, social care and third-sector services involved in patient care.
6. Improved patient and carer experience through more timely assessment, intervention and support.
7. Increased understanding of demand for post-stroke spasticity services and identification of future capacity and funding requirements.
8. Collection and review of agreed service metrics and outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of the pathway and support future service planning.

Benefits

Benefits / Impact to Patients

- Earlier identification and assessment of post-stroke spasticity.
- Improved access to specialist spasticity services and interventions.
- More consistent and coordinated care across acute, community and rehabilitation settings.
- Improved patient and carer experience through clearer pathways and earlier intervention.
- Potential for improved functional outcomes, independence and quality of life for patients living with post-stroke spasticity.

Benefits to the NHS Partner

- Creation of a standardised and sustainable approach to post-stroke spasticity management across NHS Lothian.
- Improved understanding of current and future service demand and capacity requirements.
- Better utilisation of specialist rehabilitation and spasticity resources through earlier and more appropriate referral.
- Strengthened integration between acute, rehabilitation, community, social care and third-sector services.
- Generation of data and learning to support future service planning and funding discussions.

Benefits to Merz

- Enhanced reputation for Merz through transparent and compliant partnership working with NHS Lothian.
- Improved understanding of the patient pathway, service challenges and unmet needs within stroke and rehabilitation services.
- Opportunity to contribute expertise, project support and service improvement capabilities to help optimise patient care.

- As a manufacturer of medicines used in the management of spasticity, an indirect consequence of improved identification and referral of appropriate patients may be increased access to approved treatment options where clinically appropriate.

Funding & Resources

This project is a collaborative working arrangement between NHS Lothian and Merz Pharma UK Ltd. Resources will be provided by both organisations through shared expertise, project leadership and participation in the steering and working groups. The project will utilise existing NHS and Merz personnel to support implementation, service redesign activities, pathway development and project evaluation. No direct funding is associated with the project unless otherwise agreed and documented through the collaborative working governance process.