



Private and confidential

The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust

Final terms of reference

1. Background

The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust is one of the largest acute and community providers in the West Midlands. The Trust provides services from three hospitals as well as community sites and General practices (GPs). The Trust stroke service is primarily based at New Cross Hospital. Since 2018 all acute strokes from the Walsall area have been directed to New Cross Hospital.

There have been significant national advances in the management of stroke, with a particular focus on early detection and implementation of treatments that reduce mortality and disability. This has led to a marked reshaping of stroke services throughout the NHS to ensure that patients receive the best possible care on a 24/7 basis.

Every Trust within the NHS is eligible to contribute relevant clinical data for every patient suffering a stroke to the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme (SSNAP). The analysis of this data is provided back to each participating Trust, and importantly, offers benchmark comparisons with other stroke units. SSNAP are able to identify trends in performance and provide alerts when standards of care fall below expected rates.

Dr Brian McKaig, chief medical officer for The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust approached the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) Invited Reviews service to undertake a review of their stroke services following the notification of a mortality alert from the SSNAP pertaining to the April 2021 to March 2023 period. The directorate has a plan in place to improve the quality of hyperacute and acute stroke care delivered to patients. In response to the mortality alert, the directorate is planning to undertake a case note review of a selection of deaths including some from the alerting period. Additionally, it will undertake improvement work to address hospital acquired pneumonia in hospitalised stroke patients and continue with ongoing work on data quality and collaboration with regional stroke network. This ongoing work will be considered as part of the review.

2. Objectives

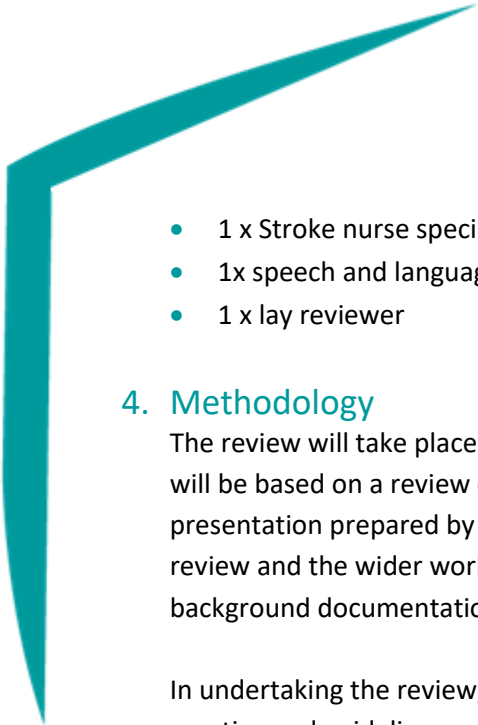
To undertake an invited service review at the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust. The medical specialty is stroke medicine.

3. Expertise required

- 2 x co chairs (IR medical director and associate director, Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme)
- 3 x consultant stroke physicians
- 1 x occupational therapist

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- 1 x Stroke nurse specialist
 - 1x speech and language therapist
 - 1 x lay reviewer

4. Methodology

The review will take place both virtually using teleconference facilities and in person. The findings will be based on a review of patient medical records, interviews with key individuals as well as a presentation prepared by the Trust focussing on the findings of the internal mortality case note review and the wider work being conducted relating to the improvement plan. Relevant background documentation will also be considered.

In undertaking the review, the review team will consider whether care is in line with national good practice and guidelines, and/or what would be considered by the view of a body of clinical professionals in a similar situation.

5. Issues to be explored

a. Clinical record review

To undertake a clinical record review of the medical records of 16 randomly selected patient deaths (72 hours post stroke) presenting with acute onset neurological disability managed by the acute stroke team:

- 8 x patient in-hospital deaths (first death from each month from 1 April 2021)
- 8 x patient in-hospital deaths (first death from each month from 1 August 2022)

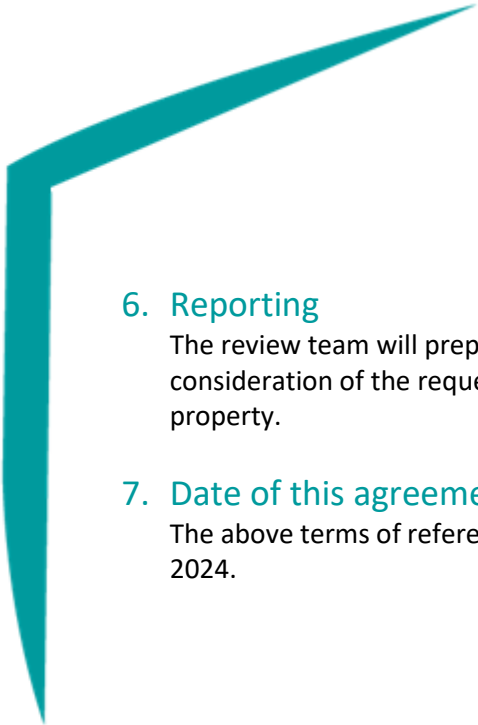
Consideration will be given to:

- Admission and initial care
- Ongoing care and treatment
- Communication with colleagues and MDT working
- Interactions with patients and their family
- Clinical record keeping

- b. To review the current service design for the delivery of care for the stroke service, to include a review of protocols and pathways, facilities, staffing (to include extended nursing roles), capacity, activity and workload. Consideration will be given to the delivery of care out of hours, and formal links with other centres.
- c. To review the quality of team working and to give a view on whether this supports the delivery of high quality and safe care. Consideration will be given ways of working, interactions with members of the wider medical team, to include nursing, clinical leadership, and job planning.
- d. To review the quality of clinical governance arrangements currently in place to support and maintain oversight of the service. Consideration will be given to raising and responding to concerns, audits, clinical incident reporting, and reviews of mortality.
- e. Highlight any new area of concern that arises during the invited review.

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6. Reporting

The review team will prepare a report that makes recommendations, as relevant, for the consideration of the requesting healthcare organisation. Once issued the final report becomes their property.

7. Date of this agreement

The above terms of reference were agreed by the RCP and the healthcare organisation on 5 June 2024.

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