



**NHS**  
**National Institute for  
Health Research**

## Issue 7

### West Midlands Stroke Research Network Newsletter

Welcome to the seventh edition of the quarterly WMSRN Newsletter!

This quarter we report on the National Stroke Research Network Conference held in Newcastle in July. We will also be showing you a sneak preview of the agenda for our Stakeholder Event in January

We will be meeting Jean Bird, a stroke survivor from the West Midlands, who has taken part in some research locally.

We also have our latest recruitment figures to share with you and our Trial in Focus this month is Stroke-Inf.

We hope you enjoy our newsletter and would very much appreciate your feedback.

Kind Regards to All

*Kate Wilde*

West Midlands Stroke Research Network Manager

Consultant Lead: Dr Christine Roffe. Network Manager: Dr Kathryn Wilde  
Enquiries: Telephone Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427454. Fax Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427446  
<http://westmidlands.uksrn.ac.uk>

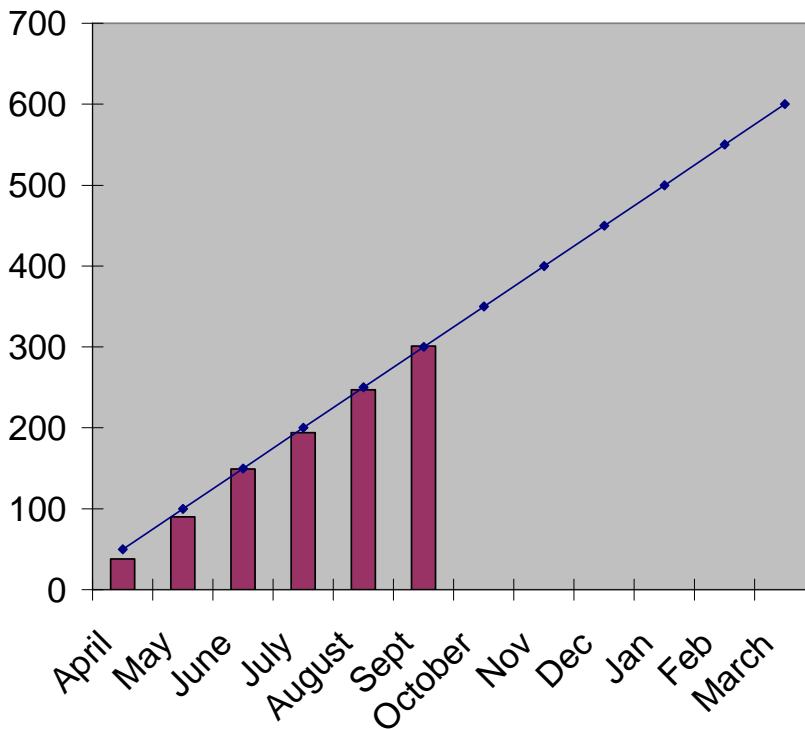
The West Midlands Stroke Research Network is part of the National Institute for Health Research and is funded by the Department of Health

# Recruitment In WMSRN



This financial year we have the new challenge to face of recruiting 600 patients to our approved list of studies. Coupled with this, one of our highest recruiting trials has closed, leaving many of sites suddenly without a trial to recruit to! Despite this we are on track to meet target at the moment. Well done to all those involved!

## NUMBER OF PATIENTS RECRUITED QUARTERS 1&2



month to month Accrual  
 month to month predicted

Consultant Lead: Dr Christine Roffe. Network Manager: Dr Kathryn Wilde  
 Enquiries: Telephone Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427454. Fax Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427446  
<http://westmidlands.uksrn.ac.uk>

The West Midlands Stroke Research Network ( WMSRN) is part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and is funded by the Department of Health



## **Trials in WMSRN Area**

### **ENOS (Efficacy of Nitric Oxide patches and blood pressure reduction regimens after Stroke).**

- This study questions whether blood pressure should be actively reduced after a stroke but additionally explores whether a Nitric Oxide patch is more efficacious than use of an oral antihypertensive. This patch can be used even when a patient has swallowing difficulties.
- There are five hospitals participating in this trial in the West Midlands and we are hoping more will in 2009/10

### **IST3 (International Stroke Trial 3)**

- This trial is looking at extension of the time frame and the age range for use of alteplase (Clot busting drug) in thrombolysis of cerebral infarcts. The drug is currently only licensed to be used up to 3 hours after the onset of stroke symptoms. This trial looks at the merit of extending this to 6 hours.
- There are now seven hospitals participating in this trial in the West Midlands.

### **BUCS (The Birmingham Cognitive Screen)**

- This research is looking into a questionnaire tool that assesses attention and executive brain function after brain injury.
- This study currently takes place at seven hospitals in the West Midlands and we are hoping another 3 will join in soon

### **RETURNS**

- This study explores rehabilitation concentrating on turning co-ordination.
- Patients are recruited through Birmingham University from the local Primary care community.

### **DNA Lacunar**

- This study collects genetic material on lacunar type strokes
- Patients are recruited from University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire and University Hospital North Staffordshire at present.

### **LOTS care and LUNS**

- These studies explore long term planning and treatment for stroke patients after discharge.
- The LUNs project is evaluating the questionnaire used to evaluate unmet needs in the LOTs Care trial.
- Three centres are recruiting patients to LUNs and 3 are recruiting patients to LOTS in the West Midlands

### **SOS**

- Is routine oxygen supplementation beneficial in the first few days after stroke?
- This study is running at seven centres across the West Midlands but we are hoping participation will increase greatly in 2009/10.

### **PAST BP**

- A randomised controlled trial of different blood pressure targets for people with a history of stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA) in primary care
- This study is running at primary care centres across Birmingham and is hopefully opening in Warwickshire

Consultant Lead: Dr Christine Roffe. Network Manager: Dr Kathryn Wilde  
Enquiries: Telephone Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427454. Fax Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427446  
<http://westmidlands.uksrn.ac.uk>

### **Stroke-inf**

- A cluster randomised controlled trial to see if prophylactic prescription of antibiotics to stroke patients with swallowing difficulties results in a better outcome than treating infection as it arises.
- This study is running at University Hospital North Staffordshire

### **ARC study**

- A Study of the Effect of ARC1779 Injection on Cerebral Microembolism in Patients Undergoing Carotid Endarterectomy
- This study is running at University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire and is being considered at University Hospital North Staffordshire

### **Coming Soon!**

### **TARDIS**

- A Study on stroke and TIA to see if triple anti-platelet therapy (aspirin, clopidogrol and dipyridimole) is more effective than aspirin and clopidogrol alone
- Expressions of interest have been shown by University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire, University Hospital North Staffordshire, Hereford Hospital and Telford hospital so far.

### **GRABIT**

- A Study on the grip and grasp response of patients recovering from particular types of stroke lesions
- This study is recruiting patients from various rehabilitation setting across Birmingham

# **Trial In FOCUS**



## **Stroke –Inf**

**A cluster randomised trial of different strategies of antibiotic use to reduce the incidence and consequences of chest infection in acute stroke patients with swallowing problems**

### **What is the purpose of this study?**

Nearly 40% of patients with acute stroke have swallowing problems and one in five of them will develop chest infections because of saliva, food or water going down the windpipe (aspiration). These chest infections are known to interfere with recovery and rehabilitation, leading to the possibility of increased number of deaths, disability and need to go into care homes.

Research shows that nearly 70-80% patients regain swallowing in the first 7-10 days after stroke. A possible way of reducing such infections is to give stroke patients with swallowing problems antibiotics for the first 7 days to prevent chest infections, but whether this approach will be successful is not known. The purpose of this study is to see if an "act first" approach in which

Consultant Lead: Dr Christine Roffe. Network Manager: Dr Kathryn Wilde  
Enquiries: Telephone Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427454. Fax Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427446  
<http://westmidlands.uksrn.ac.uk>

4

antibiotics are given to stroke patients with swallowing problems prevents chest infections and is safe and effective compared with the present "wait and watch" approach where antibiotics are used only after chest infection develops.

## **Methodology**

Centres, rather than patients are randomised to be control or intervention. Consented patients are then screened at 14 days and 90 days after their stroke for how well they are progressing.

### Control Group ("wait and watch approach")

- Stroke Unit randomised to follow the National Guidelines for dysphagic patients
- Follow the National Guidelines
- Antibiotic treatment if signs of infection
- Identify potentially eligible patients, obtain written informed consent from patient/ relative assent for the patient
- Conduct Baseline Assessments

### Intervention Group ("act first" approach)

- Stroke Unit randomised to prophylactic antibiotic use plus National Guidelines for dysphagic patients
- Identify potentially eligible patients, obtain written informed consent from patient/ relative assent for the patient
- Follow National Guidelines
- Prescribe antibiotics according to an agreed regimen for 7 days
- Conduct Baseline Assessments

### Control and intervention group

- Daily monitoring for infection, diarrhoea, and other observations for 14 days
- Day 14  $\pm$  2 days: Clinical Research Team assesses Primary Outcome Measure
- Day 90  $\pm$  7 days: Clinical Research Team assesses Secondary Outcome Measures

## **Further Information**

*Professor L Kalra*

*Professor of Stroke Medicine*

King's College Hospital  
Department of Stroke Medicine  
Denmark Hill  
London SE5 9RS

**Direct tel: 020 3299 1714**

**Direct fax: 020 3299 3195**

Consultant Lead: Dr Christine Roffe. Network Manager: Dr Kathryn Wilde  
Enquiries: Telephone Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427454. Fax Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427446  
<http://westmidlands.uksrn.ac.uk>

The West Midlands Stroke Research Network ( WMSRN) is part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and is funded by the Department of Health



## Acute Stroke Conference

Sneak Preview

Research and Improvement  
22nd January 2010

Aston University Business School Conference Centre

### Summary Agenda

9.15 – 10.00	Registration and coffee
10.00 – 10.10	<b>Aims of the day</b> Dr Christine Roffe, Clinical Lead for West Midlands Stroke Research Network Dr David Sandler, Clinical Lead (Stroke) for Birmingham and Sandwell Cardiac and Stroke Network
10.10 – 10.25	<b>Acting FAST</b> Birmingham and Sandwell Cardiac and Stroke Network
10.25 – 11.00	<b>Keynote speaker: Professor Philip Bath, University of Nottingham</b>
11.00 – 11.25	Coffee
11.25 – 11.45	<b>A patient's story: Owen Wynn-Jones</b>
11.45 – 12.00	<b>Our plans for success</b> Dr Kate Wilde, West Midlands Stroke Research Network Manager
12.00 – 1.00	<b>Research update</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>SOS trial</b> – Dr Christine Roffe</li> <li>▪ <b>The results of CLOTs</b> – Carol Williams</li> <li>▪ <b>Update on CLAHRC</b> – Richard McManus</li> <li>▪ <b>Thrombolysis, our service</b> – Dr Don Sims, Selly Oak Hospital, University Hospitals Birmingham Foundation NHS Trust</li> <li>▪ Open forum</li> </ul>
1.00 – 2.00	Lunch
2.00 – 2.45	<b>Workshops – session 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Involving Black and Minority Ethnic communities in research</b> – Jo McCormack</li> <li>▪ <b>Reading scans</b> – Dr Elliot Epstein</li> <li>▪ <b>Telemedicine: what's the future?</b> – Eunice Foster</li> <li>▪ <b>TIA: the role of the GP</b> – Dr Richard McManus</li> </ul>
2.45 – 3.00	Tea break
3.00 – 3.45	<b>Workshops – session 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Involving Black and Minority Ethnic communities in research</b> – Jo McCormack</li> <li>▪ <b>Reading scans</b> – Dr Elliot Epstein</li> <li>▪ <b>Telemedicine: what's the future?</b> – Eunice Foster</li> <li>▪ <b>TIA: the role of the GP</b> – Dr Richard McManus</li> </ul>
3.45	<b>Closing remarks</b> Dr Peter Mayer, Chair of West Midlands Stroke Research Network

## *Events Feedback*

# Stroke Research Network Conference July 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>

This two day conference was held in the impressive St James Park stadium, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, home to Newcastle United football club.

The first day was a training day aimed primarily at staff employed by the network to conduct research. Sessions included discussion around a competency framework for clinical research nurses and opportunities for training and professional development within the National Institute for Health Research and the Stroke Association.

In the evening, a gala dinner was held at the stadium, giving everyone a chance to mingle.



From left to right:  
Helen Jones – Occupational therapist, West Park Hospital, Wolverhampton.  
Martine Pritchard – Research Facilitator, University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire.  
Julie Smith -Research Nurse, Queens Hospital Burton.  
Kate Wilde- WMSRN manager  
Sarah Pountain- SOS trial manager  
Kay Finney- Research facilitator, Stoke-on-Trent

On the second day, Professor Roger Boyle, National Director for Heart Disease and Stroke for the Department of Health gave us his views on 'how I would like to be treated in 5 years time'. This was followed by some detailed feedback on some completed studies, some up and coming studies and some ongoing programmes of work. The meeting concluded with a look to our future plans and direction.

All enjoyed the conference and found the updates very useful.

Consultant Lead: Dr Christine Roffe. Network Manager: Dr Kathryn Wilde  
Enquiries: Telephone Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427454. Fax Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427446  
<http://westmidlands.uksrn.ac.uk>

The West Midlands Stroke Research Network ( WMSRN) is part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and is funded by the Department of Health

## Meet Jean Bird!

Jean Bird had her stroke in August 2003, aged 50. Previously a senior Bank Manager, she had always been active, enjoying swimming, tennis and a full social life. Her stroke left her with right side weakness in both arm and leg, and quite severe aphasia.



However, her attitude has always been positive so she readily agreed to take part in the research, even though she really wasn't quite sure what it would involve.

Kris Hollands, researcher at Birmingham University, met with Jean and explained the study was to look at how people with Jean's conditions were able to cope with sudden changes of direction when walking. The study would look at body movements, especially when the subject was asked to turn right or left when walking in a straight line. Jean fitted the sample needs of the research in terms of age and condition.

To ensure the movements were recorded, Jean was fitted with a suit of small, light reflecting balls, which enables cameras to record movement of all limbs. Jean found it amusing to have these golf ball sized reflectors velcro'd all over her body but it was clear how it helped the researchers monitor movements.



Jean was then asked to walk along a set path, turning right or left as and when instructed to by Kris. The turns appeared random as they were repeated over an hour or so. Even walking just that 15 metres or so left Jean a bit tired, so a few rests were allowed. Kris collected the data on computer, and Jean was able to see some of the recording on screen, showing just pictures of the balls moving about, as her body shape disappeared in the recording.

Jean attended two sessions to allow Kris to get a full data set. Jean's husband was also drawn in to the project as Kris needed an able bodied control group.

Consultant Lead: Dr Christine Roffe. Network Manager: Dr Kathryn Wilde  
Enquiries: Telephone Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427454. Fax Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427446  
<http://westmidlands.uksrn.ac.uk>

The West Midlands Stroke Research Network (WMSRN) is part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and is funded by the Department of Health



Overall Jean found the experience to be interesting and fun, and helped her to see the importance of stroke survivors, and their families and friends, getting involved in projects of this kind. All it took was a little time, with Kris answering any questions as they came up.



Jean would readily respond to getting involved with any future research as she feels it is important to help professionals in their work to make life better for future stroke victims. Even though the research itself has many technical implications she doesn't understand, she feels she has helped in her own way to improve the future.

### Competition Time

During September we are running a competition for BUCs to see who can recruit the highest number of patients.

The PI in the West Midlands recruiting the highest number of patients onto the BUCs trial in September will win a registration fee for the UK Stroke Forum 2009 in Glasgow 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> December. This will include a place on our minibus if you need it, which will reduce travelling costs and we may be able to help out with accommodation. If you are lucky enough to win this prize you can use it yourself, or give it to member of your team.

The PI in the West Midlands to recruit the second highest number of patients onto the BUCs trial in September will win a copy of Warlow et al, Stroke- practical management ISBN 978-1-4051-2766-0. This retails around £130.



All other participating PIs in the West Midlands to recruit a patient onto the BUCs trial in July will win a collection of small gifts (mugs, mouse mats etc) marked with the BUCs logo.

GOOD LUCK!

## STAFF NEWS



Welcome to Debbie Morgan, appointed as a Stroke Research Nurse at Wolverhampton in September. Debbie is currently the inter-hospital transfer co-ordinator for New Cross Hospital. This exciting new appointment will commence in November.

Also welcome, to Kathryn McCarron who joined the admin team at Stoke-on-Trent in September



*Au revoir*

Cheerio, but come back soon to Martine Pritchard at Coventry. Martine went on secondment in August as stroke co-ordinator for UHCW for 6 months.



*Farewell*

Good Luck to Richard Miller in his new job as Research Nurse at Leighton hospital, Crewe. We will not hold you defecting to the North West Network against you (not much anyway)!

### HALL OF FAME – EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

**Scheme introduced May 2009**

**May – Emily Jones & Kathryn Law**

**June- Claire Randall**

**July – Emily Jones**

**August – Julie Smith**

**September – Claire Randall**

Consultant Lead: Dr Christine Roffe. Network Manager: Dr Kathryn Wilde  
Enquiries: Telephone Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427454. Fax Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427446  
<http://westmidlands.uksrn.ac.uk>

10



## Other News & Up and Coming Events

**Acute Stroke Research Conference:** A one day conference giving delegates the opportunity to hear about acute stroke research undertaken in the year and related service improvements in the West Midlands.

The West Midlands Stroke Research Network operates as part of the NIHR Stroke Research Network in England. It is part of the National Institute for Health Research and forms part of the UK Clinical Research Network. The Networks support and deliver high quality clinical research studies.



22 January 2010, Birmingham

>Places are FREE -

Our 2010 Stakeholder event is now open for registration. Please visit [www.ccclimited.org.uk](http://www.ccclimited.org.uk) for details and online registration.

This year we our theme is Acute Stroke Research and Development and the conference will by held at Aston University Business School, Birmingham.



## Birmingham Brain Attack 2009

Date (Fridays)	Time	Venue	Topic	Speaker(s)	Target Audience
4 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2009	9.30 a.m.- 1.30 p.m.	Lecture Theatre, Moseley Hall Hospital	GCP and Mental Capacity Act	Tanya Symons	Stroke Research Network PIs and researchers
6 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2009	11 a.m. – 2 p.m.	Seminar room, Moseley Hall Hospital	Equality and Diversity	Kate Wilde Jo McCormack	Stroke Research Network PIs and researchers

### Strokes in Coventry

Drop in cafe  
for help support and advice.  
Every Friday 12-2pm .

contact [strokesincoventry@googlemail.com](mailto:strokesincoventry@googlemail.com)  
at Warwick Road United Reformed Church  
Warwick Row  
[www.strokesincoventry.com](http://www.strokesincoventry.com)

Consultant Lead: Dr Christine Roffe. Network Manager: Dr Kathryn Wilde  
Enquiries: Telephone Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427454. Fax Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427446  
<http://westmidlands.uksrn.ac.uk>

11

**Contact Details**  
**Tell Us About Your Event!**

**WMSRN Network Office:**

North Staffs Combined Healthcare NHS Trust  
Holly Lodge, 62 Queens Rd, Hartshill, Stoke-On-Trent, ST4 7LH

Website: <http://westmidlands.uksrn.ac.uk>

**Administrator:** Jean Leverett

[Jean.leverett@northstaffs.nhs.uk](mailto:Jean.leverett@northstaffs.nhs.uk)

Tel 01782 427454 Fax No: 01782 427446

**Clinical Lead:** Christine Roffe

[Christine.roffe@northstaffs.nhs.uk](mailto:Christine.roffe@northstaffs.nhs.uk)

**Network Manager :** Kate Wilde

[Kathryn.wilde@northstaffs.nhs.uk](mailto:Kathryn.wilde@northstaffs.nhs.uk)

## 4th UK Stroke Forum Conference

**1-3 December 2009 Glasgow**  
**Registration opens April 2009**

**Call for Abstracts**  
**opens 27 April 2009**  
**closes 27 June 2009**

Kindly supported by  
Glasgow City Council and  
Glasgow City Marketing Bureau



**Glasgow**  
Scotland with style®



**Butterfly Stroke Ball**  
**Saturday 31 October 2009**

**The Molineux,**  
**Wolverhampton**

Dinner, Live Band  
and Disco

**Black Tie**  
**Tickets £30.00**  
**Arrival 19:00**  
**Carriages 01:00**



For further information please contact  
Pauline Caines—07966400172—[pauline.caines@rwh-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:pauline.caines@rwh-tr.nhs.uk)  
Paula Bourke—[paula.bourke@rwh-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:paula.bourke@rwh-tr.nhs.uk)  
Annette Russell—07809558810  
Wendy Worth—01902 444334 West Park

Consultant Lead: Dr Christine Roffe. Network Manager: Dr Kathryn Wilde  
Enquiries: Telephone Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427454. Fax Number: 00 44 (0)1782 427446  
<http://westmidlands.uksrn.ac.uk>

The West Midlands Stroke Research Network ( WMSRN) is part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and is funded by the Department of Health