

PE2048/N: Review the FAST stroke awareness campaign

NHS Ayrshire and Arran written submission, 22 November 2024

The stroke service at NHS Ayrshire and Arran is provided by a progressive and committed team of staff and the team uses all opportunities to raise the awareness of the signs and symptoms of stroke. This incorporates FAST but the team include all of the other symptoms to be cognisant of and this includes being aware of any changes to vision or balance.

On the 29th October 2024 (world stroke day) the stroke team led an awareness day on the University Hospital Crosshouse site. Taking part were nursing and medical staff with representatives from Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland (CHSS). The Managed Clinical Network (MCN) staff were also involved. Throughout the day, information regarding FAST and information from CHSS was shared. Promotional merchandise such as keyrings and pens were disseminated and blood pressure checks for staff and visitors were carried out throughout the day. To promote the day, and to raise awareness of FAST, there was a significant social media campaign where the focus of the message given was "Time is brain" and the importance of calling 999. Stroke being a medical emergency was emphasised.

The MCN are sharing all of the posters regarding FAST, including those from CHSS to all GP surgeries, dentists, pharmacies and opticians in NHS Ayrshire and Arran with a covering letter asking them to display in all of their premises.

The clinical and management teams met with Alan Gemmell MP and Lillian Jones MP on the 25th October 2024 and shared the improvements in the stroke service including thrombectomy and BE-FAST and this was shared by Alan Gemmell in the UK Parliament.

Whilst we understand that more work needs to be carried out before the BE-FAST is adopted, the team at NHS Ayrshire and Arran would very much welcome the opportunity to be a pilot site if this was agreed. One of our consultant staff has advised that BE-FAST would potentially cover the symptoms raised in the petition; balance, gait and visual problems. He has requested some information from NHS Fife as they may have trialled the use of BE FAST although nothing has been published as yet.

In summary, the promotion of signs and symptoms to be aware of in terms of stroke is on-going and the teams are committed to continuing this, further developing their service and working with other health boards and agencies to ensure the identification and care of stroke patients in NHS Ayrshire and Arran remains a priority for the health board.