

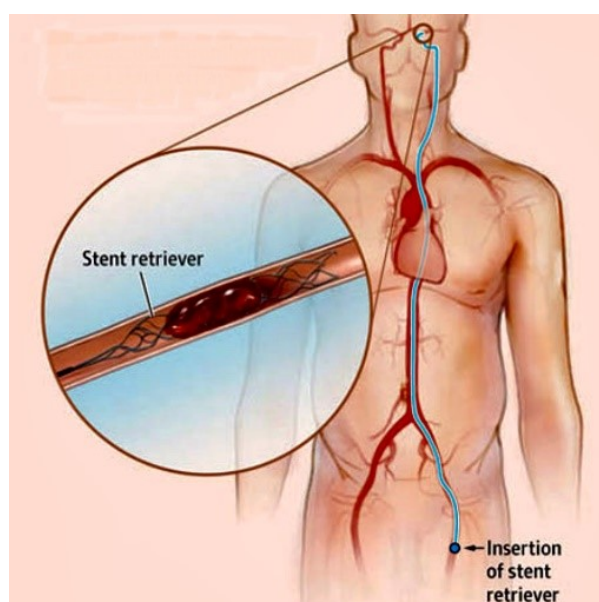
'There are 1.3 million stroke survivors in the UK' - Stroke Association

What is Mechanical Thrombectomy?

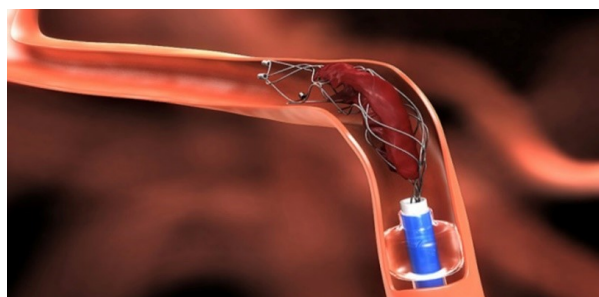
Mechanical thrombectomy (MT) was approved by NICE as a treatment for stroke in 2016 and commissioned by the NHS England in 2017.

It is a procedure used to treat patients with ischaemic stroke due to large vessel occlusion (LVO). In western countries this type of stroke is a leading cause of disability, institutionalisation and cost to [healthcare and society](#).

Mechanical thrombectomy represents an extraordinary leap forward in our ability to treat some ischaemic strokes. It is used when a large vessel occlusion cuts off blood flow to a large part of the brain. A catheter is usually inserted into the femoral artery in the groin and advanced up to the location of the blockage.



A specially-designed clot removal device is then inserted through a catheter into the blocked artery to remove the clot.



Why Mechanical Thrombectomy?

The evidence supporting the use of MT for anterior circulation LVO stroke is overwhelming, with 11 randomised controlled trials published since 2015 demonstrating substantial benefits over best medical therapy.

It would benefit at least [10% of patients](#) admitted to hospital with an acute stroke. [Findings show](#) that the numbers of patients achieving functional independence 90 days after stroke is between 19-35% greater after MT.

Who is it suitable for?

Patients with evidence of a large vessel occlusion on cerebral angiography (CTA) who present early after stroke before there is irreversible damage to the brain, are potential candidates for MT.

These patients are less likely to respond to other treatments such as conventional intravenous thrombolysis and are more likely to experience severe disability. MT is most effective the faster it

is used (ideally within 6 hours of symptom onset) so the need for patients to present to hospital early, gain rapid access to imaging and move quickly along agreed pathways is paramount.

National Drivers

The [2019 NHS Long Term Plan](#) highlighted the importance of improving access to MT and included a goal of ensuring that the 10% of patients with stroke receive MT by 2022. This ambition was not achieved for a number of reasons.

More recently, in April 2022, the [GIRFT Stroke Report](#) recommended that 8% of all ischaemic stroke patients should be accessing MT by 2025.

The National Picture

Current levels of MT provision nationally across the NHS are low at 2.8% (to June 2021). Whilst this is significantly higher than recent years, the growth is slow with wide [regional variation](#).

Between 9,580-10,020 stroke patients per year could be eligible for MT, approx. 10-11% of stroke [admissions](#).

Local Picture

NUH is the Comprehensive Stroke Centre providing the MT service to patients from the local area as well as Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Mansfield.

MT at Nottingham University Hospitals (NUH) is carried out by the Interventional Neuro-radiologists who work closely with the Stroke Physicians. Last year, 128 MTs were carried out at NUH

The NUH MT service is currently available Mon-Fri 8-6, however there is a target for the service to become 24/7 by April 2024.

Challenges

MT represents a considerable step-change in the treatment of stroke and the extension of this service poses considerable challenges to the organisation, systems and the workforce.

Specific challenges include adequate workforce to allow extension of the service, rapid imaging and image sharing between Trusts, pathway optimisation, collaborative working across specialities and rapid transfers between hospitals.

The East Midlands ISDN is tasked with facilitating these system changes to ensure MT is delivered to those who will benefit.

NUH and Viz.ai bring Artificial Intelligence to Stroke Care

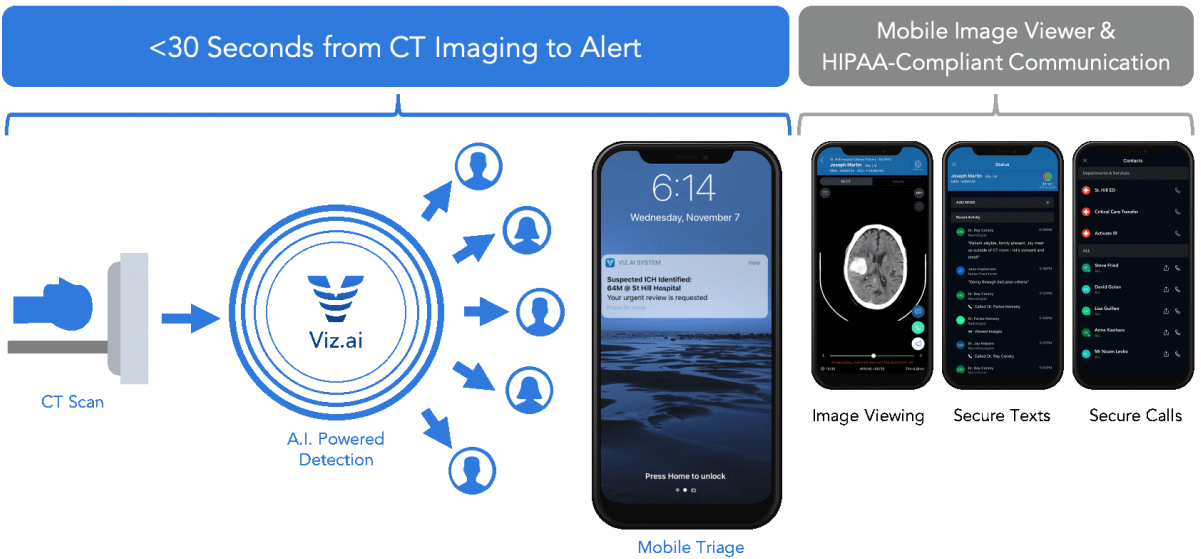


The East Midlands ISDN are pleased to announce that as of 25th January, NUH is deploying Viz.ai’s artificial intelligence-powered platform to facilitate rapid access to the Trust’s Mechanical Thrombectomy service.

Facilitating the expansion of the NUH mechanical thrombectomy service is a priority for the East Midlands ISDN. Due to the time critical nature of this treatment some of the challenges in the development of this service include:

- Rapid identification of ischaemic strokes with large vessel occlusion
- Rapid image sharing between MT referrer sites and NUH
- Efficient communication strategies
- Streamlined pathways

Viz.ai does not replace the existing stroke imaging pathway but enables NUH to overcome the above challenges by providing a decision support tool to facilitate faster detection and notification of potential candidates to the MT service.



As illustrated above, Viz.ai is a cloud-based platform that is designed to receive medical images directly from the imaging modality (in this case CT), the programme identifies suspected large vessel occlusions and automatically notifies agreed clinicians, including Stroke Physicians, Interventional Neuro-radiologists, Stroke Nurse Practitioners and MT Co-ordinators. This is all within minutes of the patient undergoing CT.

The Viz.ai application will also allow teams to communicate on a secure system in order to co-ordinate care along agreed pathways.

Work is now underway to install Viz.ai in Trusts that refer to the NUH mechanical thrombectomy service. This includes Sherwood Forest Hospitals, University Hospitals of Leicester, University Hospitals of Derby and Burton, and United Lincolnshire Hospitals. Aiming for completion by September 2023, this will enable rapid detection at the referrer site and alert of the NUH MT service with access to shared images within minutes of the CT scan. This will save critical time and increase access to the provision of MT in the East Midlands.

If you have any queries about the Viz.ai project [please contact Wendy Goodenough](#) (East Midlands ISDN Project Manager).

Stroke Awareness- Stroke Association

The East Midlands ISDN shares the Stroke Association's vision to have fewer strokes, and for people affected by stroke to get the help they need to live the best life they can.

Stroke Association runs a number of stroke survivors support groups and if you would like to join or refer someone, please follow; [Stroke Support Group](#)- Self-referral or complete on someone’s behalf with consent.



If you or someone you know has been affected by stroke, or you want to know more information on how to reduce your risk of a stroke, [please get in touch](#).

Local and Regional Resources

Stuart Cooper (Engagement Lead for the Stroke Association) is available to present information sessions on local and regional resources available to stroke teams across the East Midlands. He has been delivering these sessions since December 2020 and they have proved invaluable to the teams who have participated to date.

Teams who have already benefitted include:

East Midlands

- NHS social prescribers- Nottingham Nottinghamshire December 2020
- Northampton General Hospital Trust- New peer support officer induction August 2021
- Leicester City and County Stroke Physio Team- January 2022
- University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust- September 2021 and April 2022 (as part of a training programme)
- South Notts Community Stroke Team- January 2022
- Derbyshire ESSD North and South & Neuro Physio Therapist Team- February 2022
- Nottingham City Hospital- Therapies team February 2023

If you would be interested in organising a session for your team [please contact Stuart Cooper](#).

Patient Public Voice Group



The East Midlands ISDN is currently working on setting up their first Patient Public Voice (PPV) Group and would like to invite local stroke patients, service users, carers and families to get involved in the work done by the ISDN by becoming a part of the PPV Group. If you or someone you now would like to join the upcoming The East Midlands PPV Group then please contact the team at eastmidlandsisdn@nuh.nhs.uk

Six-Month Reviews for Stroke Survivors: A Survey of Current Practice in England

If you are the service lead (or have the responsibility for the delivery) of a six-month review service then please consider completing this online survey so that we can better understand the national provision of six-month reviews.

The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. You can access the survey [here](#) or you scan the following QR code.



For further information regarding your participation in this study, please read the information sheet embedded in the survey homepage.

This research is being undertaken as part of a PhD via the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and is fully funded by NIHR. The current survey will form the first stage of a project 'Exploring the **B**enefits and **E**xpectations of the 6-**M**onth **R**eview for Stroke Survivors' (**BE MoRe** study).

The project has been approved by the University of Central Lancashire, Health Research Ethics Committee.

If you have any queries, please contact the team at:

[Rich Holmes \('BE MoRe' Study - Project Lead\)](#)

[Prof Louise Connell](#)

[Dr Suzanne Ackerley](#)

Save the Date

BIASP Trainee's Meeting 2023

The British & Irish Association of Stroke Physicians (BIASP) Trainees' Meeting 2023 (March 23 & 24) has been approved by the Federation of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom for 10 category 1 (external) CPD credits. [For details, early bird discount and registration, please visit.](#)

SQuIRE Updates

SQuIRE Catalyst Community of Practice (for Catalyst Project Leads)
Wednesday 15th March 2-3pm (invite to follow)
Email England.SquireMidlands@nhs.net for your invite

A Be Bid Ready
workshop on
Tuesday, 7th March
2023 10am–12pm
(via MS Teams),
joined by specialists
in public health and
data to explore how
to maximise future
funding
opportunities in the
region and to share
lessons learned
from the 2022/2023
SQuIRE funding
calls.

Our **A Year of
SQuIRE in the
Midlands** workshop
on Wednesday,
22nd March (10am-
12pm) (via MS
Teams), hear from
some of the project
leads of both the
quality improvement
and catalyst projects
running in the
Midlands region and
about the future
plans for SQuIRE.

**Business Case
Development
Workshops**
(facilitated by NHS
Elect)
Workshop 1 – the
human aspects of
business case
development –
Tuesday 28th March
11.30am - 1pm
Workshop 2 – the
technical aspects of
compiling a business
case – Wednesday
29th March 11.30am
– 1pm

Next Issue

ISDN Update | BP@Home | Business Case Workshop | Events and more!



If you would like to share the fabulous work done by your teams across East Midlands or have a story, we would love to hear from you!

Working in partnership with



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For more information please contact us at:
EastmidlandsISDN@nuh.nhs.uk

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