



Mechanical Thrombectomy

A game-changing acute treatment for stroke, changing lives in an instant.

In 2022, the Stroke Association launched its campaign 'Saving Brains' supporting the drive to secure access to 24/7 Mechanical Thrombectomy (MT) services for the estimated 10% of stroke patients who would benefit from it.

The campaign was based on the substantial evidence that supports the effectiveness of MT along with:

- The NHS Long Term Plan (2019) which committed to rolling out MT fully by 2022
- The NHS England National Stroke Service Model which identified MT as a key aspect in improving stroke services across the country
- The 2022-23 NHS Mandate which identified increased access to MT as a key priority

This year the Stroke Association has published the 'Saving Brains: One Year On' report.

They found that since 2022 there has been an increase in the provision of MT across England from 2.8% to 3.3%, however rates are still well short of the 10% target.



**Currently 3.3% of stroke patients in
England are treated with thrombectomy
(up from 2.8% in 2022).**

These rates mean that 6,903 patients missed out on MT last year and if the current rate continues, 48,321 people will miss out by 2029/30

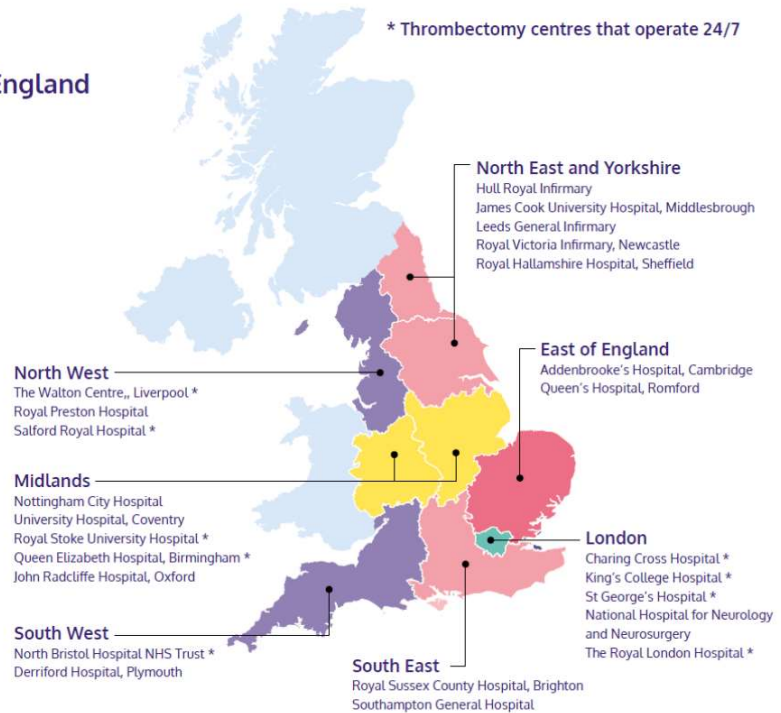


**Nearly two thirds of patients are
still missing out on this treatment -
6,903 patients in the last year alone.**

There are currently 24 thrombectomy centres across England. The image below illustrates the variability in MT rates, explained in part by some centres being able to offer a 24/7 service, whilst others offer only a 7 or 5 day service.

Thrombectomy rates across England (SSNAP data, Oct-Dec 2022)

Locality	Treatment rate
East of England	0.39%
London	9.84%
Midlands	2.74%
North East and Yorkshire	1.93%
North West	3.59%
South East	2.58%
South West	4.27%



In their report, the Stroke Association highlight a clear and widespread regional variation, creating an unacceptable postcode lottery.



**Nearly 10% of stroke patients
receive a thrombectomy in
London, compared to only 0-3%*
in other areas.⁸**

The full Saving Brains: one year on report can be found at [jn_2324-031-saving_brains-progress-briefing-final-sp-2023.pdf \(stroke.org.uk\)](https://www.stroke.org.uk/sites/default/files/jn_2324-031-saving_brains-progress-briefing-final-sp-2023.pdf).

Saving Brains 2: Regional Briefing for the Midlands

The Stroke Association also recently published regional briefings on local MT services. The Midlands briefing is below:

June 2023

There are 1.3 million stroke survivors living in the UK, with 100,000 strokes happening each year – one every 5 minutes. It is a leading cause of adult disability.

What is a thrombectomy?

Thrombectomy is one of the most effective medical interventions ever discovered. During a thrombectomy, a specialist doctor uses a tiny wire guided through the patient's arteries, finding the clot causing the stroke and extracting it, immediately allowing blood to flow freely.



Thrombectomy rates in your region

Midlands: 2.74%

This is far off the NHS Long Term Plan target of 10%.

*Some stroke units have pathway arrangements in place so their patients may receive a thrombectomy in a different region. For example, the East of England regularly transfers patients to London. This would not be included in the original region's percentages.

NHS England has published a Thrombectomy Quality Review report, which outlines steps local systems should take to optimise thrombectomy delivery: - "All Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) must support their ISDNs to prioritise 24/7 access to thrombectomy and act on recommendations within the Quality Review to remove the current postcode lottery"

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Midlands

Thrombectomy is a game-changing acute treatment for stroke. It:

saves brains: It significantly reduces the chance of disabilities like paralysis, visual impairment and communication difficulties after stroke.

saves money: Thrombectomy would save the health and care system £73 million each year, by reducing demand on rehabilitation and community support.

and changes lives: Universal access to thrombectomy in England would support 1,600 more people to be independent after stroke each year, and thousands more to live with less disability.

Last year 6,903 patients missed out.

What can you do?

- Secure funding for your Integrated Stroke Delivery Network.
- Meet with us to find out more about stroke and thrombectomy or let us know how we can help improve access in the Midlands.

For more information, email
campaigns@stroke.org.uk

The report highlights the need for the urgent development of the MT services within the Midlands. The East Midlands ISDN is collaborating closely with the acute Trusts in our region on a number of projects to facilitate this:

Viz.ai

This artificial intelligence-powered platform is a decision-support tool that facilitates the faster detection and notification of potential mechanical thrombectomy candidates to Stroke clinicians and Intervention Neuro-radiologists. It also enables all teams on the MT pathway to communicate on a secure system in order to better co-ordinate care.

Viz.ai is already in use at NUH and has just gone live at the University Hospitals of Leicester. It is in the process of being installed and rolled out at Sherwood Forest Hospital, United Lincolnshire Hospitals and University Hospitals of Derby and Burton.

This will enable immediate image sharing and alerts identifying potential MT candidates from spoke site to NUH within seconds of the patients CT scan. It also facilitates timely and effective communications across Trusts to aid clinical decision making. Implementation of similar systems elsewhere in the UK has resulted in faster access to MT.

MT Expansion Project

NUH is investing £13.5 million to expand their MT service to a 24/7 service for people in the East Midlands. NUH alone treats 1200 stroke patients every year and currently the MT service operates Mon-Fri 8am – 6pm. It is estimated that around 700 patients from across the East Midlands will benefit from this treatment when we expand to 24/7. In 2021/22 104 MTs were carried out, last year this increased to 125 MTs in 2022/23.

Expanding the MT service to a 24/7 service requires regional and system-wide collaboration. The East Midlands ISDN are supporting NUH to drive the system change required through pathway development, reviewing regional issues such as repatriation and establishing a regional group to provide a governance framework for the MT pathway.

Pre-hospital Video Triage

In conjunction with East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) and University Hospitals of Leicester, the East Midlands ISDN has submitted a bid to take part in an NHS England-funded pilot scheme aimed at enabling ambulance clinicians on scene with FAST+ve stroke patients to take part in a video triage consultation with the on-call stroke consultant in the Leicester Royal Infirmary (LRI) Acute Stroke Centre (ASC).

Potential benefits from this scheme could include;

Streamlining the way in which stroke patients are received and treated at the ASC:

Reducing door to scan times,

Reducing door to needle times for thrombolysis,

Reducing door-in / door-out times for onward transport to the MT centre at NUH in the case of large vessel occlusions (VLOs)

Helping to rule out stroke mimics (e.g. Bell's Palsies, migraines), reducing unnecessary conveyances to hospital and providing more appropriate care for patients.

If successful, EMAS have stated a commitment to roll out this new way of working throughout the rest of the East Midlands in order to ensure all East Midlands stroke patients can enjoy these benefits.

Spotlight on the SQuIRE (Stroke Quality Improvement for Rehabilitation) Programme

Since February 2022, the SQuIRE programme has been active in the Midlands, and through quality improvement (QI) and transformation projects it is aiming to facilitate implementation of the ICSS model across the 11 Midlands [Integrated Care Systems](#) (ICSs).

This groundbreaking initiative has gained significant traction, making waves not only within the medical community but also capturing attention at the highest levels of government.

Did you know? SQuIRE was even mentioned in the House of Lords in July!

[Parliamentlive.tv - House of Lords 24th July 2023](#) (skip forward to 15:15:17)

SQuIRE has its own workspace on FutureNHS. You can join it here: [Stroke Quality Improvement for Rehabilitation Hub - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#) to find out about the current Catalyst projects taking place across all 7 NHS regions in England. I'll be working with the other SQuIRE Leads over the next couple of months to add all the QI projects (and the new Catalyst projects) taking place in the Midlands.

In the Midlands we have:

- 14 QI projects
- 5 Catalyst 'transformation' projects already underway, and
- 5 *new* Catalyst 'transformation' projects due to start this Autumn

Quality Improvement Projects

SSNAP Data Processes & Data Officer Support

The aim of this project is to embed regional audit and feedback structures to review community stroke data complementing and aligning with ISDN activities. Improving SSNAP data quality through a SSNAP Data Officer post.

The project is taking place in 4 locations:

- University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust – Data Officer has been in post since December 2022.
- Midlands Partnership Foundation NHS Trust – Data Officer has been in post since January 2023.
- Birmingham Community Healthcare - Data Officer has been in post since June 2023.
- South Warwickshire Foundation NHS Trust – are awaiting recruitment of a Data Officer.

Midlands Community Stroke Services - The Pathway Improvement Project [delivered by CPD Consultancy]

This project is running at Integrated Care System (inclusive of stakeholders across providers of community stroke services) level, where professionals are taking part in a development programme focused on people led change and new ways of working.

The project is taking place in 3 ICSs:

- Birmingham & Solihull ICS
- Herefordshire & Worcestershire ICS
- Nottingham & Nottinghamshire ICS

Giraffe Online Platform for the Remote Delivery of Rehabilitation Services Pilot Project

This project is providing therapist licenses to the Giraffe Healthcare online platform.

The aims of the Giraffe pilot project include:

- Providing rehabilitation depending on need, not circumstance
- Help standardise care/reach clinical guidelines of care
- Provide augmented/seven day therapy
- Visibility of care pathway (programmes created on the platform can be downloaded in PDF format and uploaded to clinical systems for access by patient's clinicians/GP)
- Potential to reduce waiting lists
- Increase service efficiency
- Improve clinical outcomes
- Improve patient experience/communication
- Empower patients to self-manage their condition
- Increase service to hard-to-reach groups

This project is taking place in 7 locations:

- Nottingham CityCare Partnership
- Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust/University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust
- Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & Care NHS Trust
- Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
- Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- University Hospitals Leicester NHS Trust

Working Collaboratively with ICS Commissioners (and developing a 'Commissioning Network') – The Commissioning Insight Workshop

In November 2022 SQuIRE Midlands partnered with an external consultant, Magpie (a creative behaviour change agency), conducting an online workshop to understand the context in which the ICSS will be commissioned. Exploring the awareness and attitudes towards the model whilst identifying the key barriers and facilitators.

The workshop identified key areas of opportunity to empower commissioners and support commissioning processes centred on increasing confidence, knowledge and skills related to funding and commissioning the ICSS model.

Outputs from the workshop are currently being incorporated into a follow-up project being delivered cross-regionally project through the GIRFT (Getting It Right First Time) Stroke Leadership Academy Stroke Specific programme.

NHS Elect systems-led facilitated workshop between Reablement North and Northamptonshire Community Stroke Team to explore joined-up working

This project is aiming to explore the current situation and barriers and enablers to facilitating joined-up working between community stroke teams and social care in delivering an ICSS.

Work is underway between the two teams (stroke & reablement) in Northamptonshire and key findings and next steps will be reported in the Autumn.

Increasing intensity of therapy with use of Saebo Flex

In the Black Country ICS, the Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust Stafford and Cannock ESD community stroke team are aiming to improve patient outcomes, self-efficacy, and control of own rehabilitation via the intervention of Saebo orthosis at home via the support and specialism of physio and OT.

The provision of an intensive 7-day virtual stroke service for physical, cognitive and Speech & Language rehabilitation

Also in the Black Country ICS, Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust Dudley Rehabilitation Service team are aiming to provide intensive 7-day service using FES, Mirror box, cognitive worksheets and iPads containing Tactus, speech and language app as an adjunct to standard therapy provision. Aiming to achieve improve functional outcomes, self-management skills, and reduced length of stay with the service.

EMISDN Blood Pressure Monitoring @ Home

This project is running across all teams in the East Midlands and SQuIRE provided additional funding to the project.

The project involves the provision of pressure monitoring equipment and support to Community Stroke Teams, enabling them to introduce a self-management programme for their hypertensive patients. The goal is to reduce the blood pressure (BP) in hypertensive stroke patients of the community stroke teams to an agreed BP thereby reducing the risk of recurrent stroke and reducing health inequality in the community.

Provision of project management resource to oversee the pathway QI projects in stroke rehabilitation services across the ICS

In the Herefordshire & Worcestershire ICS, in Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust a Project Manager will be coordinating the QI projects (The Pathway Improvement Project; and Giraffe), including building in efficiencies within service development, supporting and creating efficiencies in data collection and supporting data analysis across all the projects. They will support both teams in service delivery strategy and development.

Upper limb pathway for stroke rehabilitation

Also in the Herefordshire & Worcestershire ICS, in Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS

Trust one team are developing an upper limb pathway which will support in targeted, specific, and equitable rehabilitation for the upper limb, across disciplines and within different stroke services. The aim of the pathway will be to provide assessment, support with clinical reasoning and an evidence-based rehabilitation intervention. This will facilitate stroke survivors' potential for functional recovery in their upper limb and provide resources to support onward self-management.

Enhancing the provision of Speech and Language Therapy in the Lincolnshire Stroke Service through the provision of Software to improve self-management of patients with communication impairments following stroke in the community

In the Lincolnshire ICS, in Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust, this project is aiming to improve the quality of Speech and Language Therapy and the intensity of delivery for patients by introducing self-directed technology-based therapy using software/apps.

Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust - Young Person's Stroke Pathway

In the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICS, at Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust, this project is working to embed a successful model to ensure continuity of care for young stroke survivors throughout their lives thereby reducing current health inequalities and provide a consistent service offer across MPFT.

Improving equitable and timely access to Vocational Rehab for patients after Stroke in East and South East Staffordshire

Also in the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICS, this project (which has now finished) in East and South East Staffordshire was an opportunity to expand the knowledge and skills of both teams with two main goals. One to be able to provide up to date rehabilitation to those stroke survivors with ongoing support needs related to their return to work, and the second to be able to share the demand of the rehabilitation across more members of the multidisciplinary team. It also enabled the teams, through the same training, to be able to provide an equitable service for patients, and also build links across boundaries in order to provide multidisciplinary peer support for staff supporting the patients with Vocational Rehab needs.

Improving organization of a Community Stroke Team using a timetabling app

In the Northamptonshire ICS, in the Northamptonshire Community Stroke team (N-CST), this project is deploying a specialist scheduling solution to automatically schedule up to 95% of all visits. The solution will improve the work life balance of staff, reduce staff churn, and improve patient experience.

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Current Catalyst Projects

The current 5 Catalyst 'transformation' projects are being led within Integrated Care Systems and provider collaboratives informed by Integrated Stroke Delivery Networks (ISDNs) and regional SQuIRE priorities. Projects are aligning with key priorities and steer from the National Stroke Programme, supporting the implementation of the ICSS model.

1. In Birmingham & Solihull - *Integrated Stroke Therapy Team in Care Homes/EAB*

The aim of this project is, through the provision of a specialist therapy team, to focus on addressing current health inequalities for patients requiring slow stream review of their potential to improve following transfer home from hospital into residential or nursing homes.

2. In Coventry & Warwickshire - *Life after Stroke Support and Six-month Reviews in South Warwickshire & Rugby*

The aim of this project is to offer South Warwickshire Patients a 6-month check from either Stroke Association or Warwickshire Integrated Community Stroke Service (WICSS). It includes the setup of a new service delivered by Stroke Association in South Warwickshire and Rugby for 6-month checks and SRS.

3. In Herefordshire & Worcestershire – ***Herefordshire ESD Care Provision and Improving rehabilitation provision to Stroke Survivors receiving social care (SC) input across Worcestershire***

This project is being delivered as two components. In Herefordshire, the project aims to ensure stroke survivors receive specialist input into their care provision through an education resource for stroke survivors, their families and care providers on the complex needs of stroke survivors and close working with care providers to meet the individual goals of each stroke survivor. The Worcestershire component is aiming to improve access to support and rehabilitation for complex stroke survivors in Worcestershire through additional staffing, training and specialist seating.

4. In Lincolnshire - ***Lincolnshire 6 Month Stroke Reviews***

The aim of this project is to establish 6-month stroke reviews in a range of accessible formats for all Lincolnshire stroke survivors in line with the Integrated Community Stroke Service (ICSS) model, delivered by a specialist stroke service working alongside Stroke Association partners who are already an integral part of the service model.

5. In Nottingham & Nottinghamshire - ***A Stepped Approach Model to implement an Integrated Community Stroke Services within Mid Nottinghamshire***

The aim of this project is to set up a successful (phase 1) ICSS within the Mid Notts area. The transformation project will increase the current establishment of the mid-Notts ESD team to the staffing structure of an ICSS in line with the revised inclusion criteria and referral numbers expected. This will be a stepped approach to the implementation of a full ICSS service delivery within the Mid Notts area.

New Catalyst Projects

After another expression of interest process this summer, the national stroke programme at NHSE have awarded funding to the Midlands region for 5 new Catalyst 'transformation' projects taking place from Autumn 2023:

1. In Birmingham and Solihull – Expansion of current catalyst project out to Solihull.
2. In Black Country - North Midlands Conversational Rehab Collaborative.
3. In Nottingham & Nottinghamshire - Regional Vocational Rehab pilot: ICS wide joint service across Nottingham & Nottinghamshire ICS.
4. In Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent – South East Staffordshire ICSS Exploration/Implementation, and
5. In Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent – North Staffs Stepped approach to ICSS implementation.

Further details on the latest Catalyst projects will be shared in a feature ISDN newsletter.

Next Issue

ISDN Update | SSNAP | Acute Projects | 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



If your teams don't regularly access email, please share this email. Please don't share outside of the organisation.

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