

Introduction:

Peer support is mainly established in mental health, with clear implementation guidelines, remit and objectives. Peer support in stroke is less well defined. It is felt it could be effective but embedding paid peer support workers into a community stroke team has not been tested robustly or its impact measured.



Method:

As part of the NHSE/I stroke rehabilitation pilots, three paid peer support workers were embedded into the Community Stroke Team to deliver peer support via lived experience sharing, secondary prevention advice, wellbeing support and complete new assessments and six-month reviews. The aim was that the visits were timely, effective and supportive to patients.

Pathways of care, competencies, bespoke stroke specific training programmes, policies, procedures and job descriptions have been developed.



Peer Support - Lived Experience is the key to unlocking the pathway to recovery

Result:

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Peer support workers who delivered secondary prevention, peer support, new patient assessments and six-month reviews were able to save teams over 2500 minutes of clinical time per worker, per year. The patient experience improved as they stated having the conversation with a peer was more meaningful, helpful and informative. Peer workers were able to see patients within 7 days of referral to the team.

Conclusion:

Peer support enables patients to thrive after stroke and see the possibility that they can recover to the life they want beyond this event

