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Dear partner,

I am writing to you as West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group and Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group want to hear views on a new service we are proposing to put in place.

You or those you represent may be able to give the CCGs valuable insight into whether the new service will give future stroke sufferers support once they leave either Ipswich or West Suffolk hospitals.

The Early Supported Discharge Service (ESD) will support patients in their recovery in their home, will be available seven days a week and will give patients or their carers support, information and advice as well as medical attention should it be necessary.

When a patient is ready to be discharged from hospital and following a comprehensive assessment by an acute stroke care health professional, they will be directly referred to the ESD within 24 hours. The discharging hospital will inform the ESD service that the patient is ready to be discharged.

The service will give patients access to physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapist, clinical neuropsychologists and dieticians as appropriate. The clinical team will be supported by rehabilitation assistance practitioners and lead by a consultant with a predominant interest in stroke.

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An effective ESD will deliver many positive outcomes by:

- Preventing people from dying prematurely by ensuring post-stroke care gives a better chance of survival
- Increasing independence and reducing dependency on long-term care
- Enhancing the quality of life of post-stroke patients – with the right level of support post-stroke patients will have the right skills and knowledge to live longer and better with their long-term condition; giving patients more motivation to live healthier and more active lives; increasing the chances of the post-stroke patient to returning to work
- Reducing the pressures felt by family and carers who look after a post-stroke patient

It is the second part of a process which has seen Ipswich and West Suffolk hospitals develop a single team of clinicians working across both to offer hyper acute stroke services offering immediate access to highly specialised diagnosis, scans and treatment, including surgery if necessary in the first 24 hours to three days following a stroke. This is the crucial time for action to prevent far-reaching brain damage.

Healthwatch Suffolk is running a survey online (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/newearlysupporteddischargeservices>) to collect views independently of the CCGs. If you would please promote this to anyone who may be interested, I would be very grateful. You can also request a hard copy of the questionnaire by calling 01449 703 949.

Yours sincerely

Dr Mark Lim
Project Director