

## MEDICINE USE REVIEWS (MURs) for STROKE SURVIVORS


Sarah Corlett , Emily Wass and Linda Dodds


### Why we did this

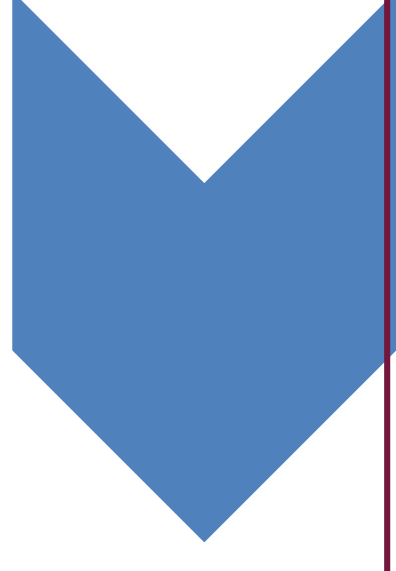
- Survivors of a first stroke have a 30% risk of a further stroke in the next 5 years.
- Most stroke survivors are prescribed a number of medicines to help reduce this risk.
- Medicine Use Reviews (MURs) are structured consultations with an accredited pharmacist, designed to help patients to manage their medicines more effectively. They take place in a consultation room within a pharmacy.
- Stroke survivors are an important group of patients who can benefit from MURs. The NHS expects pharmacists to target MURs towards patients taking the medicines that stroke survivors use.
- However many have residual disability following their stroke which may reduce their ability to access support from pharmacists.

**Aim:** To explore stroke survivors' experiences of getting support with using medicines from community pharmacists.

### What we did

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- We carried out a survey (by telephone and post) with 128 members of a local stroke support group.
  - The questions we asked were developed from other studies and from what stroke survivors in a focus group told us about their experiences:

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- Do you need help getting a regular supply of your medicines?
  - Do you go to the pharmacy to collect your medicines (repeat prescriptions)?

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- Have you ever asked your local pharmacist to help you will your medicines? How did they help you?
  - Has your local pharmacist ever asked you if they can talk to you about your medicines? Can you tell me more about this?

### What we found

#### 52 stroke survivors completed the survey:

- 40% (21) were male, average age: 67 years
- Average number of strokes was 1, but range was 1-5
- 36 (69%) were taking between 4 and 8 medicines
- 25 (48% lived alone
- 26 (50%) had medicines delivered or collected by a carer
- 17 (33%) were totally reliant on a carer for support
- 43 (83%) had significantly residual disability from their stroke.

**Stroke survivors living alone were less likely to collect their medicines from the pharmacy themselves, so didn't have opportunity to meet their pharmacist.**

### Contact with pharmacists

- 12 (23%) had been offered an MUR by a pharmacist
- 12 (23%) had been offered advice when they had a prescription dispensed
- 11 (21%) had asked a pharmacist for advice about their prescription medicines
- 6 (12%) had asked for advice about minor ailments

**23 (44%) of stroke survivors had never spoken to a pharmacist about their medicines.**



My speech becomes muddled when I'm tired (female, 66 years)

### Issues with Medicines

- 13 (25%) had concerns or worries about their medicines

I don't like the foil and plastic tablets are in, because my right hand doesn't work properly (female, 54 years)

- 23 (44%) had difficulty getting medicines out of the packets or containers
- 8 (15%) had problems actually taking the medicines

Always have had problems swallowing both tablets and capsules. (I) usually eat something to help them go down. (male, 76 years)

### What this means

- ❖ Many stroke survivors have issues with their medicines that pharmacists could potentially help with, but they are not being offered or seeking help from a community pharmacist.
- ❖ Disabilities may make it difficult for stroke survivors to access an MUR in the pharmacy. Those who live alone are more likely to have their medicines delivered so pharmacists are unlikely to invite them to have an MUR.
- ❖ Community pharmacists need to consider how best they can provide MURs to stroke survivors, particularly those who are living alone.