



Medical Director  
Direct Line:  
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Reference:

To: Medical Directors of Hospital Trusts that Provide Acute Stroke Services (Cumbria and Lancashire):

Southport and Ormskirk –  
Blackpool –  
East Lancs –  
UHMBT –  
Lancashire Teaching –

29<sup>th</sup> October 2010

Dear Colleague

**RE: Cumbria and Lancashire Telestroke Service**

As you are aware one of the major opportunities for improving the quality and reducing the cost of patient care is to accelerate our improvement in the diagnosis and treatment of Stroke in the North West. At the recent CEO meeting in July, highlighted the local opportunities and it was clear that further work was required to improve our services in line with national standards. The Cumbria and Lancashire Cardiac and Stroke Network, in association with NHS North West, has developed a project (supported by NHS North West Innovation funds) to deliver a Telestroke solution that will deliver out of hours assessment and thrombolysis. The provider organisation which is leading this exciting development is North Cumbria University Hospitals.

The impact on both short and long term outcomes is substantial for those patients who require and are given thrombolysis within a 3 hour period from onset. Clearly, providing access to a stroke specialist on a 24/7 basis in all our local acute hospitals is neither practical or affordable; however, we can be innovative and provide this level of care if we work collaboratively across our stroke services. The Cumbria and Lancashire Telestroke project will support joint working between our stroke teams and will help us achieve the national standards and best practice requirements.

The project was agreed at the Cumbria and Lancashire Collaborative Working Board and at the Cardiac and Stroke Networks Board in September 2009. Many of you will have attended the on-site Telestroke demonstrations which have generated tremendous enthusiasm within the clinical and managerial teams.

The project is progressing rapidly and is now entering the phase of the project where telemedicine equipment will be procured. In addition to this, the project needs to start to develop the overall governance and workforce frameworks for delivering the out of hours aspect of 24/7 assessment and thrombolysis. It is in this area that we now need your support.

The specialists participating in the Telestroke rota will need to change in their job plan to accommodate the service. We would seek support from you to help facilitate the changes that will be required to accommodate the service.

Each Trust will need to agree to a shared Governance framework. The attached Governance document is a draft framework which describes the clinical pathway within the service. Each Trust will also have to pass the governance framework through their own governance processes.

Time is of the essence, therefore we would be grateful if you could review this document and forward any changes to \_\_\_\_\_, Service Improvement & Development Manager, Cardiac & Stroke Networks in Lancashire & Cumbria, \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_, North Cumbria University Hospital, \_\_\_\_\_, by 1st December 2010.

If you have any other queries regarding Telestroke, please do not hesitate to contact the persons named above for help.

Yours sincerely

**NHS NORTHWEST**

**Medical Director  
NCUH**

Enc

cc: Cumbria Lancashire Cardiac and Stroke Network Board and Stroke Executive Steering Group