



# Improving Stroke Pathways

South Central SHA showed that you can **reduce stroke deaths by up to 18%** with very little cost impact.

In South Central England, PCTs needed to test the impact of moving to the NICE and National Stroke Strategy best practice pathway for **emergency stroke care**. The new pathway would give patients quick access to early treatment and better rehabilitation support but what would the resource and cost implications be?



“Scenario Generator helps clinicians and managers to understand together how their system works, and to refine and develop the model as they define the key questions central to decision-making in the health service.”

Andrew Hughes, SEPHO

# Improving patient outcomes without increasing costs

Scenario Generator allowed clinicians, staff from the South East Public Health Observatory (SEPHO), PCT managers and clinical academics to work together to answer two fundamental questions posed by the implementation of the new Stroke Pathway:

- What are the patient outcomes as a result of implementing best practice?
- How much specialist rehabilitation in the community is required and can it be paid for if patients are discharged from hospital earlier?

The visual and interactive nature of Scenario Generator allowed all organizations to collaborate easily when approaching the project.

A high level simulation of the flow of patients from initial event to diagnosis, start of treatment and general rehabilitation, reflecting current practice for thrombolysis services, was created.

The simulation included several rehabilitation options: specialist stroke unit rehabilitation, non-specialist stroke unit and other intermediate care, as well as an option for early supported discharge.

Provide the evidence for change

## Testing the new pathway in Scenario Generator proved that implementing guidelines could reduce stroke deaths by 18% without significantly increasing costs.

### Significantly improved patient outcomes

Scenarios were generated that tested various changes in GP referral behaviours resulting in more activity through the pathway as well as taking into account the expected demand as a result of population and disease prevalence changes. SEPHO also tested the impact of more non-stroke related activity being referred to stroke and then referred on after initial assessment.

The results demonstrated that the cost of the new pathway would actually be slightly cheaper as a result of early supported discharge from hospital and the delivery of specialist rehabilitation in the community would, therefore, be affordable. They also showed the very significant improvements in patient outcomes.

### Evidence for change

Simulation provided the PCTs with compelling evidence to demonstrate that the financial risk of recommissioning the stroke pathway was negligible and that showed the huge benefits of the new pathway for patients.



For more information on how Scenario Generator can help your trust make more informed strategic decisions about the future of its' healthcare system please contact our support team.

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