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South East LHIN shows greatest improvement in province in reducing mortality rates for acute stroke patients

More people in the south east region now survive and recover after a stroke

NEWS

A recently released provincial report indicates that patients and families from across the South East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) are benefiting from improved access to stroke care.

According to new data released by the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES) and the Ontario Stroke Network (OSN), the South East LHIN showed the biggest improvement in 30-day mortality rate following an acute stroke.

Overall, the report card serves as a positive indication that the quality of stroke care continues to improve in Ontario, and highlights the significant impact of access to stroke unit care now available for all residents of the South East LHIN in Belleville, Brockville and Kingston.

The south east ranks second across the 14 LHINs in the proportion of stroke patients who were treated on a stroke unit, and the Belleville area is highlighted as having made the greatest improvement of all communities across the province. The integration of acute stroke care for residents of Perth, Smiths Falls and Brockville to one site at Brockville General Hospital's inpatient stroke unit has demonstrated even further improvement this year in stroke survival rates.

The notable reduction in 30-day mortality rates for the south east region accounts for a decline of 2.6 per cent – from 14.2 per cent last year and 16.6 per cent in the previous three years to 11.6 per cent in 2015/16. This is the largest change in the province. The report also indicates continued progress in access to acute stroke unit care (72.6 per cent, ranked second in the province and still improving).

The south east is one of two top performers in providing access to Home-Based Community Rehabilitation. Progress was also made in providing access to treatments for atrial fibrillation, access to carotid imaging and emergency department referral to Stroke Prevention Clinics. These improvements have helped people to return home safely and succeed in staying home to recover. Hospital readmission rates for stroke survivors in the region have been steadily declining – the South East LHIN ranked third of 14 LHINs at 6.7 per cent, versus the provincial rate of 7.1 per cent.

The Stroke Network of Southeastern Ontario and the South East LHIN continue to work together with stroke survivors and health care providers across the region to make further improvements including timely access to rehabilitation in order to assist with ongoing recovery.

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QUOTES

“The results of this report highlight the great work being done throughout our region. Most recently, the two hospitals – Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital and Brockville General Hospital, worked collectively to implement a solution that provides the best patient experience possible for both communities, and significantly improves outcomes for patients suffering a stroke. This is just one example of how patients are receiving more integrated care.

– *Paul Huras, CEO, South East LHIN*

“The rural nature of the South East region has often played a role in how patients access specialized stroke care. By creating specialized stroke units in Belleville, Brockville and Kingston we have been able to ensure that patients across the region can quickly access teams of stroke experts. This has played a significant role in improving the mortality rate across our LHIN.”

– *Dr. Albert Jin, Stroke Neurologist, Medical Director for the Regional Stroke Network of Southeastern Ontario, Kingston Health Sciences Centre*

“I was so pleased to be involved in advising on the stroke unit in Brockville. Our family was involved in the development a [video](#) on the importance of the acute stroke unit care. We were able to reinforce the importance of the knowledge and experience of a dedicated team and how this helps others to become “survivors”. The recent decrease in mortality rate in our local area from 17 to 4 per cent is amazing and I am proud to have been a part of this endeavor.”

– *Linda Weese, Stroke Survivor, Mallorytown*

“Many people across our region were involved in making these changes, including the stroke survivors who advised us. It is by working together as a team that we provide better prevention for those at risk of stroke and create better outcomes for stroke survivors and their families.”

– *Cally Martin, Regional Director, Stroke Network of Southeastern Ontario, Kingston Health Sciences Centre*

QUICK FACTS

- An organized approach to stroke unit care in the South East LHIN has resulted in improved survival rates – a rate that accounts for an increase in 25 to 30 more people surviving stroke per year in south east Ontario.
- The Stroke Network of Southeastern Ontario based at Kingston Health Sciences Centre works with stroke survivors, health care providers across the South East LHIN to

organize stroke care, implement best practices and drive stroke prevention and improved outcomes for stroke survivors and their families.

- Since 2011, the Ontario Stroke Network's annual stroke report cards and progress reports have been a key resource for Ontario's 11 Regional Stroke Networks.

For more information contact:

Caitlin den Boer

Director, Communications and Engagement

South East LHIN

613-967-0196 ext. 2240

Caitlin.denBoer@lhins.on.ca