



Vanguard: The Neuro Network

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Julie Riley



Blog: The Neuro Network vanguard has reached a key milestone

We are now one year into our vanguard programme which has led me to reflect on the last 12 months as well as looking forward to what the next steps of the programme will be.

We were chosen to be a vanguard under the New Care Models programme because of our passion and belief in the models that we have already developed and the way we run our services at The Walton Centre. The Trust already has good experience of running networks in neurology, spinal services and rehabilitation and we have been held up as an exemplar for what we do.

The funding allocated to us through this programme has given us the opportunity to think about how we do things, how we do things differently and what we need to do in the future to provide the best possible service to patients with neurological and spinal conditions and how we can make these services sustainable.

But we cannot do this in isolation. The success of the vanguard will depend on the strength of our collaborations and that involves a number of different groups; patients, carers, GPs, commissioners. We cannot continue to work in

silos across the health economy; we have to work as a system, recognising that the organisations are inter-linked and should be centred around the patient. This is about getting patients the right advice at the right time in the quickest way at a level that is appropriate to their need, empowering the patient so they can take control of their condition, self-manage and be involved in shared decision-making about their care with GPs so patients are put on the right care pathway, whether that is management in a primary care setting or whether they need specialist input.

We have to date received nearly £3.5m in funding, the programme and the projects within it have gone from the planning stage to being up and running. As well as delivering better outcomes and finding better ways of working, knowledge exchange is a key pillar of our programme; sharing the specialist knowledge The Walton Centre has, making it more accessible. And we are listening and learning as a programme which makes your feedback and continued engagement vital. We have come a long way in a year. I look forward to the next 12 months as we work towards these services becoming fully established.

Programme Director Julie Riley

Engagement events and roadshow

The Neuro Network is a programme of work, established with NHS funding under the vanguard scheme to enhance services for patients with neurological and spinal problems through a number of different projects. In February, we held our first Partnership and Listening event which celebrated the progress of the

Neuro network to date. The feedback is helping to shape our programme and resulted in a 'You Said, We Will' section of our website visit www.thewaltoncentre.nhs.uk.

Find out more:

The Neuro Network is giving

presentations at GP and nursing forums as well as taking part in hospital 'grand rounds'. There will also be engagement events held throughout the year, focus groups and a roadshow. *Contact us (address overleaf)*



Progress report: Teleneurology—new age for neuro consultations

Each vanguard edition focuses on a different project with the programme.

The Neuro Network – a partnership The Walton Centre leads through NHS England’s vanguard programme - is pioneering a new system of ‘teleneurology’ which will allow doctors in other acute hospitals to have consultations with neurologists from The Walton Centre at the patient’s bedside via a video link.

A pilot was launched in January at the Countess of Chester Hospital working closely with The Walton Centre.

Consultant Neurologist and Clinical Divisional Director for Neurology, Dr Martin Wilson at The Walton Centre said: “This is an exciting venture which will enable us to expand on the service we already provide in district general hospitals.

“With the help of the Head of IM& T at The Walton Centre Justin Griffiths and his team, working with the

project team in the Vanguard, we have built and connected two tele-consultation carts but also developed a web-based referral ‘hub’ where the referring hospital can see available consultation slots and complete the referral electronically.”

Walton Centre doctors already visit partner hospitals across the region up to four days a week as part of a ‘hub and spoke’ neurology network. The technology allows the service to be expanded with the potential of offering patients specialist examinations seven days-a-week.



Neuro Network welcomes Ian Dodge

The Neuro Network welcomed the National Director for Commissioning Strategy Ian Dodge.

He wanted to learn about the progress of the Network which is now in the implementation stage of the programme. The Director was taken through some of the achievements of the programme so far as well as the lessons learned. Commissioners and

patient representatives joined in the conversation which emphasised how collaboration and a system-wide approach was crucial to success.



We were delighted to attend the Association of British Neurologists Annual General Meeting at Liverpool Arena and Convention Centre between 3-5 May.

As well as being able to find out more about the Programme, visitors were able to sign up to receive our regular newsletter and updates about the Neuro Network and the projects we have to improve care for patients.

Specialist nurse service grows

More neurology patients will benefit from specialist care delivered at home in the community. Vanguard funding has allowed The Neuro Network to fund extra clinics and staff so that we can provide specialist cover across Cheshire and Merseyside. The Integrated Nurse Specialist Service can be accessed by all neurology patients who are under a Walton Centre consultant. They can help with medication and signpost to other services. Visit our website or ask your GP for a list of clinics in your area.

GP advice line: hours increased

The Consultant Advice Line service has been increased from one to two hours. The advice line, which is available weekdays between 11.30am and 1.30pm, is for GPs to call if they want advice about patient medication or need specialist help in making a decision on whether to refer a neurology patient on to an acute care setting rather than manage their care in the community. The expansion of the advice line has been made possible by Neuro Network funding and is part of the Neuro Network’s goal of sharing specialist knowledge.

Neuro Network is led by The Walton Centre, working in partnership with organisations including Liverpool, Warrington and Halton Clinical Commissioning Groups, NHS England (North), NHS England (specialised commissioning) and the Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust and Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Find out more and join our mailing list by emailing sharon.jamieson@thewaltoncentre.nhs.uk or call 0151 556 3343.