

The Greater Manchester- Stroke Assessment Tool (GM-SAT)

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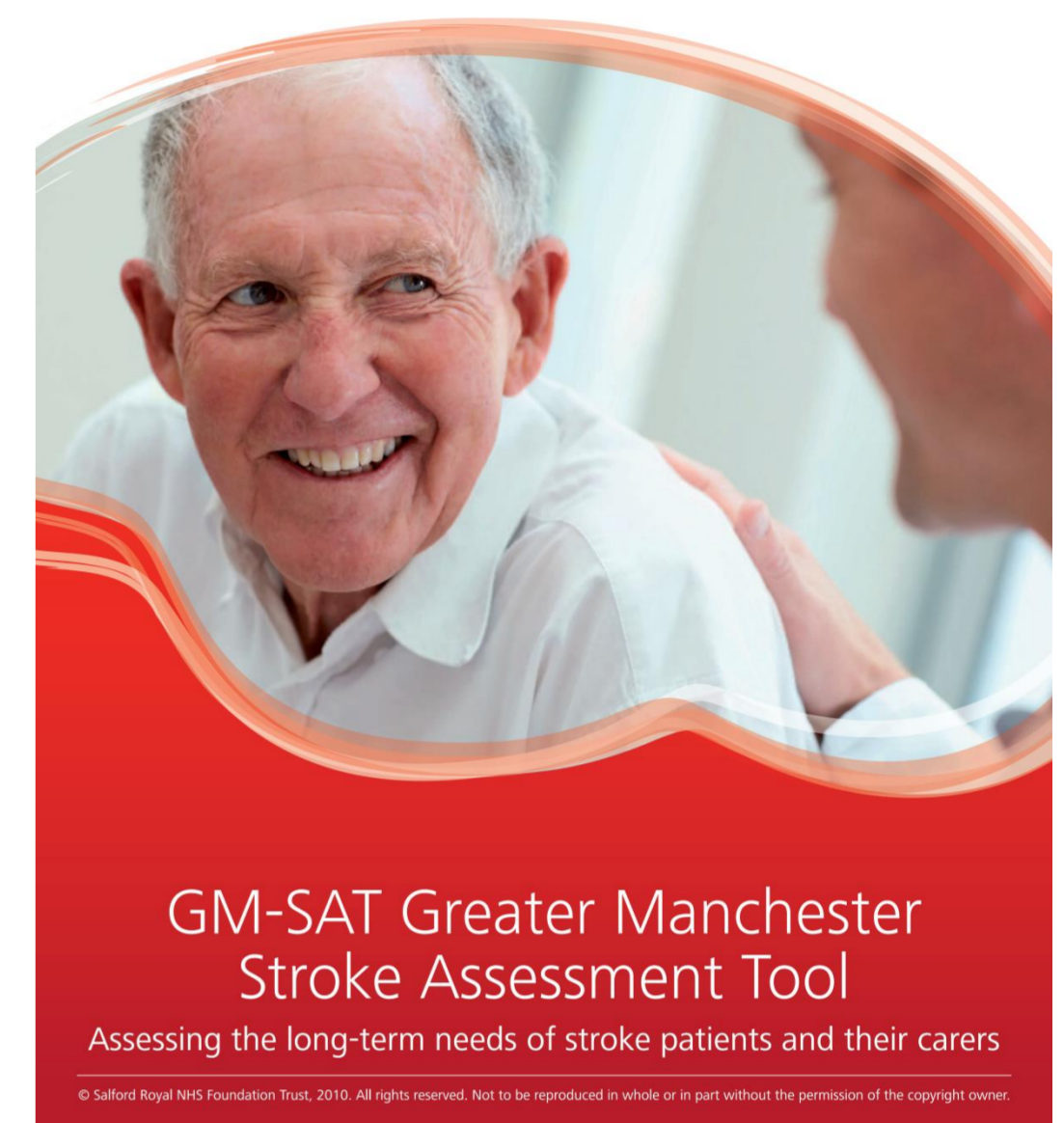
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Six month assessments are a key requirement of the 2007 National Stroke Strategy and the 2013/14 CCG Outcomes Indicator Set. At the GM CLAHRC we designed, evaluated and implemented the Greater Manchester Stroke Assessment Tool (GM-SAT), an evidence based, post-stroke assessment tool developed to holistically identify and address the long-term needs experienced by stroke survivors and their carers.

“One of the main areas the six month review helps us in is identifying the unmet needs of patients. The GM-SAT helps as it is comprehensive yet easy to follow and has everything we need in it to carry out the review.”



Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) for Greater Manchester



Background

Stroke survivors, their families and carers report a sense of abandonment in the months and years following a stroke, a time during which many experience significant changes, both positive and negative, in their medical, social and emotional care needs and struggle to adjust to the often devastating impact the stroke has had on their lives. The National Stroke Strategy (2007) states that follow-up assessments and reviews, a requirement of the Strategy, can not only help to ensure that stroke survivors feel supported in the long term, but can additionally provide a means of identifying and addressing individuals' unmet needs. The review is now included in the CCG Outcomes Indicator Set (2013/2014).

Development

The CLAHRC team worked with patients, carers and professionals from across the stroke pathway to identify the common, long term problems people experience after a stroke. This process included organising focus groups with people who have had a stroke and their carers, as well as workshops with stroke professionals from across the NHS, social care and voluntary sector, and an informal review of the available literature describing the long-term problems experienced by stroke survivors and their carers.



The GM-SAT

The Greater Manchester Stroke Assessment Tool (GM-SAT) is an evidence-based assessment tool that has been designed specifically for the six month post-stroke review. It encompasses a wide range of potential post-stroke care needs, from medication management and secondary prevention, through to mood and fatigue.

Together with its supporting materials, it provides everything needed to undertake a six month review, from the questions to ask within the review and algorithms to guide care, through to documentation for recording and communicating review outcomes to other professionals involved in an individual's care.

It has been developed to provide a structured, systematic needs assessment six months post-hospital discharge and covers both patient- and carer-related areas. For each area, the GM-SAT provides assessment questions and a simple algorithm directing the assessor to the most appropriate evidence-based management option for any given unmet need.

GM-SAT Easy Access Toolkit

The Easy Access Toolkit is a version of GM-SAT suitable for people who have aphasia after their stroke, and was created in collaboration with stroke survivors from Speakeasy, a communication support charity based in Bury, Greater Manchester. Members of Speakeasy helped to re-design GM-SAT so it could be understood by people who have aphasia. It is comprised of two resources- the Trigger Question Resource and the Conversation Support Resource- that enable people with aphasia following a stroke to participate in conversations about their long-term, post-stroke needs and to be maximally involved in decisions about their continuing care.

Evaluation

Since it was first presented in 2010, the GM-SAT has been extensively evaluated. It has been found to be both feasible to use and acceptable to professionals delivering the review, as well as patients and their carers. Those conducting the reviews report that the Tool is easy to use and particularly helpful when exploring sensitive issues with the patient.

It has also been met positively by the patients and their carers, who found the assessment process valuable and indicated that it made them feel supported. They stated it was helpful to speak to someone who understands how a stroke can affect and change a person, and who is able to give advice and help with any issues they had.

Use

Having started in the Greater Manchester area, the GM-SAT is now widely used across the UK. An evaluation report found it was used in the North of England, Yorkshire, Merseyside, Nottingham, Norfolk, Greater Manchester and London. It should be noted that these are very conservative estimates based on the response from sites known to be using the GM-SAT. As it is free to access and easy to use, the GM-SAT is likely used in more locations without our knowledge.

The GM-SAT is free to use and can be downloaded from the web address below.

For more information:

NIHR CLAHRC for Greater Manchester
Email: clahrc@srft.nhs.uk
Website: <http://clahrc-gm.nihr.ac.uk/>
Twitter: @gmclahrc