

Australian Stroke Coalition: the first four years

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Stroke Coalition

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Background

- The Australian Stroke Coalition (ASC) was formed on the 11th of July 2008 and is co-chaired by the Stroke Society of Australasia (SSA) and the National Stroke Foundation (NSF). The ASC includes membership from state stroke networks, professional colleges and associations, and consumers.



Background

Networks literature

Stakeholder views Study (McInnes et al 2011):

Factors for establishment of successful clinical networks:

- building relationships, namely effective leadership
- strategic evidence-based work plans
- adequate resources
- ability to implement and evaluate network initiatives

Network outcomes associated with two themes:

- i) **Connecting and Engaging** (interprofessional and consumer collaboration and forming strategic partnerships with state health and area health services)
- ii) **Changing the Landscape of Care** (value placed on the role of networks in improving health services, processes of care and patient outcomes; implementing evidence-based care, and in developing and supporting an engaged clinical workforce)

Background

Networks literature

From (UK) NHS Networks 2006/7

Characteristics of successful networks:

- clear mission statements and rules of engagement
- inclusive
- user-focused, not structure driven
- not too large,
- promote shared commitment
- have a 'boundary-spanner'
- financed, proactive and well-organised coordination
- time to develop and learn network management skills
- network coordinators are at the centre
- develop sustainable interpersonal relationships

Aims

- The ASC aims to improve stroke care by providing a critical communication link between relevant organisations and their members, reducing duplication and strengthening a unified voice for stroke care across Australia.

Method- 2008-2010

- Identified need by Audit and 2007 National Health Professional survey
- Identified organisations and individuals/leaders
- Set out TOR and agreed areas of focus.
- Drafted initial paper, summarizing current activity
- Identified priorities
- Resources supplied by NSF
- Set up structure of working groups on priority areas
- Met annually face to face

Method -2008-2010 (cont)

Initial priorities included:

- Response to acute event;
- Access to stroke unit care;
- rehabilitation;
- long term recovery and support and
- Workforce, training and professional development.

Method -2010-2012

- Executive established
- Renewed commitment from all organisations
- Reviewed operations and TOR
- Working groups and project teams were established to develop and implement projects aligned to these priorities
- Communication strategy developed
- Member organisations surveyed

Method -2010-2012

- New priorities established from survey results:
 - TIA
 - First 48 hours
 - Rehabilitation
 - Community care
 - Workforce, education and PD
 - Data and quality improvement
 - e-health

Results

To-date the ASC has:

- Provided submissions to Government
- Stroke unit access project
- Stroke-specific education framework
- piloted a Rehabilitation assessment pathway and Stroke Care Plan
- TIA project
- Presentations and posters at Conferences

Results (cont)

- Improved key opinion leader representation of membership
- Improved engagement with Networks
- More effective communication strategies
- Members are using ASC for dissemination
- Other orgs now using ASC for consultation

Discussion

“ **planning fallacy** is a tendency for people and organizations to underestimate how long they will need to complete a task”

Discussion

Factors for success

- Building relationships
- Effective leadership
- Engagement of KOL
- Adequate and targeted human resources
- Good people
- True shared vision and commitment
- Meaningful outcomes

Conclusion

- As a new organisation the ASC is slowly gaining momentum and further work is required to publicise the work and outcomes of ASC projects.
- As a unified voice for stroke, and the strength and participation of its membership, it has the potential for being a powerful organisation for stroke networking and advocacy in Australia.