SENSe Partnership: A Network of sites and ‘up-skilled’ therapists to deliver best-practice stroke rehabilitation of the upper limb

Leeanne Carey, Liana Cahill, Brendon Haslam, Yvonne Mak-Yuen, Megan Turville, Cheryl Neilson, Natasha Lannin, Vincent Thijs, Susan Hillier, Michael Nilsson and the NHMRC SENSe Partnership Team

The Gap

Our national survey of occupational therapists and physiotherapists (n=172) found stroke survivors are not receiving recommended best practice for upper limb rehabilitation.

Only 28% of therapists were aware of published research on treatments for sensory loss after stroke.

1 Pumpa, 2015

Our Aim

Using a ‘knowledge transfer’ intervention, guided by the Theoretical Domains Framework, we aim to change clinician behaviour and increase evidence-based upper limb therapy for stroke survivors.

Our Approach

This involves:

- The creation of Knowledge Translation Hubs with SENSe Therapy Centres
- The creation of an online Community of Therapists and Web Based Resources.

The Exemplar

100 therapists will be ‘upskilled’ and SENSe Therapy delivered to 336 stroke survivors.

Through the use of SENSe Therapy as an exemplar, a template for implementation of complex evidence-based rehabilitations will be developed.

This project will allow comparison of real-world implementation in existing health settings with complementary specialist centres and improve the access of stroke survivors to evidence-based upper limb therapy.

Results

Twelve sites are now involved nationwide.

In baseline surveys at the first 8 sites, occupational therapists and physiotherapists (n=87) reported low levels of skill in assessing and treating sensory loss in stroke survivors; Mean skill in assessment 4.5/10 and mean skill in treatment 3.8/10 on visual analogue scale.

1 Pumpa, 2015
2 Cane, 2012, Carey, 2011