



Meet Elaine

I'm Elaine I work as a staff nurse in a multi-disciplinary team within the Acute Stroke Unit of Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

People attend the unit after being diagnosed with a stroke with varying degrees of post stroke disabilities and complications. As most people may know stroke can be a life threatening and life limiting condition which can have devastating effects for the individual and their families/ carers. Stroke is an condition which can impact not only on a individuals physical health but can also carry psychosocial effects, it is vital that individuals have relevant information about stroke and are able to make informed decisions regarding their care and recovery.

What does self management mean for Elaine?

Self management is the empowerment of individuals with long term conditions and their families/ carers to participate in the management of their condition. I believe in order to do this nurses should encourage people to take an active role in their care and should facilitate this through the provision of evidence based information.

It is my view that staff should offer evidence based approaches including information on modifiable lifestyle risk factors. It is widely acknowledged that the reduction of these risk factors can decrease risk of further stroke. We provide education on a daily basis so that people we support can make evidence based choices on their care. Often families/ carers participate in their care in order to increase knowledge and support for them thus increasing their confidence on issues surrounding stroke.

It is our role to ensure those individuals and their families/ carers are being supported through their diagnosis of stroke; we strive to do this through holistic multi-disciplinary assessment, and offer coping strategies and lifestyle advice to promote the enablement of people to be as independent as possible.

Do not underestimate stroke survivor's abilities, to complete basic tasks it is far more beneficial for the individual, if they can be empowered to carry out tasks with support rather than having the task completed for them. This enables them to adopt coping strategies required.



How does self management help Elaine and her colleagues?

Self Management allows families to play an active role and feel valued in the stroke recovery process- enhancing the relationship on the ward between staff and individuals and relatives/ carers. This allows staff to see how individuals will adapt and manage at home i.e. - through assessment of necessary skills to be practiced before discharge is safe.

Stroke survivors are more goal oriented in their recovery, thus increasing confidence when goal is reached

How does self management help the people I care for?

The availability of community stroke team which enables individuals to continue their rehabilitation in their own environments thus increasing confidence and allowing them to adapt to the social aspects of coping with a disability.

Self management allows individuals to be discharged after a period of assessment with the necessary skills to be safe at home following stroke illness, increasing the number of successful discharges.

Self management promotes independence for stroke survivor. For example dressing practice/ kitchen assessments, injection technique, and lifestyle modifications.