Workshops 1b:
Fatigue after stroke: what research tell us
Prof Avril Drummond
Outline of workshop

1. To describe fatigue and how it appears in stroke survivors

2. To outline what we know about fatigue and stroke from research

3. To highlight what we don’t know and how research is developing
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What is fatigue?

Feeling of weariness, unrelated to previous exertion, which is not ameliorated by rest.
Key points

• Common - although disagreement over numbers (23%-75%)

• In top ten priority areas (stroke survivors)

• Disabling
I never felt this tired... Never felt tired like this before.

I have to keep stopping. Really short spurts. Whereas you could spend all day, now I’ll perhaps do an hour and then I’ll stop and then maybe start again a bit later.

I used to whizz round and not even think about it, but now it’s an effort.

Thinking about what I’m actually going to say and what I’m actually saying, that’s what makes me tired as well.
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A lot of research to date!
Areas of research

1. Different in stroke
2. Course of fatigue
3. Stroke lesion
4. Sleep
5. Cognitive
6. Medication
7. Depression
8. Physical
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Relationship with depression
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NotFAST study
NotFAST study

- 268 were assessed with mild - moderate stroke.
- 4 UK centres
- Asked about pre stroke activity, baseline at 4-6 weeks and follow up at 6 months
Frequency of Fatigue

- Pre-stroke: 19%
- 4 weeks: 43%
- 6 months: 51%
Predictors of fatigue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>4 weeks</th>
<th>6 months</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In a relationship</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced mobility</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduced independence in ADLs</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher levels of depressive symptoms</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher levels of anxiety symptoms</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-existing fatigue</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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</tbody>
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“Have you spoken to anyone about it?”
I don't think anyone has spoken to me about it.

I did mention it to [consultant]. He says, well, that's something that happens and it can take months.

I got this leaflet about fatigue after stroke. It made me realise that it's going to last longer than I thought...

Nobody else has mentioned it.

I wouldn't say fatigue has been high on the list... She’s never said to me, 'Are you suffering from fatigue?' Her role has been to get my blood pressure down.
Treatments

Not a ‘one size fits all’

History
Exercise
Rest
Mood
Pacing
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