

Evaluation of a new stroke monitoring tool for Longer-term Unmet Needs after Stroke (LUNS)

Results of the study – Information for participants



What is the LUNS questionnaire?

The LUNS questionnaire, which you completed, has 22 questions to identify longer-term problems after stroke that people need help with.

Stroke patients may experience a range of longer-term problems affecting physical, social and mental well-being, and sometimes not all of their needs are addressed.

LUNS was created to:

- Identify where patient needs are not being met
- Help services monitor the care they provide
- Inform service development

LUNS was developed through:

- Reviewing previous research
- Discussions with colleagues
- Feedback from patients
- A pilot study
- Interviews with stroke patients

What is the LUNS study?

Before we can use the LUNS questionnaire in practice, we need to know:

- How reliably it measures peoples' unmet needs (reliability)
- How well the questions measure unmet need (validity)
- How acceptable it is for stroke patients to use (acceptability)

We tested this by:

- Comparing the scores at Pack 1 and Pack 2 (reliability)
- Comparing LUNS with other questionnaires (validity)
- Looking at how much data was returned (acceptability)

The study you were involved in allowed us to assess this. We posted the LUNS questionnaire to patients 3 or 6 months after their stroke. Patients completed Pack 1 which contained LUNS and three other questionnaires, then approximately two weeks later completed Pack 2.

Problems with thinking and communication are not uncommon after having a stroke. Therefore we included people both with and without problems with their thinking or communication, to ensure we could understand how well LUNS works for a typical sample of stroke patients. For some patients in the study, relatives or friends helped with completing the questionnaire.

What were the results of the study?

We recruited 850 patients living throughout England, from 40 hospitals, during December 2008 to May 2009, and February 2010 to January 2011.

The average number of unmet needs that each person identified was 4 (range 0-19). The three most often reported unmet needs were for more information about stroke, fear of falling, and problems with forgetting and concentrating.

Overall, stroke patients found LUNS acceptable to use and it has good validity and reliability.

What can we conclude?

LUNS provides a simple and reliable method for identifying the number and types of unmet needs after stroke, for an individual patient or in a service.

LUNS has lower reliability and validity when used with people who have thinking or communication problems. This is a common problem when using questionnaires, yet LUNS remains a unique tool for capturing the unmet needs of stroke patients.

We hope that LUNS can be used in practice to improve care for stroke patients after discharge from hospital. For example, LUNS could be used during an individual patients post-stroke review, or as a survey tool to evaluate how well a service is meeting the needs of its stroke patients.

LoTS care website

Please visit the LoTS care website where you can find more information about the LUNS study, including;

- Further information about the LUNS study and results
- A view of the LUNS questionnaire
- A presentation of results delivered at the UK Stroke Forum

www.lotscare.co.uk/luns_study.html

**If you would like to know more, please get in touch with
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