Section 4: Preparing the Stroke Surveillance Site

Overview

Introduction

Once your application for participation has been accepted, and you have received your Stroke surveillance site code (SSS code), you will be able to recruit or obtain staff through secondment and set up the data entry tool.

Intended audience

This section is designed for use by those fulfilling the role of the site coordinator.

In this section

This section covers the following topics:

Recruiting Staff

Introduction

The number and type of staff recruited to do data collection will depend on the following:

- Scope and size of the stroke study (including Step 1, 2 and or 3)
- Source of data to be collected (ie active recruitment, or retrospective record review)
- Qualifications and skills of interested applicants.

Core roles

The core roles of data collection staff are covered in section 2.

Where to get people from

In many countries, recruitment is likely to be an informal process where staff are 'seconded' from other duties within a health facility or health authority. For example, junior staff in training. In this situation, arrangements for their release or scheduled participation may need to be negotiated and explicitly agreed upon.

Where there is not sufficient available staff or specific skills are required formal recruitment may be necessary.

Number of staff

For a STEPS Stroke study that intends to register prospectively 250 cases per year, you will need to recruit two data collection staff.

It is normal to screen a much larger number of patients with a range of stroke-like symptoms even vaguely suggestive of a stroke. Data collection must be ensured during sick leave, annual leave, etc.

More staff may be needed if data collection is spread over a large area. This includes multiple hospital coverage and in places where death certificates are not centralized.

Briefing and Training for Data Collection Staff

Introduction

Training is likely to be informal and will depend on the level of skill and qualifications of data collection staff.

Purpose

The purpose of the briefing and training is to ensure:

- Uniform application of the steps stroke surveillance materials
- Good overall quality of data collected, and
- Useful and meaningful results reported.

What to cover

Depending on the qualifications and skills of staff recruited and type of data collection, briefing and/ or training could cover some or all of the following topics:

Topic	What to cover	Reference
STEPS stroke surveillance	• Basis of STEPS stroke and rationale for the study • About stroke • Key definitions and epidemiological concepts • Key vascular risk factors • Medical treatment	Section 1
Roles	Roles and responsibilities of data collection staff	Section 2
Data collection	• Methods for identifying stroke patients (hot and cold pursuit) • Interview skills • Recording patient responses • Using the STEPS stroke instrument • Using the Q by Q Guide • Administration • Test cases	Section 5 Section 7
Updating the stroke register	• Using the data entry tool	Section 6

Setting up the Stroke Surveillance Site

Introduction

To set up the STEPS stroke surveillance site, an office space will need to be identified or established for:

- Coordinating the steps stroke study
- Entering patient data entry into the data entry tool, and
- Maintaining the stroke register and relevant files.

Office equipment and supplies

General office equipment and supplies required for the stroke surveillance site office include:

- Photocopier
- Shelving
- Filing cabinets or boxes
- Telephone
- At least one computer with internet connection
- Office stationery supplies

Software

The following is a list of software that you will need to have setup on your office computers:

- Microsoft Office '98 or higher recommended for reports, correspondence and general word processing.
- Virus scanning software (if connected to the internet and/ exchanging files outside the office).
- MS Access ('98 or higher) for data entry.
- Standard Data Entry Tool (DET).

For information on installing the DET see page 4-5 and for further information on using the DET see section 6.

Note: The DET is a standard tool that is only available in English.

Other technical requirements

To conduct an "ideal" stroke incidence study, you will need access to brain imaging equipment at the surveillance site. This may not be feasible in all settings.

Installing and Preparing the Data Entry Tool

Introduction

It is important to properly set up and install the Data Entry Tool (DET) prior to starting data collection. The setup process involves:

- creating a folder for the DET
- receiving and installing the DET
- preparing the DET for data entry.

Create DET folders

Follow the steps below to create appropriate STEPS Stroke folders on the computer that will be used to enter data and establish a register.

Step	Action	Recommended folder name
1	In Windows Explorer, create a primary folder (directory) for all your Stroke files, including: • data • code • documents, and • other files.	Use either: • C:\SSS200X(insert appropriate year), or • other appropriate drives if your disk is partitioned you are on a network.
2	Create a sub-folder under the STEPS Stroke primary folder to contain your data files	C:\SSS200X\data

Receiving the DET

Once you have been authorized by the ICU to participate in a STEPS Stroke study, the ICC data analyst will email you the appropriate version of the DET.

Note: Make sure you have ordered the version of the DET which corresponds to the Microsoft Access® version on your computer or local network (e.g. DET for MS Access 97).

Installing the DET

Follow the steps below to install the DET onto your computer.

Step	Action
1	Unzip the DET attachment
2	In Windows Explorer, copy the following files into the C:\SSS200X folder: **WHO_Original.mdb** **WHO_Original_Data.mdb** **Note:** All export files of the Data Entry Tool are automatically stored into this folder.

Continued on next page

Installing the DET (continued)

Step	Action
3	In Windows Explorer double click the file: **WHO_Original.mdb**
4	Click OK in the Entering SSS code box.
5	Click on the SSS code button in the configuration window.
6	Enter your SSS code and click OK in the SSS code window.
7	Repeat step 9 to confirm your SSS code.
8	Click the Close button in the configuration window.
9	Click the Close button in the start window.

Error messages

You will get one of the following error messages if you incorrectly entered your SSS code and will need to repeat steps 7-10 above to correct:

- invalid data entry
- wrong sss code
- invalid SSS code.

Test Run

Introduction

Prior to starting the stroke study, it may be useful to complete a test run of the:

- STEPS stroke instrument
- case finding process
- access to records
- case registration process, and
- data transfer of results.

Test patients

Identify and approach a sample of 25 patients to be part of the test run. If possible, the test cases should include:

- both men and women
- people with differing levels of education
- a broad age range (within the target study range)
- more than one ethnic group (if appropriate).

Feedback

At the end of each interview, ask the patient the following questions and record their feedback:

- Did any of the questions make you feel uncomfortable?
- How could we improve the format or layout?
- Were there activities that we missed?
- How else could we improve this survey?

Evaluation and refining the Instrument

On completion of the trial:

- Compile all patients' comments into a single report.
- Where necessary, adapt and refine the Instrument - taking care not to change intended meanings.
- Send the instrument to the ICC for comment and quality assurance.

Note: The ICU will also provide feedback on the overall quality of collected data.

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