

How Does Delirium Affect Allied Health Therapy After Stroke?

Brendan Cutts, A/Prof Anna Wong Shee, A/Prof Chris Barr

Completed as part of the requirements for the Master of Clinical
Rehabilitation (Neurological Physiotherapy), Flinders University 2018



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Background, Aim and Method

- Delirium has a significant impact on functional recovery
- Allied health therapy is particularly critical in the first few weeks post stroke

This study proposed to evaluate the effect of delirium on patient participation in allied health therapy and determine whether time or length of session improved engagement.

- Observational study of consecutive stroke patients from 4 North, IRP and GEM
 - Therapists completed a survey for each session
 - Nursing staff completed the Confusion Assessment Method each day

Results

- 40 patients recruited for 355 therapy sessions
- 13 developed delirium (32.5%)
 - Older (79.3 vs 69.0 years, $p = .024$)
 - More severe strokes (NIHSS 12.2 vs 6.9, $p = .011$)
- Patients had less therapy when in delirium ($p < .001$)
 - Delirium +ve sessions: 14.5 mins therapy in 29.0 min session (47.3%)
 - Delirium –ve sessions: 29.3 mins therapy in 42.2 min session (72.0%)
- For delirium +ve sessions, therapists scored participation lower, and both inattention and altered conscious state affected sessions more

Analysis

- Shorter sessions may be better for patients in delirium
- Engagement and participation in morning sessions was not different to afternoon sessions
- Altered conscious state had the greatest correlation with participation

Key Messages:

- This is the first study to measure the participation and engagement of patients in post-stroke delirium in rehabilitative therapy
- Patients in delirium were able to participate in therapy no matter the session time or duration
- Conscious state may be the best predictor of a patients ability to engage in therapy