We are now into our second year of the CIRCIT trial and much has been achieved by you all in that time. We are now actively recruiting at 4 sites, with Parkville, Melbourne due to start just as soon as the final paperwork issues are sorted out. The number of people that have contributed to our progress to date is ever increasing (as is our gratitude!) and there are too many to name individually. But the greatest thanks must go to our stroke survivor participants and their families who have supported their involvement, from providing transport to assessment appointments to assisting with questionnaires. Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to as many participants as you can – it is stating the obvious to say without their involvement the trial would not be possible.

**Recruitment update**

- Hampstead = 81
- Repat = 30
- St Margaret’s = 7
- Osborne Park = 19
- TOTAL = 137

*48% of target sample!*

**Blinded Assessors**
The blinded assessors team has now grown and includes:

- Samantha McKenzie – Hampstead
- Michelle Hardy – Repat and St Margaret’s
- Alison Kirkman – Osborne Park
- Ruth Moriarty (Parkville – waiting in the wings!)

Particular thanks also need to go to Sue Baxandall at Hampstead for managing assessment bookings and staff at Hampstead and Osborne Park for conducting baseline assessments.

**Behind the scenes.....**

Several people have been working very hard doing the often invisible, but essential work of sorting out agreements, money and contracts. To Andrew Zoerner, Tony Hewitt and all others involved in this work within the various organisations, a huge thankyou. Hidden away we also have Anthea Worley doing the absolutely vital task of data entry and production of therapy reports.

**Weekend Therapy**

Tony Elson continues his excellent management of the weekend roster. Current weekend staff covering Hampstead and St Margaret’s include Nicolle Macaitis Tanya DeVeer Jaffar Liensavanh and Louise O’Neill.

Top tips for CCT implementation

We asked some of this site investigators to provide a tip, suggestion or a particular exercise or activity that they have found useful in circuit classes. Here’s what they came up with.

- For treadmill, we have a chart next to it with speed translations from 10m timed gait to equivalent treadmill speed setting (ours is in km/hr) as I personally was tending to set treadmill too slow. (Liz Lynch, Hampstead)
- Make sure you start on time – if you don’t start on time it is horrible (all of the Hampstead team)
- Obstacle courses run like a mini-circuit with everyone going at once (Jess Nolan, Osborne Park)
- Sit-Stand competition, how many can you do in a minute: always sparks their competitive nature and you can get pretty much every participant involved at once. It’s a good warm up too. Rachel Harling, Hampstead

Embedded projects

Gurpreet Kaur recently completed her honours study: “Ummm, about an hour? How accurate are physiotherapists at estimating therapy time in stroke rehabilitation?” This observational study was embedded within the CIRCIT protocol and involved videotaping and analysing 47 therapy sessions (28 CCT sessions and 19 IT sessions) from three CIRCIT sites. Her key findings were that therapists were pretty accurate in estimating total therapy time, although they did consistently overestimate time by about 12% or 8 minutes. However, it appears that estimating the time participants spend active versus resting in therapy is much harder, with errors of around 30% of overestimation of active time and underestimation of rest time. These results were similar between individual therapy and circuit class therapy sessions. The take home message being that participants are doing less activity in therapy sessions than we think!

Gurpreet has presented her work as a poster at the Stroke Society of Australasia conference in September and more recently as an oral presentation at the Australian Physiotherapy Association Congress. If you are interested in Gurpreet presenting her work at your site, please contact Coralie (coralie.english@unisa.edu.au).

Publications and presentations


Kaur G, English C, Hillier S. “Ummm, about an hour? How accurate are physiotherapists at estimating therapy time in stroke rehabilitation?” International Journal of Stroke Vol 6 (Suppl. 1); September 2011; 35–52 (P55)