Dear colleague,

In April this year, the Specialised Neurology Services (Adults) Service Specification was published. It outlines how specialised and core neurology services should work together at population level to deliver timely, equitable and accessible neurological care.

The service specification defines core services and specialised service requirements across major neurology subspecialties. Integrated Care Boards, as local commissioners of NHS services, are required to work with their Trusts to ensure the needs of the service specification are met.

GIRFT National Neurology Report

The 2021 GIRFT Neurology National Report was the result of a systematic review and analysis of services led by Dr Geraint Fuller, former GIRFT Neurology Clinical Lead, who visited all 24 neuroscience regions and 67 Trusts delivering services for 139 sites.

The report demonstrated the marked variation in the range of services available across the country for people with neurological disorders. The 72 recommendations helped inform this new service specification. In the past 4 years, GIRFT has worked with Trusts across the country to help reduce long waits and improve delivery of care and will continue to do so.

Integrated neurology care

Integrated neurology systems bringing together secondary and tertiary services are central to delivering the service specification, ensuring that core neurology services are available as close to home as possible across both Specialised Neurology Centres (SNCs) and District General Hospitals (DGHs), with equitable access to specialised expertise wherever the patient presents.

Our ask of Trusts

There is very limited national data on general and specialist neurology service provision. GIRFT is inviting all providers of neurological services to participate in this national self-assessment survey to better understand how services are provided and to benchmark their services against national standards.

By capturing a comprehensive picture of how neurological services are currently organised and delivered, we can better support implementation of the service specification and identify opportunities for improvement at both local and national level.

The purpose of this survey is:

- National objectives:
  - To benchmark services and identify where targeted national support might be helpful.
  - To identify exemplar best practice to share more widely.

- To demonstrate quantifiable evidence of any systemic gaps to better inform national commissioning and policy.

➢ Neurology unit objectives:
- To provide neurology units with a tool for self-reflection against national standards so they can develop local improvement plans.
- To facilitate local conversations within networks to identify strengths and weaknesses they can address together.

Completing the Survey

We require only one response per Trust. We would suggest the service's clinical lead and operational lead are best placed to complete this together. We will analyse the responses and produce a report (anonymised) on the findings.

We recognise that this survey is detailed and may require information from a number of colleagues within your organisation. For this reason, responses can be saved and returned to at any stage before submission.

The value of this work depends on broad participation across the country. To allow sufficient time to gather information from across services, the survey will remain open until 1 February 2027.

The survey can be accessed through the link below:

GIRFT Neurology Self-Assessment Toolkit: survey link

We will be running the survey until **Monday 1st of February (23:59)**.

If you have any issues with completing the survey, or any other queries, please get in contact with the team via the GIRFT Neurology inbox: england.girftneurology@nhs.net

GIRFT does not currently hold complete contact lists of all clinical and operational leads across England. We will be using the contacts as provided to help develop our workstream's distribution list. If you would like to provide alternate clinical and operational contacts for your service, please get in touch via the GIRFT Neurology shared inbox (*see above*).

Uses of data

The purpose of the self-assessment is to support quality improvement and national benchmarking, and not for performance oversight. GIRFT will review and summarise data nationally. Participating organisations will receive a benchmarking report comparing their service against regional and national peers. We will subsequently publish overall national findings anonymously.

Links to relevant documents:

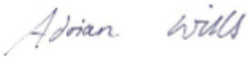
- Specialised Neurology Services (Adults) - service specification
- https://gettingitrightfirsttime.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Neurology-Sept21g-1.pdf

Thank you,



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