PLORAS Newsletter
Predicting Language Outcome and Recovery After Stroke
Issue 3 | December 2014

Hello!
The PLORAS project has seen big and exciting changes over the last year - see our feature on the Clinical Research Network to find out more! Here we’ve also selected other highlights. For more events and updates see our website: www.ucl.ac.uk/ploras.

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Recruitment update
We now have over 700 stroke survivors in the study! Many thanks to all our participants for your time, and eagerness to help new stroke survivors. The research would not be possible without you!

Stroke Association funding
We were delighted to receive additional funding from the Stroke Association to support our research.
Together with our Wellcome Trust funding, it will help us to achieve even more towards the PLORAS aims.
Events and media

UK Stroke Assembly
On 16 June, Professor Cathy Price gave a presentation on PLORAS to stroke survivors in Nottingham.

It was a great opportunity for stroke survivors to feed back their thoughts on the research directly to the Principal Investigator.

BBC Radio 4 programme: Brain Attack
Robert McCrum, journalist and stroke survivor, visited our centre as part of a new BBC Radio 4 programme: Brain Attack. He took part in the research with speech and language therapist Rachel Browne, and then interviewed Cathy Price - to find out what the results from his MRI scan and language assessment mean in the context of our research. In the programme, Robert tells his own story, and seeks to find answers from medical science to questions about stroke. Read more about the two-part series here: http://tinyurl.com/o2zpaxn. Brain Attack will be broadcast at 11am on Monday 2nd & 9th March 2015.

BBC Look East
In August, PLORAS featured in a local news piece on Peterborough City Hospital's involvement in the project. The research team at the hospital are one of our CRN sites (see next page). We received very positive comments from stroke survivors and their families who saw the feature - and then decided to take part in the project!
After many months of set-up, we are delighted we have launched PLORAS with the Clinical Research Network (CRN). The CRN are funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) to co-ordinate and develop stroke research nationally.

We are very excited about working with the CRN, as it means we can vastly increase the numbers of stroke survivors we reach.

Over 40 hospitals across England are now recruiting participants for PLORAS via the CRN (and more are in the set up process). This means we can include stroke survivors from much more diverse backgrounds and geographical areas than has been possible before.

For March to November this year, our CRN sites recruited 168 participants. Many thanks to the stroke survivors who showed interest in PLORAS, and the hospital research practitioners for your hard work for PLORAS!

New aphasia-friendly information

To enable us to work with the CRN, we submitted a new ethics application - and added extra aphasia-friendly materials.

We are always keen to receive feedback on these (and on our website). If you are a participant and received information sheets from us - we’d love to hear if you have comments (good or bad!) or suggestions.
Spotlight on...Tom Hope - Research Fellow

Tom is responsible for building and refining the PLORAS prediction system.

This involves putting results and insights from his own research and from the other group members into a single, practical framework. He then validates (checks) their impact on the predictions that we can make for individual patients.

Tom has a PhD in Computational Cognitive Neuroscience (number processing in the brain) and a background in Artificial Intelligence.

New stroke website

We are working as part of the UCL Stroke Research Forum to develop a website with information on all stroke research at University College London. Once complete, we hope it will be a useful resource for stroke survivors and health professionals / academics.

The website address is www.ucl.ac.uk/stroke.

Finally…

Look out for regular updates on our Facebook or Twitter pages. If you would prefer not to receive our newsletter in future, please contact us.

We wish you all a very happy Christmas!

From all the PLORAS Research Team

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