

The Development of a Specialist Rehabilitation Pathway In Neurosciences Intensive Care

An evaluation of staff perceptions.

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Background

It is well documented that early rehabilitation in General Intensive Care is safe and effective.¹ However, there is a paucity of evidence to support early rehabilitation for patients in Neuroscience Intensive Care, with no established consensus in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, patients with a neurological diagnosis are often excluded from early mobility studies.²

Early rehabilitation in Neuro Intensive Care is a challenging clinical conundrum, requiring a high level of multidisciplinary collaboration, expertise and communication. The complexities of avoiding secondary brain injury and the challenges of rehabilitating patients with neurological deficits often complicates early intervention.²

There is a need to focus on optimising patient recovery in Intensive Care with a co-ordinated rehabilitation approach. A recent publication³ highlights the importance of rehabilitation pathways, requiring collaboration between intensive care clinicians and rehabilitation specialists.

Objectives

To devise a rehabilitation pathway for use in Neurosciences Intensive Care Unit (NICU), UHS.

To evaluate staff confidence and knowledge of patient rehabilitation within Neurosciences Intensive Care after implementation of the pathway.

Methods and Materials

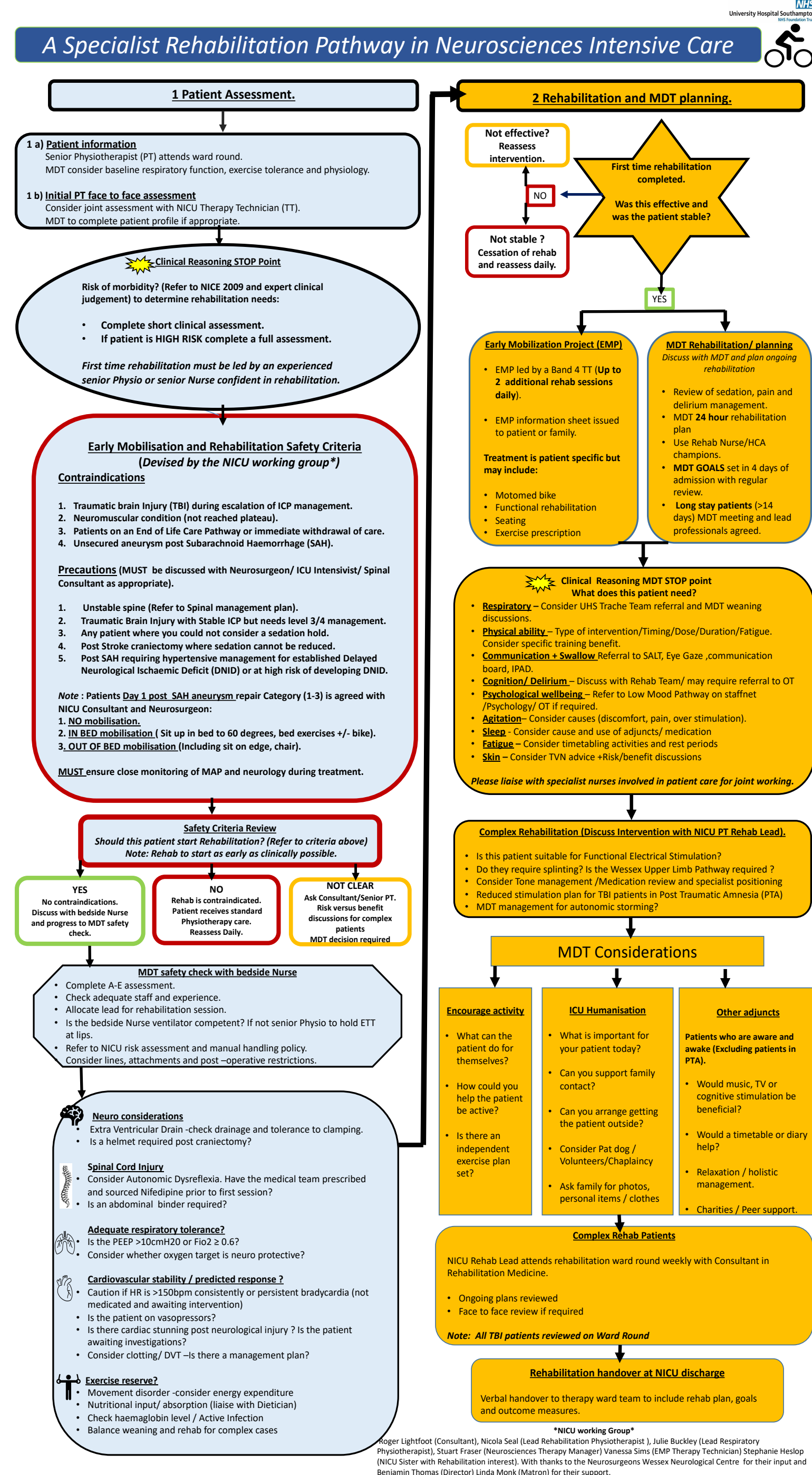
A Rehabilitation Working Group was set up in 2015 which included a Neurosciences Consultant, Lead Rehabilitation Physiotherapist, Lead Respiratory Physiotherapist, Lead Early Mobilisation Therapy Technician, Neurosciences Therapy Manager and a Nurse Sister with specialist interest in rehabilitation.

A review of the literature relating to the safety of mobilising patients in Neurosciences Intensive Care was undertaken to assist development of the pathway (Figure 1).

Expert advice was sought from Consultant Neurosurgeons and the NICU Rehabilitation Working Group to ensure safety of initial implementation of rehabilitation.

An online survey utilising a 5 point Likert rating scale explored staff perceptions of the rehabilitation pathway.

Figure 1

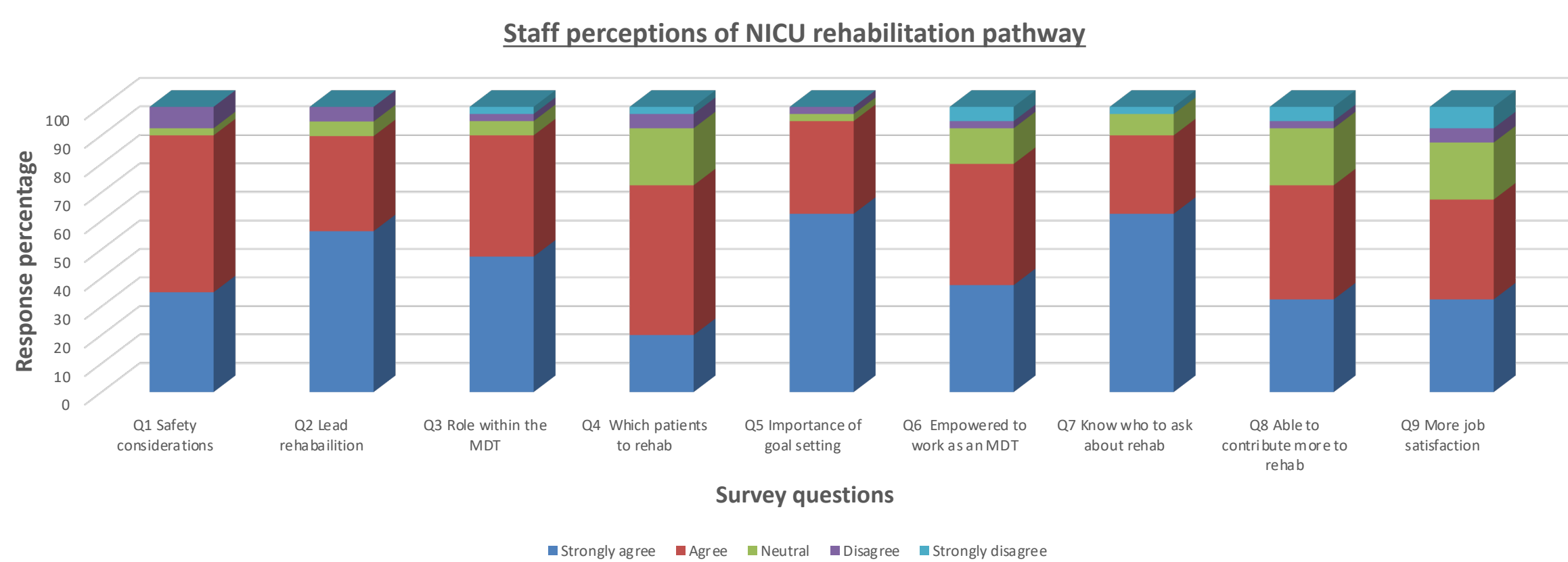


Survey Results

40 staff members completed the online survey. The results (Figure 2) reflect the perceptions of a range of professionals working in NICU. The largest response rate was from the nursing profession.

An average of 83% of staff stated that they either strongly agreed or agreed with the survey statements reflecting positive staff perceptions of the Rehabilitation Pathway.

Figure 2



Conclusions

A positive rehabilitation culture has been associated with successful early rehabilitation practices in the intensive care setting. The results of this survey suggest that staff feel confident in knowing which patients should undergo rehabilitation and understand the importance of MDT working to support rehabilitation.

The pathway will be a useful educational tool to support bedside education in NICU and as a guide for rotational Physiotherapy staff.

References

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 3 Phillips M, Turner-Stokes L, Wade D, Walton K. Rehabilitation in the wake of COVID-19 A phoenix from the ashes. *British Society of Rehabilitation Medicine*. 2020 1-20 Available from https://www.bsrm.org.uk/downloads/covid-19bsrmissue2-11-5-2020-forweb11-5-20.pdf [Accessed 5th August 2021]