

## **Chain of care and rehabilitation after stroke – Discharge to a skilled nursing facility before returning home**

Sofie Fors<sup>1,2</sup>, Anna Bråndal<sup>3</sup>, H el ene Pessah-Rasmussen<sup>1,4</sup>, Ingrid Lindgren<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Neurology, Rehabilitation Medicine, Memory Disorders and Geriatrics, Sk ane University Hospital, Sweden, <sup>2</sup> Department of Health Sciences, Lund University, Sweden, <sup>3</sup> Department of Community Medicine and Rehabilitation, Physiotherapy, Ume  University, Sweden, <sup>4</sup> Department of Clinical Sciences, Lund, Lund University, Sweden

### Background

A stroke can affect various aspects of daily living and rehabilitation is often needed in various forms and settings. A care pathway including a skilled nursing facility is in Sweden common for persons with more extensive care and rehabilitation needs. The aim of this study was to explore how people with stroke, discharged to skilled nursing facilities before returning home, experience the chain of care and rehabilitation.

### Methods

Thirteen stroke survivors discharged from a stroke unit to a skilled nursing facility before returning home, participated. Semi-structured telephone interviews including the post stroke checklist, were conducted 2-5 months after stroke and analyzed with content analysis.

### Results

The analysis resulted in three categories, Organizational processes, critical and complex, Rehabilitation, the right support at the right time and Adaptation to the changed situation, with a total of nine subcategories. The informants perceived low participation in planning and goalsetting and limited information. Support from healthcare was important to proceed with improvements although the amount of supported training varied. Problems were described but also personal factors like inventiveness that facilitated managing the problems in everyday life. Many informants reflected on how far recovery would take them.

### Conclusion

To our knowledge, this is the first Swedish study exploring experiences of the chain of care with discharge to a skilled nursing facility before returning home. Support and rehabilitation as well as individuals' needs varied, throughout the chain of care. Repeated information, as well as assistance in setting goals, is warranted, to enable people to participate in their rehabilitation. Tailored care and rehabilitation throughout the chain of care should be provided, followed up at home and coordinated for smooth transitions between organizations.