

## Understanding the Roles and Responsibilities of Stroke Navigators

**System Navigator (Community):** Navigators are trained, culturally sensitive and committed individuals who provide holistic case management support and guidance to persons with stroke and their support networks (families, friends, care partners) whenever needed along the stroke recovery experience. Their role is to help improve quality of life by easing the adjustment to post-stroke life through education and improved access to community services and health care resources.

**System Navigator (Inpatient):** A Stroke System Navigator ensures best practice care for persons with stroke by ensuring access to acute and rehab stroke unit care, facilitating appropriate triage and flow into specific programs and services based upon needs and engaging in collaboration to optimize patient care. A Stroke System Navigator acts as a pivotal role in inpatient stroke care facilitating access, triage and flow while acting as a resource for the interprofessional stroke team, persons with stroke and families. Their focus is on the health care system and they typically have minimal community involvement.

Roles & Responsibilities	Best Practice Alignment	System Navigator (Community) ✗ ✓	System Navigator (Inpatient) ✗ ✓
<b>Required to be a Regulated Health Professional</b>	Sections: 6.3 ii.	✓	✓
<b>Assessment and Referrals (linking person with stroke to services)</b> (e.g. Help with return to work and connect to vocational services, day programs, rehabilitation services, etc.)	Sections 6.5.1 6.5.2 6.5.3 6.5.4	✓	✓

Roles & Responsibilities	Best Practice Alignment	System Navigator (Community) ✗ ✓	System Navigator (Inpatient) ✗ ✓
<b>Complete and file program application forms (on behalf of person with stroke)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for funding, medical, service applications, etc.</li> <li>• for assisted living, long term care, restorative care</li> </ul>	Sections  6.6.1	✓ ✗	✗ ✗
<b>Develop care plans</b>	Sections 5.3	✓	✓*
<b>Coordination of services</b> Introduction, link to the service, complete or facilitate application process	Sections 6.3 6.4	✓	✓
<b>Follow-up after initial intake and post discharge (for active services)</b>	Sections: 6.5.2 i	✓	✗
<b>Long term follow-up</b>	Sections: 6.5.2i	✓	✗
<b>Liaise with health care and community service providers</b>	Sections: 6.4iii (g)	✓	✓
<b>Individual and family support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informational</li> <li>• Transitional Care</li> <li>• Psychosocial</li> </ul>	Sections: 6.1, 6.1.1 6.1.2 6.1.2	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✗

\* System Navigators do not develop care plans but facilitate assessment and triage of persons with stroke ensuring streamlined, rapid and seamless flow to the next phase of their care.

Roles & Responsibilities	Best Practice Alignment	System Navigator (Community) x ✓	System Navigator (Inpatient) x ✓
<b>Accompaniment</b> Accompany persons with stroke to community facilities, medical appointments, housing appointments etc.	N/A	✓	x
<b>Advocacy</b> Be a steward and advocate for persons with stroke in the community – speaking to agencies or facilities about navigator role, needs of persons with stroke and relaying feedback/issues from them	N/A	✓	✓
<b>Education</b> Education on stroke, community services and resources on improving health status/situation for the person with stroke and their family; direct person with stroke and their families to reliable information sources i.e.: Heart and Stroke, NEO Stroke Network, StrokeEngine, OSS, Canadian Best Practice Recommendations for Stroke, etc.	Sections: 6.2 6.3	✓	✓
<b>Coaching patients in self-management</b>	Sections: 6.2.3	✓	x
<b>Discharge Planning</b>	Sections: 6.4	✓	✓
<b>Collecting process/outcome measures</b> Track progress of active caseload and check in with those considered high-risk or those with low motivation and/or limited support systems	Sections: 6.5.2	✓	✓

Roles & Responsibilities	Best Practice Alignment	System Navigator (Community) ✗ ✓	System Navigator (Inpatient) ✗ ✓
<b>Reduction of barriers to access:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stroke unit care, early access to inpatient stroke rehab</li> <li>community services</li> </ul>	Sections: 4.1, 5.1  6.5	  ✗ ✓	  ✓ ✗
<b>Act as a resource for the team:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acts as a central hub of information for each active person with stroke?</li> <li>Acts as a team liaison</li> </ul>	Sections:  6.3	 ✓ ✓	 ✓ ✓
<b>Provides Tools and Resources</b> Provides the tools and resources necessary to empower persons with stroke and their caregivers to participate in the recovery journey	Sections: 5.3 viii (d) 6.2.2	 ✓	 ✗

This table reviews current roles and responsibilities of the above listed positions across Ontario and was partially derived from questionnaires compiled regarding Navigator roles and responsibilities.