

STroke AWareness in Eastern Switzerland – The STRAW-II-survey

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Introduction

Today a wide variety of therapeutic options is available for patients suffering ischemic stroke. With «time» being one of the most relevant factors for successful treatment, knowledge about stroke symptoms and immediate measures in case of an emergency situation is crucial for a good functional outcome and quality of life.

The aim of STRAW-II was to assess knowledge about stroke symptoms and treatment in a rural population of Eastern Switzerland after a nationwide public campaign aiming at improvement of stroke awareness.

Methods

The survey was conducted from April to June 2017 in 12 different local GP offices. The questionnaire consisted of exactly the same 9 questions as in the 2015 survey.

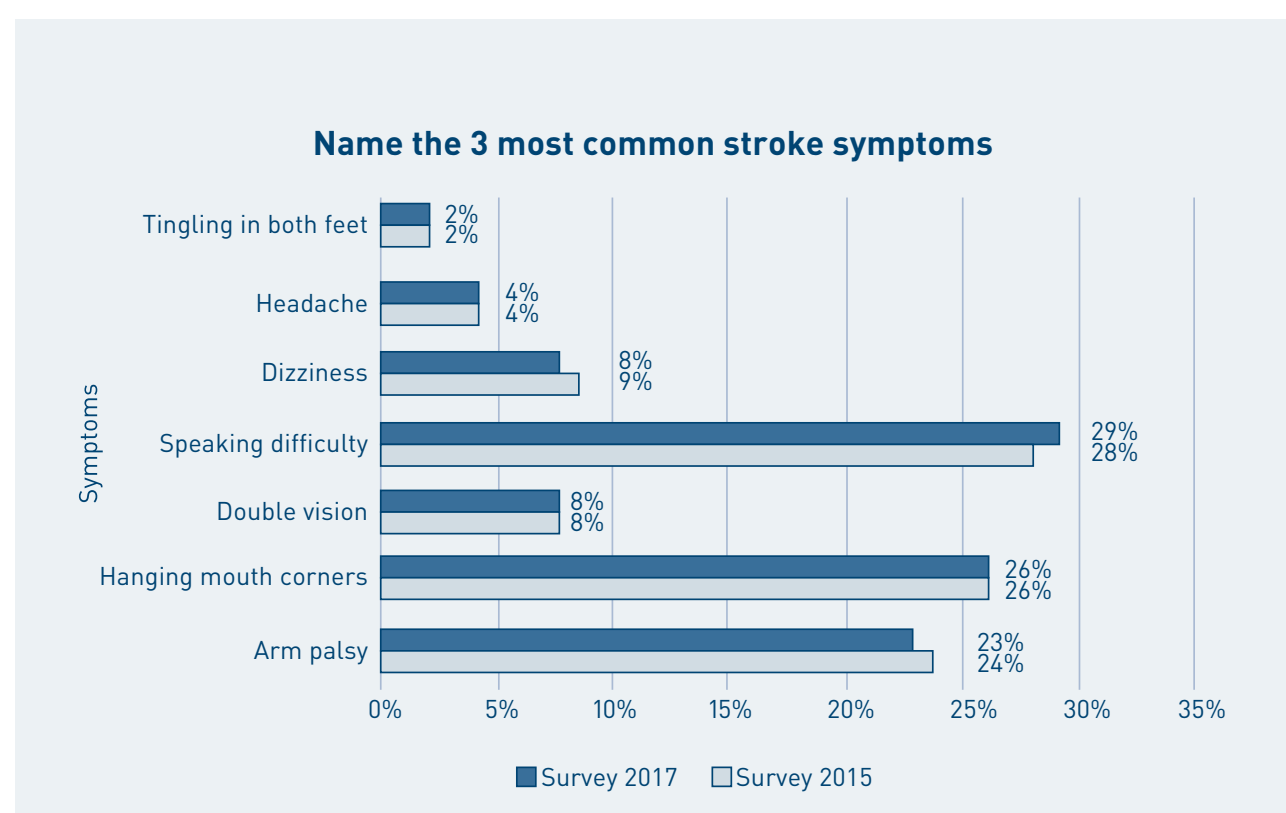
Results

405 people (169 men, 236 women) aged between 18 and 71 years took part in the survey. Distribution of age and educational level were comparable to 2015.

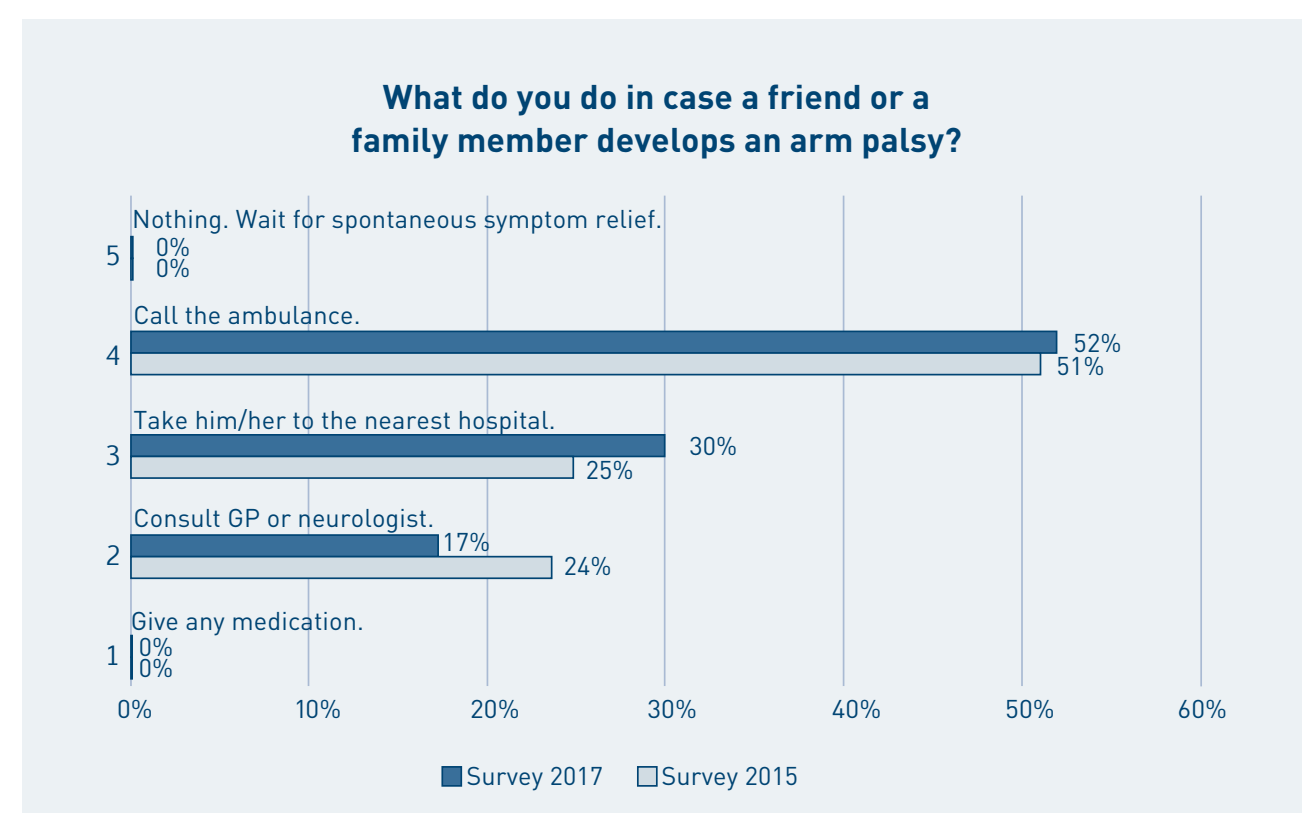
Our results show quite a good knowledge in a randomly chosen population as far as common stroke symptoms are concerned, except for eye symptoms. The intention to call the ambulance is fairly high. On the other hand, knowledge about acute stroke treatment is rather poor. The results differ only slightly from those obtained in 2015.

Conclusion

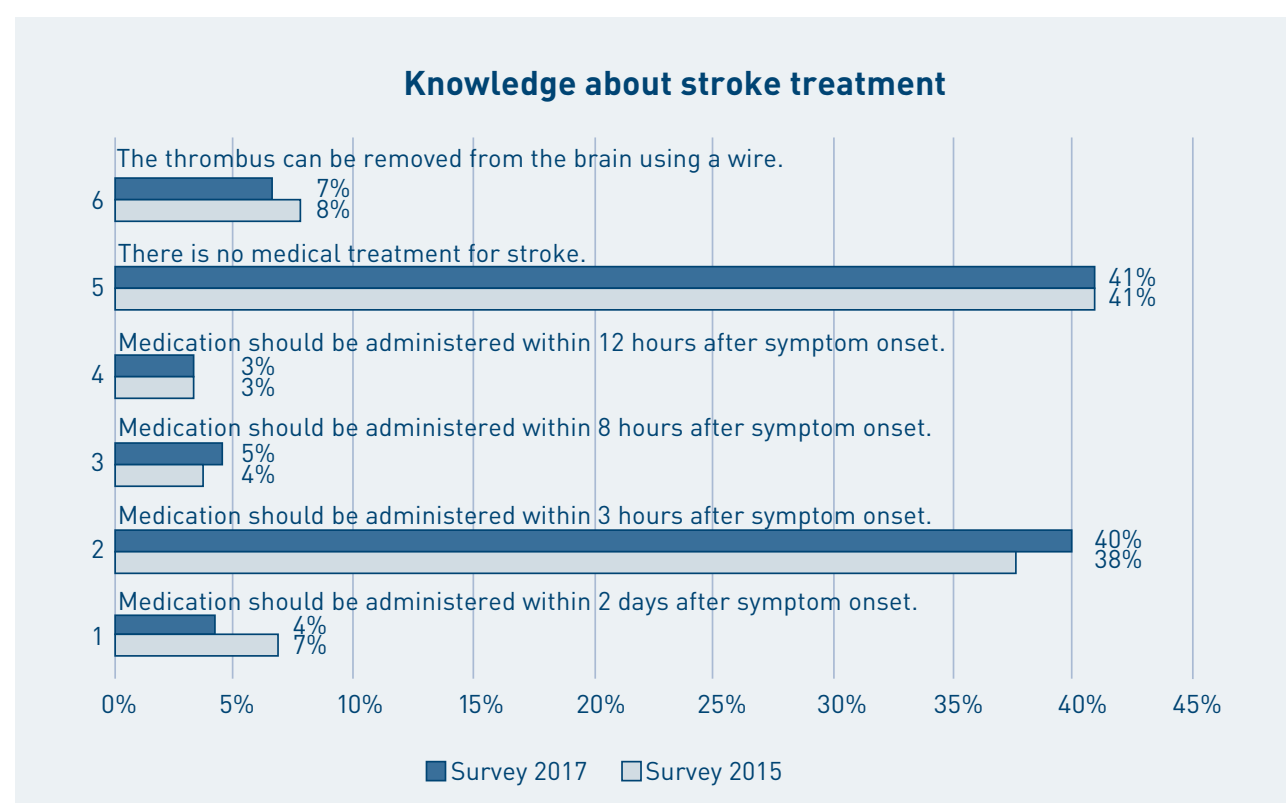
Despite public campaigning to improve people's knowledge about stroke symptoms and the need for a quick referral to a specialized stroke center, the 2017 results show almost no difference when compared to those obtained in 2015. These findings may question the effectiveness of public campaigning.



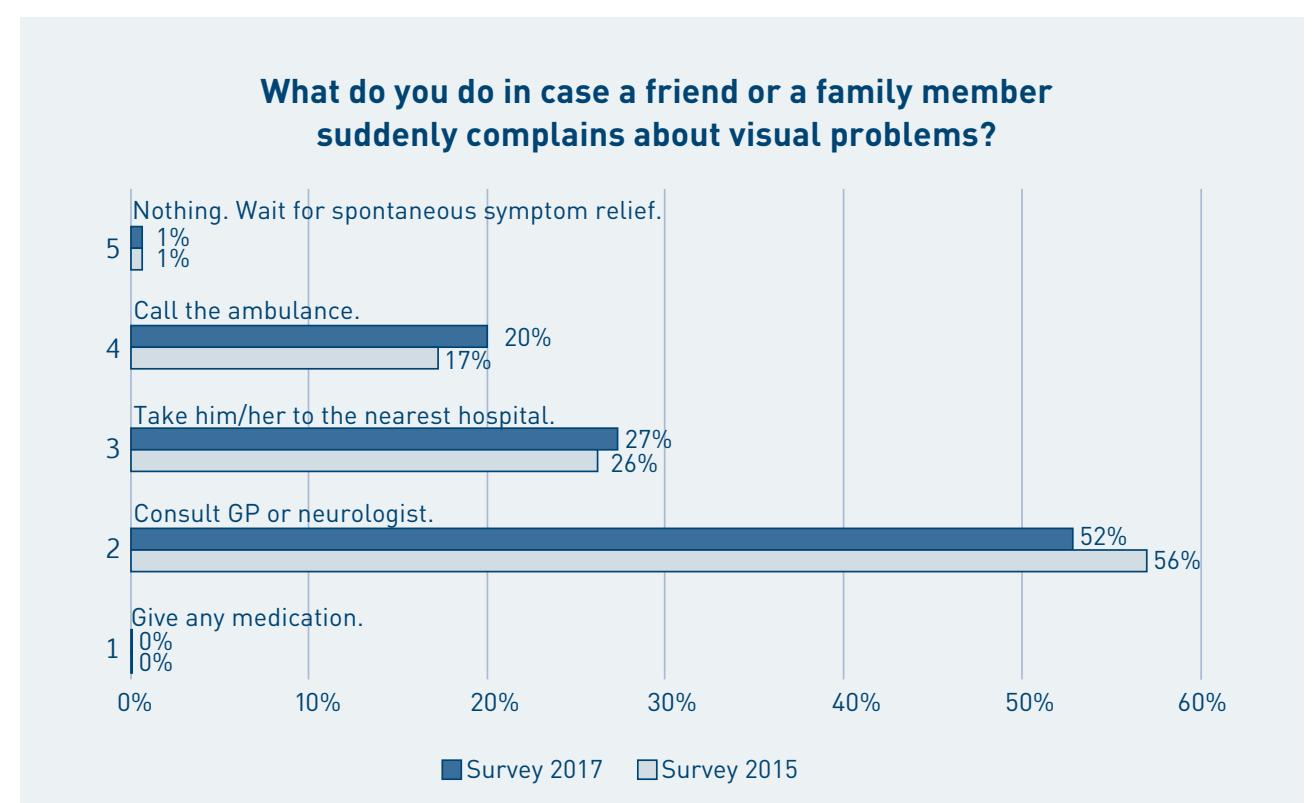
Graph 1: Palsies and speech problems are recognized as the most common stroke symptoms.



Graph 3: A trend towards shortening the time-to-needle duration.



Graph 2: No difference between 2015 and 2017, i.e. before and after public campaign, when it comes to knowledge about stroke treatment.



Graph 4: Eye symptoms are still underestimated or misinterpreted.