HeadPoST - Head Position in Stroke Trial

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Facts

- Stroke is the leading cause of death and disability in China.
- Stroke rates among Chinese is 205 to 584 per 100,000, compared with 170 to 335 per 100,000 among Caucasians.
- Stroke accounts for almost 2% of the total health expenditure in China.
- Stroke is a major contributor to the global burden of disease, for which there are limited treatments.

Background:

- Stroke blocks blood flow to the brain.
- There are few proven treatments to improve outcomes of acute stroke.
- Many of these treatments are expensive and inaccessible to most middle- and low-income country patients.
- A simple way of increasing blood flow to the brain is to tilt the head of patients, so it is at a ‘lying flat’ (0°) head position.

Aims:

- The primary aim of HeadPoST is to compare the effects for patients with acute stroke, of lying flat (0°) head position with a sitting up head position (equal or greater than 30°) applied in the first 24 hours of admission, on the outcomes of disability or death at 90 days.

Methods:

- This is the largest nursing care trial conducted to date, with research involving over 19,000 patients in 140 hospitals in the UK, South America, Australia, China, Taiwan and Mongolia.

Impact:

- HeadPoST has been designed to resolve uncertainty around treatment and provide reliable evidence to support a policy regarding the ideal head position in the acute phase of stroke. This simple head-positioning policy has the potential to be applicable to stroke patients over the world.
- If HeadPoST shows that a simple nursing technique can improve stroke recovery by reducing death and disability, it will have global impact on the lives of people with stroke.

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Contact

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