General Information about ESO Certification

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1. General

1.1. Scope and Terms Stroke Centre & Stroke Unit
This regulation applies for the certification of Stroke Centres and Stroke Units by the European Stroke Organisation.

1.2. The Stroke Unit
A dedicated geographically clearly defined area or ward in a hospital, where stroke patients are admitted and cared for by a multi-professional team (medical, nursing, and therapy staff) who have specialist knowledge, training, and skills in stroke care with well-defined individual tasks, regular interaction with other disciplines, and stroke leadership. This team co-ordinates care through regular (weekly) multidisciplinary meetings.

1.3. The Stroke Centre
A hospital infrastructure and related processes of care that provide the full pathway of stroke unit care. A stroke centre is the co-ordinating body of the entire chain of care. This covers pre-hospital care, ongoing rehabilitation and secondary prevention, and access to neurosurgical and vascular intervention. A stroke unit is the most important component of a stroke centre. An ESO Stroke Centre provides stroke unit services for the population of it’s own catchment area and serves as a referral centre for peripheral hospitals with ESO stroke units in case their patients need services which are not available locally.

1.4. Definition of National Levels of Stroke Organisation

I. no national guidelines, no national strategy
II. national guideline and/or national strategy present
III. national guidelines and/or national strategy, quality control and/or certification process present
IV. national guidelines and/or national strategy, participation in national quality control (e.g. prospective national audit, certification, stroke registries) present

2. Organisation

2.1. Stroke Unit Committee
The ESO Stroke Unit Committee has been mandated by the ESO Executive Committee to establish the ESO Stroke Unit/Centre certification project. The ESO Stroke Unit Committee has been responsible for developing the content of the application and evaluation criteria for certification and for defining the overall process.

2.2. ESO Audit Team
The ESO Stroke Unit Committee is proud to be supported by a number of colleagues in order to evaluate applications for ESO Stroke Unit and ESO Stroke Centre certification.
2.3. ESO Stroke Unit/Centre Certification Head Office
The ESO Head Office can be contacted with questions before, during or after the certification application.

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3. Certification Application

3.1. Certification procedure
The whole certification application will be handled online in one system.

3.2. Information about the application process
Online under „Application“ you can find the Certification Application Forms with all questions and necessary uploads in order to be well prepared. Please note that all documents must be in English, except for Chapter “E” where documents in the local language are allowed.

3.3. Property of documents
All documents are property of the institution who is making the application and will only be used by ESO for certification purposes.

3.4. Confidentiality
The institutions and persons involved in the certification are committed to confidentiality.

4. Audit

4.1. Length of audit
The audit will take a maximum of 6 months to its final decision.

4.2. Auditors
The application will be evaluated by carefully selected ESO auditors from all over Europe. They will be trained and informed about the certification process.

4.3. Audit Team
Each application will reviewed by national auditor and two international auditors (from the Stroke Unit Committee).
4.4. Evaluation
Questions highlighted in yellow are must-criteria’s and they must be fulfilled. If you cannot fulfil any of them, we highly recommend you not to start the online certification process before you have all required documents ready and services available.

The quality criteria’s are evaluated by points.

There are two different principles:

1. The must criteria (highlighted in yellow) have to be either fulfilled (3 points) or are not fulfilled (0 points); some further criteria are fulfilled (3 points) or not (0 points). This is shown as 0/3 in the column “Points”.

2. Many additional criteria’s will be graded as follows:
   - 0 Points = not existing/fulfilled
   - 1 Point = minimally existing
   - 2 Points = existing/fulfilled to at least 50%
   - 3 Points = completely fulfilled

This is shown as 0/1/2/3 in the column “Points” below.

5. Fees

5.1 Certification Fees
The application fee of EUR 1'250.00 for Stroke Units and EUR 2'500.00 for Stroke Centres will be charged by the ESO once you have completed and submitted your application for certification.

6. Certification Process

6.1 Decision
After the auditors have given their report on your application, the ESO Stroke Unit Committee will give their final decision.

6.2 Validity of Certification
ESO Stroke Unit certification and ESO Stroke Centre certification is valid for 5 years. After this time organisations can reapply online with the initial account. The process must be started 6 month before the previous certificate expires.

7. Remedy

7.1 Appeal
An appeal can be directed to the ESO Certification Head Office within 30 days after an unsuccessful certification application by email. The Head Office will then coordinate everything with the ESO Stroke Unit Committee.