

Living with stroke – 10 years after the incident

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Introduction and purpose: From 1997 to 1999 a clinic-based sample of 82 hospitalised stroke patients were executed. The participants underwent four studies after their stroke incident*. In August - December 2009, ten of the subjects was still alive and gave their consent to a new interview.

The main purpose of this study is to describe factors that promote subjective well-being and survival.

Material and methods: The subjects and three spouses underwent in-depth interviews in their homes. They were asked to describe factors accounting for subjective well-being and survival after the stroke.

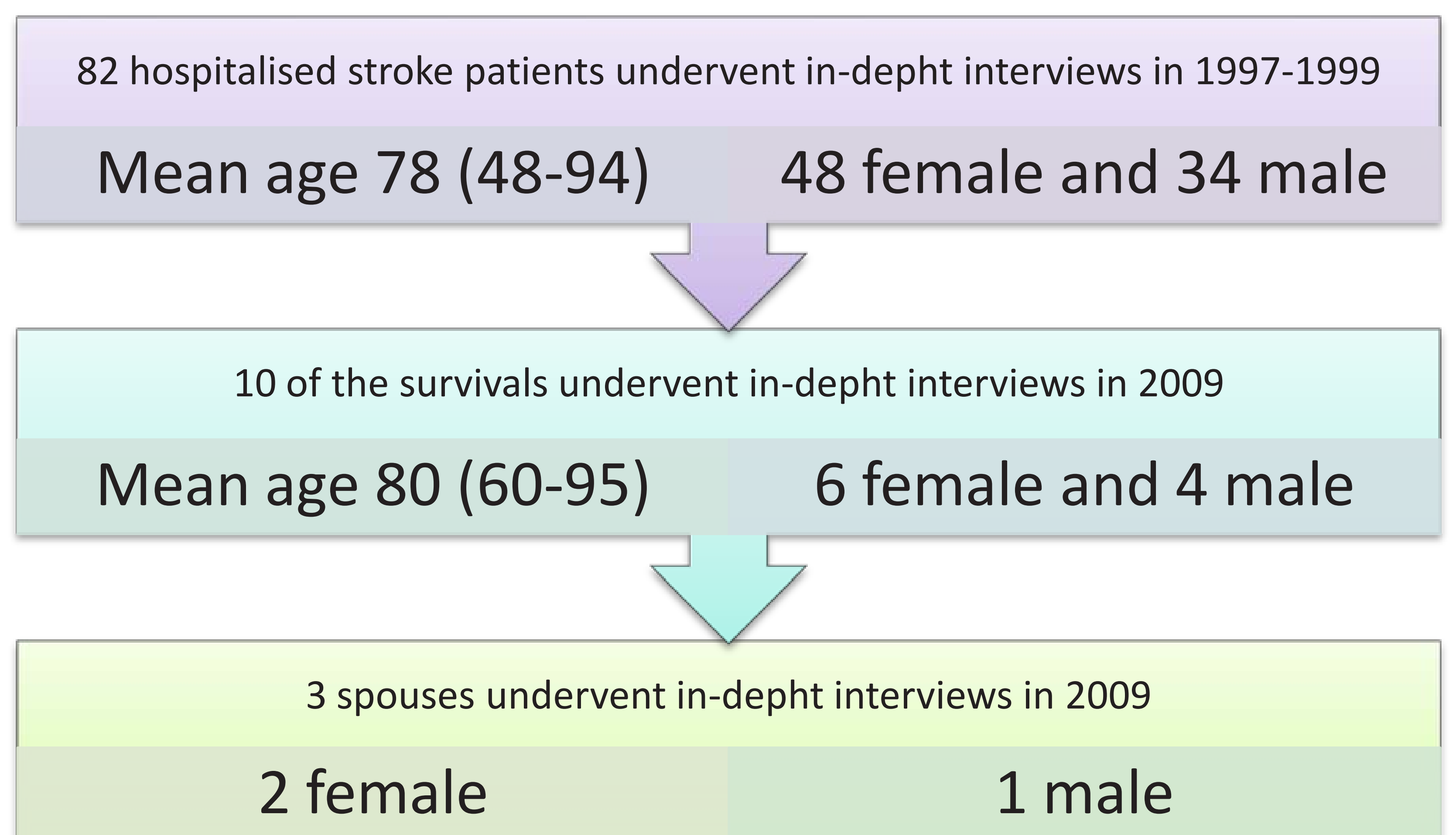
Results: Still, 10 years after the stroke incident, several of the subjects complained about unworthy conditions, e.g. being placed in a corridor and few opportunities for guided training in the hospital. Only one of the survivals described herself as lonely, miserable and depressed even though such negative emotions and little assistance in coping with non-physical problems were frequently reported by discharge*.

Only a few of the survivals had received any home-care nursing or health assistance, but still they were satisfied with their rehabilitation outcome. One subject reported discontent with social services.

Self-esteem, will-power, hobbies, "not giving up easily" and family were described as the most important factors for subjective well-being. Having a family was the most important factor for survival.

Conclusion: Synergy with significant others seems to be the most important factor for quality of life and survival after stroke.

Keywords: Stroke, living with stroke, subjective well-being, survival.



* Birgit Brunborg and Torgeir Bruun Wyller (2007) Coping with stressful events during the first six months after stroke. Norsk Tidsskrift for Sykepleieforskning 9 (1): 16-28.

*Birgit Brunborg (2009) Stressful Situations the First Six Months after a Stroke. Illness, Crisis & Loss 17 (1): 39-50.