



Tasmanian Pre-budget Submission

2025–26

Tasmanian StrokeSafe Speaker, and survivor of stroke, John Stevens.



Stroke Foundation is the voice of stroke in Australia, working to prevent stroke, save lives and enhance recovery

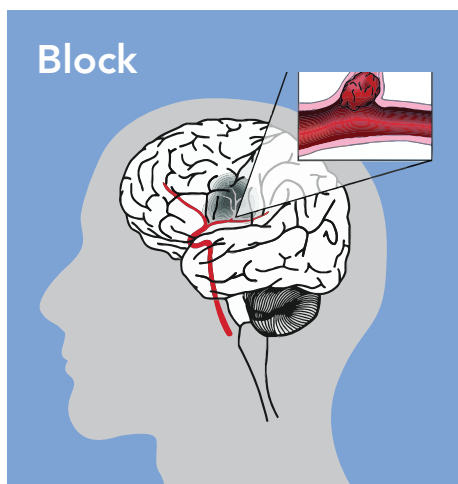
We partner with survivors of stroke, carers, health professionals, government and the community to reduce the incidence and impact of stroke for all Australians.

Stroke Foundation is the leading national organisation in Australia focused on stroke prevention, treatment and recovery.

For more than 25 years, we have championed breakthrough stroke research, successfully advocated for access to innovative treatments, increased public awareness in stroke prevention and recognition, and supported thousands of health professionals to deliver best-practice care.

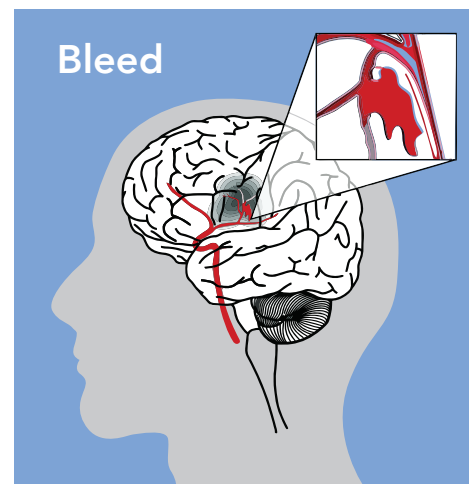
Every achievement takes a united team of stroke champions all working together with a single voice and purpose: survivors of stroke with their families and carers, health professionals, researchers, volunteers, advocacy bodies, generous donors, corporate Australia, government and philanthropic partners.

What is a stroke?



Ischaemic stroke

(Blood clot or plaque blocks artery)



Haemorrhagic stroke

(Artery breaks or bursts)

Stroke can strike **anyone**, at **any time**.

A stroke happens when blood supply to the brain is interrupted.

When this happens, brain cells do not get enough oxygen or nutrients and they immediately begin to die.

Stroke is always a medical emergency.

Importantly, we know that more than **80 percent of strokes can be prevented**.



The state of stroke in Tasmania – why we have to act now

In 2023, there were 1,168 stroke events in Tasmania,¹ and many of those survivors of stroke will be living with an ongoing disability. There are more than 11,000 survivors of stroke living in Tasmania¹ – and their number is growing.

One of the key modifiable risk factors for stroke is high blood pressure. Importantly, 117,200 Tasmanians are living with high blood pressure,¹ and many don't know it. In addition, 47,600 Tasmanians are daily smokers and 56,200 have high cholesterol¹ – putting them at an increased risk of stroke.

Why is this happening?

Our population is growing and ageing. We are living longer, more sedentary lives. Our physical and social environments are influencing lifestyle choices and behaviours, putting us at an increased risk of stroke, and at a younger age.

At the same time, there is a clear lack of community knowledge and awareness about the common stroke risk factors, the typical signs of stroke when it happens, and the fact that stroke is a medical emergency and calling an ambulance immediately at the first sign of stroke is critical.

Our health system is also struggling to meet the needs of patients with stroke. Improvements have been made in the delivery of acute stroke treatment and care; however, time-critical treatment and best-practice care is not available to all Tasmanian patients. In addition, we know that for many survivors of stroke, their rehabilitation needs are not assessed and those who need rehabilitation do not always receive it. This in turn increases the impact on informal carers and social care services.

It doesn't have to be this way

Stroke can often be prevented and it can be treated. We are making progress, but there is much more to be done.

We are taking action, but we can't do this alone. It takes everyone's support, from government right through to individuals, to prevent stroke, save lives and enhance recovery from stroke for all Tasmanian residents.

We have an opportunity to act, to reduce the impact of stroke on survivors, their families and carers, the community, and the healthcare system. We can and must act for the health and wellbeing of future generations.

We are proud to be partnering with the State Government in taking action to address the impact of stroke in Tasmania. Stroke Foundation strongly supports the State Government's vision that all Tasmanians are supported by a world class, innovative and integrated health system. As the voice of stroke in Australia, we look forward to continuing to work with the Tasmanian Government to achieve the key objectives of the Long-Term Plan for Healthcare in Tasmania 2040, ensuring we deliver on stroke prevention, treatment and support for all Tasmanians.

The hard facts



Over **1,100** stroke events in TAS in 2023¹



There are more than **11,000 survivors of stroke** living in TAS¹



Stroke can happen at **any age**. **1 in 4** first ever strokes occur in people **under 65 years**¹



More than **80 percent of strokes** can be prevented²

Lifetime costs associated with strokes that occurred in 2023 exceed

\$385 million

(almost \$342,000 per person)

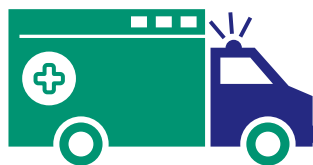


Costs in the first year after stroke were over

\$194 million

(almost \$172,000 per person)

\$141 million in healthcare costs for strokes occurring in 2023 including



\$10 million

in road ambulance costs



\$110 million

in hospital costs



Summary of Stroke Foundation proposals

To meet the urgent needs of survivors of stroke, their families and carers, Stroke Foundation is seeking funding of \$2.56 million over four years.

1. Stroke Information and Support Services

\$920,000 (\$230,000 per year over four years).

Continue the F.A.S.T. (Face, Arms, Speech, Time) Community Education Program, and implement a F.A.S.T. Multimedia Campaign

Ensure more Tasmanians know how to recognise the signs of stroke and how vital it is to call triple zero (000) immediately, regardless of where they live.

2. Community Healthcare Initiatives

\$1.4 million (\$350,000 per year over four years).

Continue the *StrokeLink* Program to provide a better plan for stroke treatment and care

Ensure hospitals and health professionals across Tasmania are supported to strengthen their capabilities in the delivery of evidence-based stroke treatment and care. This will include support for progress towards the National Stroke Targets and undertaking stroke unit certification.

Continue the *StrokeLine* Navigator Service to help Tasmanians manage their stroke recovery

Ensure more Tasmanian survivors of stroke are contacted following their discharge from hospital, connected to the appropriate services and supports, and have the information they need, ensuring they have a smooth transition from hospital into the community and avoid unnecessary hospital readmission.

Continue the *Living Well After Stroke* Program to reduce the risk of recurrent stroke through effective secondary prevention

Ensure more Tasmanian survivors of stroke are provided with a clear pathway to health behaviour change and lifestyle risk management after discharge from hospital, reducing their risk of subsequent stroke.

3. National Stroke Week Peer Connection Grants

\$240,000 (\$60,000 per year over four years).

Ensure more Tasmanian survivors of stroke, and their family members and carers, are able to enjoy the significant benefits of peer support, and participate in the delivery of events during National Stroke Week that improve community awareness of stroke.



1: Stroke Information and Support Services

Investment: \$920,000 (\$230,000 per year over four years).

Continued investment in the F.A.S.T. Community Education Program and new investment in a F.A.S.T. Multimedia Campaign will deliver:

- › a community-led education program focused on raising awareness of the signs of stroke in hotspot areas and among priority groups
- › F.A.S.T. advertisements across high reach, high impact broadcast channels, outdoor or transit media, and digital platforms such as Google Ads
- › a mainstream media campaign emphasising the F.A.S.T. message through stories told by survivors of stroke
- › an increase in the awareness of at least one F.A.S.T. sign of stroke in Tasmania from 73 percent to 80 percent by 2027.

Stroke is a medical emergency. Faster diagnosis and treatment saves lives and results in improved quality of life. When someone suffers a stroke, every minute counts. F.A.S.T. access to treatment means a greater chance of recovery and decreased costs for our health system.

The F.A.S.T. message highlights the three most common ways to recognise a stroke (Face, Arms and Speech), and reminds us that Time is critical when seeking treatment. Stroke Foundation is the one organisation in Australia dedicated to sharing this message widely, and encouraging all Australians to learn it and share it with others.

Importantly, we know that major gains in population awareness of the F.A.S.T. message can be made over time. F.A.S.T. advertising campaigns are proven to increase awareness of the signs of stroke, and calls to emergency services, nationally³ and internationally,^{4,5} and support well established scientific findings that significant and continuous exposure to public health messages over several years leads to gradual improvement in population awareness and knowledge.

Learn the F.A.S.T. signs of STROKE



FACE
drooped?



ARM
can't be raised?



SPEECH
slurred or confused?



TIME
is critical! Call 000.

If you see any of these signs
Act FAST call 000 (triple zero)



Stroke Foundation is proud to be partnering with the Tasmanian Government to deliver the **F.A.S.T. (Face, Arms, Speech, and Time) Community Education Program**. This program recruits, trains, and provides support to local volunteers to raise awareness in the community about stroke, including the signs of stroke, and chronic disease prevention, through the **delivery of StrokeSafe presentations**. *StrokeSafe* speakers are embedded in their local and cultural communities, and many have a lived experience of stroke. Through the compelling voice of those impacted by stroke, we increase knowledge and help to ensure patients get to hospital in the critical time window for life-saving stroke treatment.

In addition to delivering *StrokeSafe* presentations, **volunteers set up displays and activities at community events and in health settings, distribute F.A.S.T. resources, and gain local workplace support**, which facilitates improved awareness about the signs of stroke and dispatches of ambulances.

Key achievements of the program in 2023-24

Over the last 12 months, the program has delivered:

- **12 *StrokeSafe* speakers.**
- **58 *StrokeSafe* presentations**, reaching **1,122 people**, including:
 - 26 presentations (45 percent) in regional areas
 - 2 presentations (3 percent) to Aboriginal community groups
 - 22 presentations (38 percent) in lower socio-economic areas (SEIFA 1-4).

- ***StrokeSafe* displays and activities at 8 community events**, engaging with **210 people**.
- **8,202 F.A.S.T. resources** (bookmarks, posters, wallet cards, magnets, polo shorts, and merchandise [e.g. cups, socks etc]) distributed across the state.
- Partnerships with:
 - Red Cross
 - Meals on Wheels
 - Central Highlands meal delivery program
 - MAX Solutions and TAFE
 - Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania.
- **12 news stories featuring the F.A.S.T. message**, published or broadcast by Tasmanian media outlets, which included syndications from national stories.

The results of the **2023 Stroke Foundation F.A.S.T. Signs and Stroke Awareness Survey** showed that Tasmania had the highest unprompted awareness of the signs of stroke, compared with all other states and territories, with **38 percent of Tasmanians able to recognise two signs of stroke unprompted**, compared with **24 percent** nationally.⁶

The F.A.S.T. Community Education Program is delivering results; however, there is still more to be done to increase awareness of the signs of stroke, so more Tasmanians are able to receive life-saving treatment sooner.

Importantly, only **41 percent** of Tasmanian stroke patients arrive at hospital within the 4.5 hour window for clot-dissolving treatment (thrombolysis).⁷

Continued and expanded investment in the program

Continued and expanded investment in the program will enable the current pool of volunteers to be increased and enable partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to self-determine the delivery of stroke education in their communities. It will also enable a **F.A.S.T. Multimedia Campaign** to be rolled out across the state, which will support and strengthen the work of the F.A.S.T. Community Education Program, and ensure even more Tasmanians understand how to recognise a stroke when it occurs, and what to do. The F.A.S.T. Multimedia Campaign will include:

- › *An integrated, multi-channel advertising campaign* to promote the F.A.S.T. message in Tasmania. This may include high reach, high impact broadcast channels, Outdoor (OOH) or transit media, supported by digital advertising using a screens-based approach such as digital video on YouTube or catch-up TV.
- › *A mainstream media campaign* in metropolitan news outlets emphasising the F.A.S.T. message through stories told by survivors of stroke. News stories will include a call to action for all residents and workplaces to get behind the campaign, as well as announcements about F.A.S.T. awareness levels.

We are calling on the Tasmanian Government to continue and expand its investment in Stroke Foundation's successful F.A.S.T. Community Education Program, and invest in a F.A.S.T. Multimedia Campaign. This will increase awareness of what stroke is, how to reduce stroke risk, how to recognise the F.A.S.T. signs of stroke, and the importance of calling triple zero (000) immediately. In addition, this will support Tasmanian hospitals and clinicians in their efforts to progress towards the 30/60/90 National Stroke Targets, a group of metrics designed to drive quality improvement in the areas of stroke unit access and time-critical stroke treatments.

Stroke Foundation StrokeSafe Speaker John Stevens, delivering F.A.S.T. resources to households in Primrose Sands.



Case study 1: Eddie's story

Blackmans Bay resident Eddie Jager was 49 when he suffered a stroke.

He was at home when he began to experience the telltale F.A.S.T. (Face, Arms, Speech and Time) signs of stroke.

"I went to stand up and felt light-headed. I noticed I couldn't raise my left arm. I tried to get up again, but my legs collapsed from underneath me," said Eddie.

Thankfully, Eddie's wife Caroline was at home at the time. She had participated in a first aid course at work only the day before, where she had learnt about the signs of stroke. She knew what to do, kept Eddie calm, and called triple zero (000).

"I have no doubt she saved my life, if not my life, she was able to greatly improve my quality of life by getting me the help I needed quickly," said Eddie.

"I didn't realise younger people had strokes, but the reality is, they can happen to anyone, at any time," said Eddie.

Eddie says he's fighting stroke by facing challenges he once thought impossible.

"Being back at work was a big achievement of mine. It's been really great to have some independence."

"My next goal is to make it to the top of Mount Wellington. That would be the pinnacle of my recovery journey."



Survivor of stroke, Eddie.



2: Community Healthcare Initiatives

Investment: \$1.4 million (\$350,000 per year over four years).

Continued investment in the *StrokeLink* Program will ensure:

- more Tasmanian clinicians are able to access specialist educational resources, including Stroke Foundation's National Webinar Series
- more Tasmanian clinicians are aware of, and are able to access reliable, up-to-date clinical recommendations for stroke treatment and care
- Tasmanian hospitals and clinicians are supported in their efforts to progress towards the 30/60/90 National Stroke Targets and achieving stroke unit certification.

Improving the quality of stroke treatment provided in Tasmanian hospitals is critical to reducing the impact of stroke in our state.

State Government investment in Stroke Foundation's *StrokeLink* Program is enabling hospitals and health professionals across Tasmania to be supported, strengthening their capabilities in the delivery of evidence-based stroke treatment and care, through a variety of activities, including:

- the *provision of specialist educational resources*, such as Stroke Foundation's National Webinar Series, which provides web-based education on a range of topics for health professionals, including those in regional and remote areas, working in stroke treatment and care
- the *dissemination of research*, including updates to Stroke Foundation's world-leading *Living Guidelines for Stroke Management*, which are critical to ensuring Tasmanians receive the most up-to-date stroke treatment and care
- *networking and peer to peer interaction*, where health professionals are able to meet, discuss quality improvement ideas, and share resources.

Key achievements of the program in 2023-24

Over the last 12 months, there have been:

- **20 webinars** covering a wide range of topics, delivered as part of the Stroke Foundation National Webinar Series, **attended by a total of 107 Tasmanian clinicians**
- **two statewide educational forums** held for health professionals working in stroke treatment and care, which provided a platform for networking, collaboration, and sharing of ideas:
 - an **online Stroke Rehabilitation Forum** attended by 62 participants
 - a **face-to-face Stroke Acute Forum** attended by 43 participants
 - more than 95 percent of those who attended the face to face Stroke Acute Forum, agreed or strongly agreed that the forum increased their knowledge of best-practice acute stroke assessment and treatment, and stated that they intended to use the information at the forum to improve their clinical practice

- › a variety of clinical engagement activities, including **site visits, educational sessions, and regular meetings**, to build relationships with and between clinicians working in hospitals with stroke services across Tasmania.

Continued and expanded investment in the program

Access to **stroke unit care**, characterised by provision of care in one location by a multidisciplinary team including medical, nursing and allied health professionals with expertise in stroke, is **proven to make the biggest difference to patient outcomes following stroke, both in hospital and after.**^{8, 9} Importantly, **only 46 percent of Tasmanian stroke patients are able to access stroke unit care**, which is well below the national average.⁷ More work needs to be done to improve stroke unit access in Tasmania.

The Australian Stroke Coalition (ASC), co-chaired by Stroke Foundation and the Australian and New Zealand Stroke Organisation, has developed a voluntary system for certification of stroke units in Australian hospitals. The aim of the ASC Stroke Unit Certification Program is to certify all centres providing stroke care in Australia by 2030.

Therefore, in addition to ensuring health professionals in Tasmania are able to access ongoing professional development to equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to deliver best-practice stroke treatment and care, **continued investment in the StrokeLink Program** will ensure Tasmanian hospitals and clinicians are supported in their efforts to progress towards achievement of stroke unit certification and the 30/60/90 National Stroke Targets.

This will be critical to improving Australia's substandard stroke unit admission rates and reperfusion treatment speed, and will help ensure we are on par with other comparable high income countries.

In addition, State Government investment is needed so that the Royal Hobart Hospital has the infrastructure (including up-to-date perfusion scanning software), medical leadership, and critical 24/7 treatment capabilities, to ensure our state has a self-sufficient, comprehensive stroke service capable of treating all Tasmanian stroke patients, avoiding costly transport of patients interstate where possible.

We are calling on the Tasmanian Government to continue its investment in the *StrokeLink* Program. This will help to close the gap between guidelines and practice, and empower Tasmanian clinicians to deliver evidence-based, best-practice stroke treatment and care, including by facilitating progress towards stroke unit certification and achievement of the 30/60/90 National Stroke Targets. Further to this, additional State Government resourcing of hospital infrastructure, including workforce, is needed to ensure all Tasmanian stroke patients, regardless of where they live, are able access the treatment and care they need.



Continued investment in the *StrokeLine* Navigator Service will ensure:

- › more Tasmanians who are impacted by stroke are able to access the information and support they need in a timely manner, including for issues such as mental ill health
- › improved coordination of care for Tasmanian survivors of stroke
- › more Tasmanian survivors of stroke receive the information they need to help prevent secondary stroke.

Navigating the complex health system after leaving hospital is often one of the greatest barriers to success that Tasmanian survivors of stroke face in their recovery journey.

In Tasmania, on discharge from hospital, 46 percent of stroke patients do not receive education about behaviour change for modifiable risk factors, and 67 percent do not receive a care plan.⁷ This leaves many Tasmanians unable to achieve their best possible recovery, manage their health, and achieve better outcomes after stroke.

Tasmanian Government investment in Stroke Foundation's *StrokeLine* Navigator Service is ensuring Tasmanian survivors of stroke are contacted following their discharge from hospital and provided with the appropriate level of information and support, so that **fewer of them fall through the cracks**. This includes ensuring survivors have access to Stroke Foundation's *My Stroke Journey*, a resource delivered by our hospital partners in the first few days after a person's stroke, which is used throughout their admission in education and care planning. This free resource also supports the transition from hospital to the community, and includes information on preparing for discharge and available supports and services.

Specifically, the service is:

- › facilitating care coordination, including referrals to other service providers and outpatient appointments

- › improving survivor knowledge, self-efficacy, health literacy and social connection
- › reducing the burden on family members and carers and improving their quality of life and wellbeing.

The Navigators who deliver the service day-to-day are a mix of allied health professionals such as occupational therapists, social workers, physiotherapists, and speech pathologists, all of whom understand stroke and the stroke support service network, and are therefore able to connect survivors with the supports they need.

While some participants may only require one consultation with the service, others may require one or more follow-up consultations, depending on the complexity of their needs.

Over the last 12 months:

- › significant efforts have been made by the Navigator team to **promote the service**, and **educate hospitals about the purpose of the service**, particularly among low referring hospitals, and this has resulted in an increase in the number of referrals to the service
- › a total of **269 referrals** to the service have been made from **7 hospitals**, and of these, 167 (62 percent) were completed successfully

- › when clients of the service were asked, **82 percent** reported that they had **benefitted from the service**
- › clients who received the service were provided with health education, linked in with community services, given *My Stroke Journey* and additional resources, informed about the *StrokeLine* service, and redirected back to the referring hospital when needed.

Continued investment in the *StrokeLine Navigator Service* will facilitate improved continuity of care, and ensure Tasmanian survivors of stroke are connected to the appropriate services and supports, and have the information they need to achieve their best possible recovery and avoid hospital readmission due to complications or recurrent stroke. This is particularly important for vulnerable survivors, and those with poor outcomes following their stroke.

We are calling on the Tasmanian Government to continue to invest in the *StrokeLine Navigator Service*, which will ensure more Tasmanians, regardless of where they live, are supported to manage their stroke recovery, achieve better outcomes, return to work (where possible), and resume social and community participation. This will have benefits for survivors of stroke, their families and carers, and the Tasmanian community, as well as our state's health system and economy.



*StrokeLine health professional,
Katherine Yong.*

Case study 2: Bertha's story

Bertha was 72 when she suffered a stroke.

After spending 2 weeks in inpatient rehabilitation following her discharge from hospital, she returned home, and was contacted by Stroke Foundation's *StrokeLine* Navigator Service.

During the initial phone call, Bertha told the Navigator health professional that she was finding it incredibly difficult to find services to support her with the ongoing impact of her stroke now that she was home. In particular, she needed assistance accessing occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and home help services, information and resources on vision loss, as well as some support to be able to go for a walk.

The Navigator health professional listened to Bertha's concerns, and provided her with information about stroke and stroke risk factors, as well as services to contact for support. Bertha was also encouraged to follow up with services she was still waiting to hear from.

Specifically, the Navigator health professional informed her that she could access a Mental Health Care plan through her GP if she felt she needed mental health support, and also encouraged her to contact Centrelink to discuss financial support that she may be eligible for due to the ongoing impact of her stroke.

Once the initial call was complete, the Navigator health professional looked into further supports and services that might be available to Bertha in her local area.

The *StrokeLine* Navigator Service contacted Bertha again the following week, and she confirmed that she had success in accessing some of the resources and supports she required.

The Navigator health professional then provided Bertha with further resources and information via email, which included general information on stroke, resources to support her to manage her vision loss including the Stroke Foundation 'Vision Loss After Stroke' fact sheet and information on Guide Dogs Australia, as well as information on occupational therapy and physiotherapy services available in her local area.



Survivor of stroke, Bertha.

Continued investment in the *Living Well After Stroke Program* will ensure:

- › more Tasmanian survivors of stroke have a clear pathway to health behaviour change and lifestyle risk management after discharge from hospital
- › more Tasmanian survivors of stroke are equipped with transferrable skills and strategies they can apply to improve their lifestyle
- › there are fewer preventable secondary strokes in Tasmania.

Every year, more than 1,100 Tasmanians experience a stroke event, and there are more than 11,000 survivors of stroke living in our community.¹ Importantly, four in 10 survivors of stroke will go on to have another stroke,¹⁰ and secondary stroke is more likely to be fatal or cause major disability.¹¹

More than 80 percent of strokes can be prevented,² and this provides a unique and urgent opportunity to support health behaviour change and prevent secondary stroke from occurring.

People are at higher risk of stroke after their first stroke, and the *Living Guidelines for Stroke Management* state that stroke patients should be assessed and informed of their risk factors for recurrent stroke and educated about strategies to reduce their risk.¹²

Despite this, once in the community, many survivors of stroke find appropriate, evidence-informed health behaviour change interventions unavailable or difficult to access.

There is a clear need for services that address behaviour modification for the reduction of stroke risk factors, to reduce further stroke.

As such, **Stroke Foundation is proud to be partnering with the Tasmanian Government to deliver the *Living Well After Stroke Program* in Tasmania.** This person-centred, 8-week program provides Tasmanian survivors

of stroke who have an identified need to change health behaviours to reduce their risk of future stroke, with a clear pathway for effective, evidence-based education and intervention to support this health behaviour change. This is done through a Health Action Process Approach (HAPA), that has been shown to be an effective model for people with chronic illness and disability.¹³

“

I gained access to this program at a time when I was scared, lost, felt unsupported. From the first session the above feelings were reversed. I felt heard, understood and was given access to other supportive programs. I have been energised, am taking more responsibility for my health, feel empowered to continue with my goal and am excited to begin a new goal, adding better health and enjoyment to my life. I am extremely grateful for my mentor, Beth, for her compassionate manner, knowledge, skill in implementing the program and understanding. Thank you.

”

Living Well After Stroke participant



Continued funding of Stroke Foundation's *Living Well After Stroke Program* will ensure more Tasmanian survivors of stroke are supported to build motivation, set goals, plan, and implement and track health behaviour change for a variety of health behaviours related to reducing risk of stroke recurrence, including physical activity, healthy eating, smoking cessation, and consuming alcohol within safe limits.

“

To have a facilitator on the end of the line, gives me the incentive to get out and walk. To be in touch with someone who understands has been beneficial. To have the support and positiveness. I can now independently go for a walk – I've done 17 walks on my own in the last month.

”

Living Well After Stroke participant

We are calling on the Tasmanian Government to continue its investment in Stroke Foundation's *Living Well After Stroke Program*. This will provide more Tasmanian survivors of stroke with a clear pathway to health behaviour change and lifestyle risk management after discharge from hospital. Continued funding will enable the program to equip survivors with a toolkit of transferrable behaviour change skills and strategies to support long-term self-management and reduce their risk of future stroke. This will reduce the impact of stroke in the Tasmanian community and ensure a more sustainable health system.



3: National Stroke Week Peer Connection Grants

Investment: \$240,000 (\$60,000 per year over four years).

Investment in National Stroke Week Peer Connection Grants in Tasmania will ensure:

- more Tasmanian survivors of stroke, and their family members and carers, are able to enjoy the many benefits of peer support
- more survivors, and their family members and carers are able to connect with and learn from others in a similar situation, share experiences, and gain confidence in their journey post-stroke
- improved community awareness of what stroke is, how to reduce stroke risk, how to recognise the F.A.S.T. signs of stroke, and the importance of calling triple zero (000) immediately.

A positive relationship has been demonstrated between perceived social support and the health-related quality of life of survivors of stroke,¹⁴ and there is growing evidence that peer-led interventions may be an effective way of helping survivors of stroke cope with the devastating consequences stroke.^{15, 16}

Peer support groups for survivors of stroke and carers can offer therapeutic benefits including empowerment and inspiration, a sense of belonging, learning new ways to cope, feeling helpful, feeling secure, being able to express feelings, and a sense of increased agency and independence.¹⁵

Tasmanian Government investment is needed to ensure the benefits of peer support are available to as many Tasmanian survivors of stroke, and their family members and carers, as possible.

National Stroke Week Peer Connection Grants

Stroke Foundation's National Stroke Week is our annual awareness campaign that **encourages the community to learn the F.A.S.T. (Face, Arms, Speech and Time) signs of stroke** so they can save a life in the event that someone they know experiences a stroke. All funds raised through National Stroke Week help Stroke Foundation continue to promote F.A.S.T. awareness to the community.

National Stroke Week Peer Connection Grants will be established to fund Tasmanian community groups and organisations that currently facilitate social connection and peer support for survivors of stroke, and their family members and carers, to **undertake events during National Stroke Week that promote greater community awareness and understanding of stroke.**

Support groups eligible for these grants will include those representing priority groups (such as Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse communities), that will be able to develop and deliver events that are tailored to address the needs and interests of their communities.



We are calling on the Tasmanian Government to invest in the establishment of National Stroke Week Peer Connection Grants, which will ensure more Tasmanian survivors of stroke, and their family members and carers, are able to enjoy the significant benefits of peer support. These grants will also facilitate greater community awareness of what stroke is, how to reduce stroke risk, how to recognise the F.A.S.T. signs of stroke, and the importance of calling triple zero (000) immediately.

NATIONAL STROKE WEEK
5-11 AUGUST 2024



**KEEP LOOKING
AT YOUR MATE.**

**IT COULD SAVE
THEIR LIFE.**

Know the F.A.S.T. signs of stroke.
FACE. ARMS. SPEECH. TIME.
You could save a life. Call 000.



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**Will you help? We invite you to have a conversation
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