

# ACT Election Platform 2024



Stroke Foundation is an evidence-based, non-partisan national charity that partners with the community to prevent stroke, save lives and enhance recovery. We do this through raising awareness, facilitating research, and supporting survivors of stroke.

While ACT residents have among the highest living standards and longest life expectancy in the world, our population is growing and ageing, and there is an increasing prevalence of chronic conditions, including stroke. Unless further action is taken, it is estimated that by 2050 the number of strokes experienced by Australians will be 72,000 strokes annually.<sup>1</sup>

Stroke Foundation is calling on the next ACT Government to continue to invest in its highly effective, evidence-based programs, to ensure ACT residents know how to reduce their risk of preventable stroke, recognise the F.A.S.T. (Face, Arms, Speech and Time) signs of stroke to reach hospital in time to receive world-class, best-practice stroke treatment and care, and are able to successfully transition from hospital to home and onto recovery to live the best possible life after stroke.

## For the ACT in 2023



**660**  
stroke events



**6,392**  
residents living  
with stroke



**144 per 100,000**  
residents experienced  
a stroke (176 per 100,000  
in Australia)

Prevent stroke. Save lives. Enhance recovery

## The estimated stroke risk in the ACT



**240,104**

Overweight and obese



**80,800**

High blood pressure



**43,800**

No physical activity



**38,500**

Daily smoking

## Current work in the ACT

We are proud to be partnering with the ACT Government in taking action to address the territory's stroke burden. A strong foundation has been established with the delivery of the successful *F.A.S.T. Community Education* and *StrokeLine Navigator* programs, as well as participation in the Australian Stroke Clinical Registry (AuSCR).

It is critical ACT residents understand if they or someone they know experiences the signs of stroke, they must call triple zero (000) immediately. The *F.A.S.T. Community Education Program* is delivering clinical education on the management of stroke and stroke risk in general practice, as well as StrokeSafe presentations and F.A.S.T. resources in the community, improving awareness of the signs of stroke and stroke prevention. This program is making an impact. Stroke Foundation's most recent study of the awareness of the signs of stroke found the unprompted community awareness of the three F.A.S.T. signs in the ACT was the second highest in the country.

Improving the quality of stroke treatment provided in ACT hospitals is critical to reducing the burden of stroke. Ongoing participation in the clinical quality registry ensures government, health services and stroke clinicians have access to the data they need to monitor and improve stroke care. ACT Government support for the

participation of Canberra Hospital and North Canberra Hospital in the AuSCR has led to demonstrated improvements. For example, the ACT now leads the nation in access to stroke unit care, which we know reduces death and dependency after stroke.

Navigating the complex health system after leaving hospital is one of the greatest barriers to success that survivors of stroke in the ACT face in their recovery journey. Many survivors speak of falling into a 'black hole' once they are discharged from hospital. ACT Government investment in the *StrokeLine Navigator Program* is ensuring more ACT residents are supported to manage their stroke recovery, return to work (where possible), and resume social and community participation.

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



**FACE**  
drooped?



**ARMS**  
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)



Key Proposals	Investment
<b>Prevention: Fewer preventable strokes in the ACT</b>	
<p><b><i>Continue the F.A.S.T. (Face, Arms, Speech, Time) Community Education Program.</i></b></p> <p>This program is delivering results, but more must be done. Only 30 percent of ACT stroke patients arrive at hospital within the 4.5 hour window for clot-dissolving (thrombolysis) treatment. Continued investment will ensure more ACT residents know how to reduce their stroke risk and recognise a stroke when it occurs, as well as understand how vital it is to call an ambulance immediately.</p>	<p>\$62,000 p.a. (over four years)</p>
<b>Treatment: Ensure all ACT residents have access to evidence-based stroke treatment</b>	
<p><b><i>Stroke Foundation led support for ACT stroke quality improvement initiatives.</i></b></p> <p>While it is critical the ACT Government continues to invest in the collection of stroke patient data, data collection on its own is not enough. ACT Government investment in Stroke Foundation led quality improvement initiatives that support an ACT Stroke Learning Health System will ensure stroke clinicians have the knowledge and tools they need to improve the quality, safety and effectiveness of stroke treatment and care. These initiatives will also support ACT hospitals as they work towards achieving Australian Stroke Coalition Stroke Unit Certification and the new 30/60/90 National Stroke Targets.</p>	<p>\$60,000 p.a. (over four years)</p>
<b>Recovery: Enhance recovery to help ACT residents achieve better outcomes after stroke</b>	
<p><b><i>Continue the StrokeLine Navigator Service to help ACT residents manage their stroke recovery.</i></b></p> <p>This will ensure more 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.</p>	<p>\$80,000 p.a. (over four years)</p>

Stroke Foundation strongly supports the ACT Government’s vision of a public health system that is accessible, accountable and sustainable. As the voice of stroke in Australia, we look forward to continuing to work with the ACT Government to achieve the key objectives of the *ACT Health Services Plan 2022–2030*, ensuring we deliver on stroke prevention, treatment and support for all ACT residents.

#### Contact Us

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#### References

1. Kim J et al, on behalf of the Stroke Foundation, Economic Impact of Stroke 2024. Stroke Foundation 2024. Melbourne Australia.

