

# Strategy 2027: Stronger Together

# About Stroke Foundation

Stroke Foundation is the only national charity that partners with the community to prevent stroke, save lives, and enhance recovery.

Established in 1996, Stroke Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation that works with survivors of stroke, their families and carers, health professionals, researchers, government, and the public to reduce the impact of stroke in the community.

As the voice of stroke in Australia, we:

- Represent more than 440,000 survivors of stroke, as well as carers and family members. We listen to, respect and involve those impacted by stroke in everything we do.
- Are dedicated to working on all aspects of the stroke journey. We raise awareness of the risk factors and signs of stroke, work with the stroke sector to improve treatment for stroke to save lives and reduce disability and support survivors to live their best possible life after stroke.
- Encourage, fund and collaborate in stroke research, ensuring it aligns with the priorities of those with lived experience.
- Advocate for initiatives to prevent stroke and improve stroke treatment and recovery.
- Raise funds from the community, corporate sector and government to continue our mission.

Our values are the foundation that guides how we interact and influence with each other and collaborate to achieve our mission and vision. We are brave in our decisions and are always improving. We are caring and chose to do the right thing even when that is hard. In our actions we lead by example setting high standards for those around us.



National Stroke Week



StrokeLine



Stride4Stroke

## Our values



Courage



Excellence



Compassion



Integrity



Leadership

# Why we do what we do

Stroke remains one of Australia's most significant health challenges. Stroke is a medical emergency that occurs when blood supply to the brain is interrupted, leading to disability or death. Despite advancements in treatment, stroke continues to have a substantial impact on the lives of Australians.

When a **stroke** strikes, it attacks up to



**1.9 million brain cells** per minute

In Australia there is one stroke every **11 minutes**



**Immediate treatment saves lives.**



Call **000 (triple zero)** for help

**Without action** by **2025**, it is predicted the number of strokes



in Australia will increase to **72,000 per year**

Stroke costs the **Australian economy**



**\$9 billion** each year

**80% of strokes** can be **prevented**



**1 in 4 strokes** occurred in people under the **age of 65**



**Regional** Australians are **17% more likely** to experience a stroke



than those living in **metropolitan** areas

In 2023 there were **45,785 stroke events** in Australia



Stroke can happen at **any age**



In **2023**, there were **440,481**



Australians **living with stroke**

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander** people are **3x more likely**



to experience a stroke; and at a **younger age** than other Australians

# Strategy 2027: Stronger Together

*Strategy 2027: Stronger Together* reflects our commitment to partnership and collaboration recognising that meaningful positive change can only be achieved by working together.

Strategy 2027 brings a new vision, to see an Australia with **'fewer strokes, better outcomes, support and care for all'**.

To achieve this vision, our mission is to prevent stroke, save lives and enhance recovery delivered in three core pillars. These pillars form the foundation for our priorities and activities, and set out clear goals for reducing stroke incidence, improving access and delivery of care, and enhancing support for survivors of stroke, their families, and carers.

We are committed to delivering evidence-based, targeted stroke programs and services that address critical gaps, such as our world-leading *Living Clinical Guidelines for Stroke Management* and *StrokeLine*. We will have a strong focus on rehabilitation and recovery to enhance life after stroke. By concentrating our efforts where they are most needed, we aim to reduce the impact of stroke in Australia.

Our enabling goals serve as the bedrock that supports the delivery of our mission. By empowering people, aligning research, advocating for change, growing our profile and funding, and enhancing digital capabilities, we ensure

that we have the internal strength, external support, and capacity to achieve the ambitious outcomes outlined in Strategy 2027. These enablers are not optional extras; they are essential elements that drive our ability to scale our impact, respond to emerging challenges, and ultimately prevent stroke and improve the lives of Australians affected by stroke.

- › Our success is built on our exceptional people, empowered by a shared purpose and a culture of collaboration, innovation, and learning. By fostering diversity, equity, and strong governance, we drive innovation and informed decision-making. This creates an exceptional workforce that attracts and retains top talent. Our volunteers are foundational to our success, enhancing our reach, capacity, and impact by aligning their efforts with strategic priorities in community-driven initiatives and campaigns.

**Vision:** Fewer strokes, better outcomes, support and care for all.

**Mission:** Prevent stroke. Save lives. Enhance recovery.





- › Our research program is an integrated approach aligning our research investments with our strategic goals and lived experience priorities to ensure it is fit for purpose and accelerates the development of evidence-based solutions. We cultivate the next generation of stroke researchers through targeted early career grants, while strategic partnerships with leading research institutions ensure that we are at the forefront of new developments in stroke care.
- › Advocacy is one of the most powerful tools we have to influence systemic change and it is woven throughout our mission. Through strategic engagement with government decision-makers and mobilisation of community advocates, we will drive policy reforms and secure funding across the stroke continuum. This coordinated approach ensures our advocacy efforts deliver meaningful improvements in stroke prevention, treatment, recovery, and research outcomes.

- › A strong profile is vital for attracting support and funding to achieve our mission. Raising awareness of stroke and our work boosts visibility, grows our community, and engages supporters. Diversified revenue ensures financial stability, funding prevention, treatment, and recovery initiatives, while a strong brand enhances credibility and influence across the stroke sector and with key decision-makers.
- › A robust technical foundation will ensure we can deliver high-quality, scalable services that meet evolving digital demands.
- › Partnerships and collaboration with others mean we can increase our impact – stroke is a big problem to solve but together we can make significant, generational change.

In line with our values, our six key guiding principles inform our culture and the way we work to deliver on our mission and enabling goals.

Stroke Foundation *Strategy 2027: Stronger Together* is a comprehensive and bold plan to address the growing impact of stroke.

## Guiding principles



“ We can’t achieve our vision and mission alone, only by working together can we achieve meaningful positive change for survivors of stroke, their families and carers. ”

Dr Lisa Murphy  
Chief Executive Officer, Stroke Foundation



# Our mission

## Prevent stroke

80% of strokes are preventable by addressing modifiable risk factors like high blood pressure, atrial fibrillation, high cholesterol, diabetes, smoking, lack of physical activity, poor diet and unhealthy weight. Recognising that the risk factors are shared with other conditions and that prevention requires sustained, long-term efforts, we are committed to reducing the incidence of stroke through partnerships with other health sectors and government. Our approach includes advocacy, partnerships, and campaigns aimed at promoting good health, encouraging regular health checks and better adherence to appropriate treatments.

We seek to prevent stroke by advocating, raising awareness and building partnerships to reduce stroke risks for all Australians.



### 3 year goal

**Achieve national progress towards reducing the main risk factors for stroke**

- 1. Advocate to increase the national funding dedicated to prevention and that stroke and its risk factors are prioritised in national plans** to ensure that stroke prevention is a funded priority.
- 2. Drive the national conversation and actions to address the two biggest risk factors of stroke: uncontrolled blood pressure and atrial fibrillation** to reduce the incidence of stroke in Australia.
- 3. Lead and participate in sector partnerships and coalitions** to ensure stroke risk factors are addressed and report impact.

## Save lives

Ensuring that every Australian receives world-class evidence-based stroke care is central to our strategy. We will do this by delivering our world-leading *Living Guidelines for Stroke Management*, supporting health professionals to provide quality stroke care, advocating for better and more equitable acute and rehabilitation stroke care, and engaging in research – all of which will ultimately enhance patient outcomes. Whilst significant progress has been made in stroke treatment, there is still much to accomplish, particularly in stroke rehabilitation. We will work with the rehabilitation community to advance stroke rehabilitation, applying relevant insights from the acute stroke sector.

We support and empower hospitals and health professionals across Australia to deliver excellent stroke care.



### 3 year goal

**Improve access and delivery of evidence-based stroke care**

- 1. Deliver and promote world-leading *Living Guidelines for Stroke Management*** to ensure health professionals have access to the best clinical advice.
- 2. Champion quality improvement efforts** to support health professionals to deliver best practice and innovative stroke care.
- 3. Advocate for improved systems** so that people who have had a stroke receive the best acute and rehabilitation stroke care no matter their age or where they live.
- 4. Contribute to research into the most effective strategies** to ensure new evidence or guidelines improve care.

# Meeting the future challenges of stroke

## Enhance recovery

Enhancing rehabilitation and long-term care services is critical to improving life after stroke. We seek to improve the availability, accessibility and equitability of recovery services so that all survivors of stroke can achieve the best possible quality of life after stroke. This involves providing resources, connecting survivors with community-based services and providing long-term support post stroke through programs such as our proven *StrokeLine* and online services such as *EnableMe* and *Young Stroke*.

We connect people living with the impact of stroke to information, support and services throughout their life.



### 3 year goal

Reach people with impactful products and services that align with their needs

- 1. Improve access to and navigation of rehabilitation** so everyone can achieve their best possible life after stroke.
- 2. Reach out to as many people living with the impact of stroke as we can** to connect them to support throughout their life after stroke.
- 3. Ensure our products and services are centred on lived experience** to improve our impact.
- 4. Ensure our products and services improve health equity** for priority communities.

Stroke Foundation's Strategy 2027: Stronger Together sets the stage for achieving measurable improvements in stroke prevention, treatment, and recovery by aligning our efforts with key national health priorities. The strategy is designed to not only address the current state of stroke in Australia but also to future-proof the system against the anticipated rise in stroke as the population ages. By 2027, Stroke Foundation aims to:

- › See fewer strokes by driving down risk factors like high blood pressure and raising community awareness of stroke.
- › Better outcomes by improving access to evidence-based stroke treatment in every community.
- › Support and care for all through enhanced recovery outcomes by expanding access to, and availability of, community-based supports and rehabilitation services.

Stroke Foundation is also committed to fostering a research environment that drives innovation in stroke prevention and care. By attracting the best and brightest to stroke research, we aim to support the discovery pipeline of new approaches to reducing stroke risk and improving treatment and recovery outcomes. Through advocacy, partnerships, and evidence-based interventions, we are working to reduce the incidence of stroke, improve access to timely treatment, and ensure that every survivor of stroke can be supported to achieve their best possible life after stroke.

Furthermore, the organisation's focus on digital transformation and secure data management will enhance our ability to deliver high-quality services efficiently and effectively.

Stroke is a growing public health crisis in Australia, with significant healthcare, social wellbeing and economic implications.

Our Strategy 2027 is a well-aligned response to the challenges posed by the rising incidence of stroke and the need for improved care. By focusing on stroke prevention, treatment, and recovery, our strategy not only addresses the current state of stroke in Australia but also positions the organisation to achieve substantial progress by 2027.



The development of *Strategy 2027: Stronger Together* was led by the Stroke Foundation Strategy Working Group in collaboration with people with a lived experience of stroke. Input was provided by Stroke Foundation's employees, Councils and Committees, and members of the stroke community. It was endorsed by the Stroke Foundation Board of Directors.

### Acknowledgement of Country



Stroke Foundation respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to land, water, sky and community. We pay our respect to the peoples, cultures, and Elders past and present for they hold the memories, culture and hope of their peoples.

### Acknowledgement of People with Lived Experience

We acknowledge the individual and collective expertise of those with lived experience of stroke and their carers. We recognise their vital contribution at all levels including advocacy, program design and research. We value the courage of those who share this unique perspective so we can learn and grow together to achieve better outcomes for people living with stroke.



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