

New South Wales Pre-budget Submission

2025–26

NSW survivor of stroke and
StrokeSafe Speaker, Tony Finneran.



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

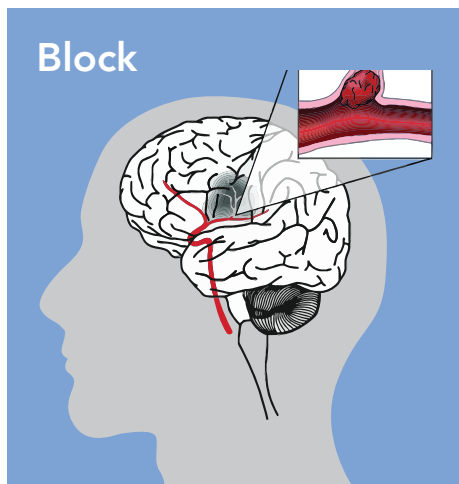
We partner with survivors of stroke, carers, health professionals, government and the community to reduce the incidence and impact of stroke for all Australians.

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.

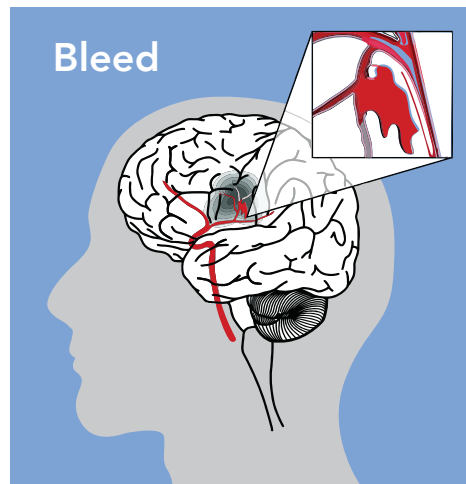
Every achievement takes a united team of stroke champions all working together with a single voice and purpose: survivors of stroke with their families and carers, health professionals, researchers, volunteers, advocacy bodies, generous donors, corporate Australia, government and philanthropic partners.

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 New South Wales – why we have to act now

In 2023, there were 14,777 stroke events in New South Wales (NSW),¹ and many of those survivors of stroke will be living with an ongoing disability. There are more than 140,000 survivors of stroke living in NSW¹ – and their number is growing.

One of the key modifiable risk factors for stroke is high blood pressure. Importantly, 1,570,100 NSW residents are living with high blood pressure,¹ and many don't know it. In addition, 687,300 NSW residents are daily smokers and 714,700 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 NSW 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 NSW 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 urgently need the support of the NSW government. Our programs and services are in greater demand than ever before, because the health system, the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the aged care system are not adequately meeting the needs of the community.

Now is the time for action and investment to change the landscape of stroke prevention, treatment, and recovery in New South Wales.

The hard facts



Over **14,000** stroke events in NSW in 2023¹



There are more than **140,000 survivors of stroke** living in NSW¹



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

\$5 billion

(almost \$354,000 per person)

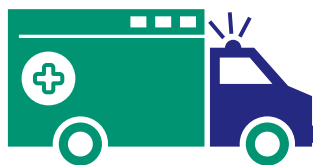


Costs in the first year after stroke were over

\$2.5 billion

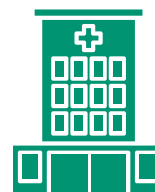
(almost \$175,000 per person)

\$1.8 billion in healthcare costs for strokes occurring in 2023 including



\$126 million

in road ambulance costs



\$1.4 billion

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 \$6.36 million over four years.

1. F.A.S.T. (Face, Arms, Speech, Time) Regional and Metropolitan Education Program

\$3.52 million (\$880,000 per year over four years).

Ensure more NSW residents 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. A campaign to increase awareness and uptake of the *Living Guidelines for Stroke Management*

\$720,000 (\$180,000 per year over four years).

Ensure NSW clinicians are aware of the world-leading *Living Guidelines for Stroke Management*, and are using the Guidelines to inform their practice and deliver evidence-based, best-practice stroke treatment and care for all NSW residents. This will include support for progress towards the National Stroke Targets and undertaking stroke unit certification.

3. Enhanced support for stroke recovery: *My Stroke Journey* for every NSW survivor of stroke and *StrokeLine* support for NSW

\$2.12 million (\$530,000 per year over four years).

Ensure more NSW residents who are impacted by stroke are able to access the information and support they need in a timely manner, which will have benefits for survivors of stroke, their families and carers, and our community, as well as our state's health system and economy.



*StrokeLine health professional,
Katherine Yong.*



Proposal 1: F.A.S.T. (Face, Arms, Speech, Time) Regional and Metropolitan Education Program

Investment: \$3.52 million (\$880,000 per year over four years).

Investment in a F.A.S.T. Regional and Metropolitan Education Program will deliver:

- › 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
- › a community-led education program focused on raising awareness of the signs of stroke in hotspot areas and among priority groups
- › an increase in the awareness of at least one F.A.S.T. sign of stroke in NSW from 57 percent to 67 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.

Over the last few years of the pandemic, we know that many NSW residents missed out on health checks and early detection of stroke risk, and there could be increased numbers of people at risk of stroke. Therefore, it is critical we improve F.A.S.T. awareness in our community now.

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.

Stroke Foundation is proud to have partnered with the NSW Government to deliver the F.A.S.T. Community Education Program in conjunction with the roll out of the NSW Telestroke Service. **Over three years (2020-2022), the Program contributed to an increase in the unprompted awareness of at least two F.A.S.T. signs of stroke in regional NSW of over 20 percent (from 22 percent in 2020 to 44 percent in 2022).**⁶

Current F.A.S.T. awareness in the NSW community

The 2023 Stroke Foundation F.A.S.T. Signs and Stroke Awareness Survey reported on the unprompted awareness of the F.A.S.T. signs of stroke in the NSW community⁷:

Number of F.A.S.T. signs recognised	Awareness in NSW	
	Regional	Metro
0 signs	26 percent	52 percent
1 sign	34 percent	28 percent
2 signs	30 percent	15 percent
3 signs	10 percent	5 percent

In addition, **only 39 percent** of NSW stroke patients **arrive at hospital within the 4.5-hour window** for clot-dissolving treatment (thrombolysis).⁸

NSW Government investment in a F.A.S.T. Regional and Metropolitan Education Program is needed to facilitate improved awareness of the F.A.S.T. signs of stroke and the need to call triple zero (000) immediately. This will maximise the State Government's investment in the NSW Telestroke Service, targeting those regional communities covered by the Service. The Program will also support NSW 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, which have been endorsed by the NSW Government.

The program

Program activities will be focused on regional and metropolitan stroke hotspot geographical areas, including NSW Telestroke Service geographical catchment areas, and other areas identified using data from sources such as the No Postcode Untouched report, the Australian Stroke Clinical Registry (AuSCR) and the YouGov F.A.S.T. Signs and Stroke Awareness Survey.

F.A.S.T. Multimedia Campaign

Advertising Campaign: An integrated, multi-channel advertising campaign to promote the F.A.S.T. message in NSW will be delivered. 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.

Media Campaign: Mainstream media coverage 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.

F.A.S.T. (Face, Arms, Speech, and Time) Community Education Program

Stroke Foundation's F.A.S.T. (Face, Arms, Speech, and Time) Community Education Program establishes awareness and increases people's knowledge of the signs of stroke through community engagement. We work with groups representing priority communities – including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and those from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds – to develop and deliver tailored activities to increase F.A.S.T. awareness in these communities. We recruit, train, and provide support to a network of local volunteers, many with a lived experience of stroke, to creatively raise awareness about the signs of stroke and stroke prevention, through the delivery of *StrokeSafe* presentations, workplace engagement and targeted events. Through the compelling voice of those impacted by stroke, we increase knowledge among those most at risk of stroke, and help to ensure patients get to hospital in the critical time window for life-saving stroke treatment.



Evaluation

A formal program evaluation will be undertaken, focused on the following outcome measures:

- F.A.S.T. Community Education Program
 - Awareness of the F.A.S.T. signs (unprompted and prompted), key stroke risk factors, and what actions to take in the event of a stroke, as measured in Stroke Foundation's regular *F.A.S.T. Signs and Stroke Awareness Survey*.
 - Short-term (measured immediately after *StrokeSafe* presentations) and long-term (measured 3 months after *StrokeSafe* presentations) recall of the F.A.S.T. signs and stroke risk factors in hotspots.
 - Number of people at risk of stroke in hotspots who discussed their stroke risk with a health professional, and changed their behaviour in order to address a stroke risk factor(s) (measured 3 months after *StrokeSafe* presentations).
- Multimedia Campaign
 - *Advertising Campaign*: Key performance metrics to be determined with media agency, based on the target audience, objectives and media channels selected.
 - *Media Campaign*: Number of news stories promoting the F.A.S.T. message published or broadcast in news outlets, and their reach.

We are calling on the NSW Government to invest in our successful *F.A.S.T. Education Program*, which will be rolled out in targeted regional and metropolitan areas, to increase awareness of what stroke is, how to reduce stroke risk, and how to recognise the F.A.S.T. signs of stroke. This program will also maximise the State Government's investment in the NSW Telestroke Service, targeting those regional communities covered by the service, and ensuring residents know the signs of stroke and the importance of calling triple zero (000) immediately.

Case study 1: F.A.S.T. in action – Jenny’s story

Jenny Hellyer has an affinity with the ocean – it’s where the avid surfer enjoys spending time with her family, but in January this year, a regular family day out at the beach took an unexpected turn when they got home.

“My leg felt like it had turned to rubber. I tried to walk, but it felt like a flag flapping in the breeze, then it completely gave way. I also felt a numbness creeping up the right side of my face.”

The 43-year-old was having a stroke. Luckily she knew the F.A.S.T. acronym from Stroke Foundation’s campaign, recognised the signs of stroke and called an ambulance immediately.

“I just knew I had to get to the hospital quickly.”

After a month in hospital undergoing gruelling rehabilitation, the mother of two learned how to walk again and was determined to get back on her board. The former stand up paddleboard state champion’s love for the water drove her recovery.

“I just told myself get out there, you can’t let the stroke beat you.”

And that’s exactly what Jenny did. She’s now back on her board, taking on the waves of New South Wales’ northern beaches once again.

“It feels great to be back out there in the lineup and doing what I love.”

“Everyone should know the F.A.S.T. signs of stroke. It could save their life, just like it saved mine.”



Survivor of stroke, Jenny Hellyer.

Proposal 2: A campaign to increase awareness and uptake of the *Living Guidelines for Stroke Management*

Investment: \$720,000 (\$180,000 per year over four years).

Investment in a campaign to increase awareness and uptake of the *Living Guidelines for Stroke Management* will ensure:

- more NSW clinicians will be aware of, and able to access reliable, up-to-date clinical recommendations for stroke treatment and care
- NSW hospitals and clinicians will be able to access resources that facilitate progress towards the 30/60/90 National Stroke Targets and achieving stroke unit certification
- regional and rural stroke clinicians in NSW will be supported to improve the timeliness of access to specialised stroke treatments, maximising the NSW Government's investment in the NSW Telestroke Service.

Stroke Foundation's world-leading *Living Guidelines for Stroke Management* are critical to ensuring NSW residents receive the best and most up-to-date stroke treatment and care. **The Guidelines are saving lives, and have led to a 99 percent reduction in time from research to point-of-care.**

Since 2018, when the first truly living guideline in Australia was established, the Stroke Guideline has produced **57 new and updated recommendations**.

We know time is brain. In a medical emergency, clinicians are able to refer to the Guidelines in real time and make a quick assessment about the best treatment options that are available for a patient. Without access to this critical clinical resource, the consequences could be dire.

The formal evaluation of the Guidelines found that clinicians have higher levels of trust in the *Living Guidelines* model, resulting in increased use of guideline recommendations in their daily practice.

We know that the net societal benefit of implementing new guidance within the first year of practice-changing evidence becoming available (rather than five years later), for just two interventions in stroke and diabetes, is more than \$1.2 billion.⁹

NSW Government investment is needed to facilitate improved awareness and uptake of the Guidelines by NSW stroke clinicians, ensuring they are embedded in routine practice.

“

We know that rapid guidelines updates as part of the *Living Guidelines for Stroke Management* are saving Australians from premature death or disability, and are accelerating local and state-wide system changes. Sustainable funding for this world-first initiative must be secured. We cannot afford to go backwards.

”

*Professor Bruce Campbell,
Consultant Neurologist and Head of Stroke
Royal Melbourne Hospital.*



The campaign

Stroke Foundation will deliver a campaign of activities focused on **increasing the awareness and uptake** of the Guidelines amongst NSW stroke clinicians, in order to support them in the delivery of best-practice, world-leading stroke treatment and care and achievement of the 30/60/90 National Stroke Targets, which have been endorsed by the NSW Government.

Increasing awareness of the Guidelines

Stroke Foundation will deliver a **campaign to raise awareness of the Guidelines** among NSW stroke clinicians, and will reach them through:

- › *InformMe*, Stroke Foundation's dedicated website for health professionals working in stroke treatment and care
- › implementation of a comprehensive communications plan
- › collaboration with the NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI) Stroke Network to deliver resources and hospital-level training programs, and annual forums and workshops at the local health district level.

Stroke Foundation is currently undertaking a comprehensive, formal evaluation of the Guidelines, and the outcomes of this evaluation, as well as the priorities of the NSW ACI Stroke Network, will inform the messaging used in this awareness campaign.

Increasing uptake of the Guidelines

Stroke Foundation will deliver information and support, in the form of tailored educational resources, to help NSW stroke clinicians integrate and embed the Guidelines into their routine practice. These resources will be freely available through *InformMe*.

This information will address the needs of metropolitan, regional and rural stroke clinicians in NSW, and ensure they are supported to improve the timeliness of access to specialised stroke treatments, maximising the State Government's investment in the NSW Telestroke Service.

The tailored resources that will be developed could include, but not be limited to:

- › online learning resources on *InformMe*
- › webinars
- › specific resources for practical support on implementing guideline recommendations.

The type of educational resources delivered, and the specific clinical areas covered in these resources, will be informed by the outcomes of the formal evaluation of the Guidelines, as well as the priorities of the NSW ACI Stroke Network; however, there will be a specific focus on the National Stroke Targets, including certification of stroke units throughout NSW.

Evaluation

A formal evaluation plan will be developed, and the campaign will be monitored throughout for continuous improvement. Specific outcome measures will be determined at the commencement of the campaign, and could include, but not be limited to:

- › changes in the awareness of NSW clinicians about the Guidelines
- › the number of metropolitan, regional and rural NSW clinicians who access and use resources and tailored educational activities
- › annual benchmarking of NSW hospital performance against the 30/60/90 National Stroke Targets
- › the number of NSW hospitals that achieve stroke unit certification.

We are calling on the NSW Government to invest in the implementation of a campaign to increase awareness and uptake of the *Living Guidelines for Stroke Management* amongst NSW clinicians. This will help to close the gap between guidelines and practice, and empower NSW clinicians to deliver evidence-based, best-practice stroke treatment and care, as well as facilitate progress towards achievement of the 30/60/90 National Stroke Targets, which have been endorsed by the NSW Government.



Case study 2: Living Guidelines for Stroke Management in action – Communication Partner Training (CPT)

One in three survivors of stroke will experience difficulties with communication, including aphasia, a disorder where individuals experience difficulties talking, reading, writing or understanding other people when they speak. Specifically, survivors of stroke with aphasia may find it challenging to ask questions of, and provide information to, the health professionals treating them.

New research has been incorporated into the *Living Guidelines for Stroke Management*, strongly recommending that Communication Partner Training (CPT) should be provided to health professionals or volunteers who interact with survivors of stroke with aphasia.

Communication between people with aphasia and their treating health professionals can be greatly improved when health professionals are trained in using supportive conversation techniques and tools. CPT covers a range of interventions that train the conversation

partners of people with aphasia, and a number of CPT interventions have been developed and used to support health professionals to interact successfully with people with aphasia.

Importantly however, Organisational Survey data from Stroke Foundation's 2024 National Rehabilitation Services Audit has shown that only 49 percent of participating rehabilitation services routinely offer CPT to health professionals and/or volunteers who interact with people with aphasia.¹⁰

As a result of this new *Living Guidelines* recommendation, more Australian stroke services will understand the value of CPT and offer this training to their staff, improving communication, understanding and self-confidence, and reducing depression and social isolation for survivors of stroke with aphasia.

“

After participating in the CPT program, everyone made gains and was really connecting with the patient, rather than just superficially doing things.

”

Speech pathologist participant in a CPT program for multidisciplinary healthcare professionals.



Proposal 3: Enhanced support for stroke recovery: *My Stroke Journey* for every NSW survivor of stroke and *StrokeLine* support for NSW

Investment: \$2.12 million (\$530,000 per year over four years).

Investment in enhanced support for stroke recovery in NSW will ensure:

- › every survivor of stroke discharged from hospital in NSW receives a copy of *My Stroke Journey*
- › more NSW residents 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
- › more NSW survivors of stroke receive the information they need to help prevent secondary stroke.

Survivors of stroke, their families, friends and carers, need access to ongoing information and support as they navigate life after stroke.

Stroke Foundation delivers a suite of products and services for survivors of stroke, their families, carers and friends, and the general public, including its flagship *StrokeLine* inbound information and support service. *StrokeLine* health professionals provide expert information, advice, support and referral on stroke prevention, treatment and recovery via telephone, email, social media and Stroke Foundation's recovery website *EnableMe*.

***StrokeLine* is a highly regarded, trusted service:**

- › In 2023, 89 percent of clients said they would recommend it to someone else. This was similar to 2022, indicating the service delivers a consistent and positive user experience.
- › When advice was provided to clients about what they could do to resolve their issue, 77 percent acted on this advice.
- › In 2023, there was a 34 percent increase in callers to *StrokeLine* asking for advice on signs of stroke before calling an ambulance.

Importantly however, we know from our own existing services' data and internal evaluation of the service, that there is unfulfilled demand for the *StrokeLine* Service, with the current service unable to adequately meet the needs of specific groups within our community:

- › *StrokeLine* provided information and support to almost 2,500 survivors of stroke, their families, friends and carers, and the public during 2023; however, this is only a small proportion of the number of Australians who experience a stroke for the first time each year, and are living with stroke in our community.
- › In the last three years, there has been a significant increase in the number of complex calls into *StrokeLine*. This includes vulnerable survivors calling the service for advice and support, who are facing challenges with issues such as anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation, loss of independence and finances, strained relationships and social isolation, in addition to trying to manage the impact of their stroke. These calls are longer in duration and often require follow-up.

Stroke Foundation's My Stroke Journey is 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.

My Stroke Journey is now a suite of resources, with versions available in both standard and easy English, Italian, Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Hindi, Korean, Vietnamese and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and parents and carers of children who have had a stroke.

We know that 94 percent of those who receive *My Stroke Journey* find it useful, and over 75 percent refer to it after going home. In addition, the proportion of survivors who receive advice on (1) stroke risk factors and (2) secondary stroke prevention and recovery, at discharge, has increased by 20 percent and 13 percent, respectively, as a result of *My Stroke Journey*.

In 2023, this valuable resource was delivered to only 5,124 NSW survivors of stroke. Importantly, we know that many of the people who need this resource the most are not receiving it.

What will enhanced support for stroke recovery in NSW deliver?

StrokeLine Service for NSW

We will deliver **StrokeLine support for NSW callers**, to ensure more clients are supported to access the information and services they need in a timely way. We will also **facilitate GP connection and liaison for clients with complex needs**.

Currently, around 1 in 6 calls (17 percent) to *StrokeLine* are about mental ill health, including depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts. As such, **the mental health capability of StrokeLine will be strengthened.**

A **targeted community awareness campaign to raise the profile of StrokeLine** will be delivered, with a focus on promoting the service to hospital clinicians and inpatients, primary care (GPs), multicultural organisations, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, and survivors of stroke, their families and carers, **in identified stroke hotspots.**

My Stroke Journey for every NSW survivor of stroke

We will identify and directly engage with NSW hospitals that are not delivering *My Stroke Journey*, prioritising those hospitals located in stroke hotspots.

Educational and promotional activities will be employed within these hospitals to **ensure every survivor of stroke** discharged from hospital in NSW **receives a copy of My Stroke Journey that is in the language and medium of their choice, and is culturally appropriate.**

Evaluation

A formal evaluation plan will be developed, and specific outcomes to be measured will be determined at the commencement of the initiative. These could include, but not be limited to:

- the number of NSW clients accessing *StrokeLine*
- the number of survivors of stroke in NSW receiving *My Stroke Journey*
- client satisfaction with *StrokeLine*
- the number and type of supports provided by *StrokeLine* (e.g. referrals to other service providers, or provision of information on secondary stroke prevention)
- knowledge, self-efficacy, and health literacy for survivors of stroke using *StrokeLine*
- health-related quality of life, emotional wellbeing, levels of distress, and rates of anxiety and depression for survivors of stroke using *StrokeLine*
- quality of life and physical and emotional wellbeing for family members or carers using *StrokeLine*
- the number of NSW residents receiving a secondary stroke prevention intervention.

We are calling on the NSW Government to invest in enhanced support for stroke recovery. This will ensure every survivor of stroke discharged from hospital in NSW receives a copy of *My Stroke Journey*, and more NSW residents who are impacted by stroke are able to access the information and support they need, including for complex issues such as mental ill health, in a timely manner. This will have benefits for survivors of stroke, their families and carers, and our community, as well as our state's health system and economy.



Case study 3: *StrokeLine* in action – Greta’s story

Greta rang *StrokeLine* and spoke to Siobhan, a *StrokeLine* health professional, in March 2024.

After a stroke in October 2023, Greta had changes to her vision and mood, as well as ongoing fatigue.

During the call, Siobhan worked to make Greta feel safe to talk about her concerns. Greta lived alone in Darwin, was no longer able to drive, and reported feeling socially isolated. She disclosed her previous suicide attempts and recent thoughts about ending her life. Siobhan listened, allowing Greta all the time she needed.

Greta and Siobhan talked about the role of hope in stroke recovery, and in managing depression and suicidal thoughts. Siobhan provided options for further support, referring Greta to *Lifeline*. She also encouraged Greta to make an appointment with her GP to talk about her mental health. Siobhan suggested a medication review and accessing professional support through a mental health care plan.

Siobhan understood the importance of social connection for Greta. She suggested talking to *FriendLine* for social support. She found a local stroke support group for Greta to join.

With Greta’s most pressing concerns dealt with, Siobhan broadened the conversation. Greta was unsure of her stroke risk factors. She spoke about wanting to get her heart checked. Siobhan provided secondary stroke prevention education. She again encouraged Greta to make an appointment with her GP, and talked about the things Greta could do to reduce her stroke risk.

Siobhan also identified the need for further rehabilitation. She talked with Greta about accessing allied health services through a chronic disease management plan.

As Greta couldn’t drive to appointments, Siobhan provided information on local transport options. She also provided details on how to access support through Centrelink.

“

Stroke Foundation’s *StrokeLine* Service was incredibly helpful. Siobhan was able to provide me with valuable information, and connect me with the services I needed. But more than that, she gave me hope that things could get better.

”

Survivor of stroke, Greta.



*StrokeLine health professional,
Siobhan McGinniss.*



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**Will you help? We invite you to have a conversation
with us today, to learn more.**

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We also have offices in Sydney, Brisbane, Perth and Hobart.

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