

What we think about:

The use of stem cells in research

Half of all stroke survivors are left with a disability and we know that recovering from a stroke can be really challenging – stroke survivors tell us every day.

We believe that everyone has the right to make the best recovery they can from stroke. Stem cell technology has the potential to help achieve this and that's why we support the continued use of stem cells in research.

We understand that some people have concerns about stem cell research. Currently, the Stroke Association only funds research involving adult stem cells taken from organs and tissues and not embryonic stem cells. Embryonic stem cells come from fertilised human eggs, normally from a surplus of embryos donated by couples undergoing in vitro fertilisation (IVF). Before the embryonic stem cells are removed, the fertilised eggs are grown in the laboratory past the stage where they are able to develop into a complete embryo.

Stem cell technology is exciting. Early results from ongoing research suggest that treatment using human, adult stem cells may lead to an improved recovery for stroke survivors living with a disability. Continuing this type of research is vital to further explore such a potentially life-changing treatment. That's why the Stroke Association will fund research involving stem cells from human or animal embryos, as well as adult tissue, if it is scientifically justifiable.

As with all scientific research funded by the Stroke Association, stem cell research will be funded on merit and scientific excellence after rigorous peer review and in line with the current legal and regulatory framework. The UK has some of the strictest rules in the world around the use of embryonic stem cells. Any research the Stroke Association funds in the future would be required to follow the UK Stem Cell Bank's Code of Practice for the use of Human Stem Cell Lines.

Together we can conquer stroke