Quality Improvement Plan 2016-2017
Improving how we work
Introducing the Stroke Association

Welcome to *Improving how we work*, our Quality Improvement Plan, which details our quality and performance for 2015/16 and our priorities for 2016/17.

As the major stroke charity in the UK, we play a crucial role in helping stroke survivors to make the best recovery they can and supporting those who care for them. We also work to reduce the number of people who are affected by this devastating condition.

Stroke is devastating and has a massive and sudden impact. It’s a leading cause of adult disability in the UK and the fourth most common cause of death. We believe in life after stroke. We work to prevent strokes and support stroke survivors and their families through information and our Life After Stroke Services. We campaign to raise awareness about stroke and improve care and we fund research into prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.

There are over one million stroke survivors in the UK, and around half rely on others to help them with everyday activities. All our work is underpinned by our core values – Professionalism, Passion, Innovation, Respect and Openness, and Working together – and we are committed to building continuous improvement and quality into everything we do so we can prevent strokes, and reduce their effect through providing services, campaigning, education and research.

This document outlines the progress we have made over the past few years in customer service, user involvement, and investment in the learning and development of our people, and outlines the commitment we have to improving how we work over the years ahead.

It also describes the priorities we have set for in our Life After Stroke Services and Stroke Information Services for the year ahead. We intend to monitor ourselves against these priorities and report back on how we have been performing.

*Jon Barrick*
Chief Executive
Stroke Association
Stroke facts and figures

Stroke is one of the greatest health challenges of our time.

- There are over 1.2 million stroke survivors in the UK.
- Stroke occurs approximately 152,000 times a year in the UK; that is one every 3 minutes 27 seconds.
- Stroke is one of the largest causes of disability in the world – half of all stroke survivors have a disability.
- Black people are twice as likely to have a stroke and at a younger age than white people.
- Stroke is the fourth single largest cause of death in the UK and second in the world.
- Stroke kills twice as many women as breast cancer and more men than prostate and testicular cancer combined a year.
- Over a third of stroke survivors in the UK are dependent on others, of those 1 in 5 are cared for by family and/or friends.
- For every cancer patient living in the UK, £241 is spent each year on medical research, compared with just £48 each year for every stroke patient.
- Stroke kills twice as many women as breast cancer and more men than prostate and testicular cancer combined a year.
- Over a third of stroke survivors in the UK are dependent on others, of those 1 in 5 are cared for by family and/or friends.
- Black people are twice as likely to have a stroke and at a younger age than white people.
- For every cancer patient living in the UK, £241 is spent each year on medical research, compared with just £48 each year for every stroke patient.
Our quality

Within our charity we have various quality systems in place

External quality accreditation

As an organisation we undertake a number of externally accredited quality assessments each year.

These systems have been chosen to support us on three distinct levels:
1. As a driver of continuous improvement
2. As a skills development tool
3. As an independent validation of our quality

With the customer at the heart of the organisation we always aim to understand their requirements by meeting or exceeding their expectations. The quality systems provide frameworks of good practice so we are able to drive continuous improvement in order to meet or exceed the initial expectation of the customer.

We use the Customer Service Excellence framework as both a monitoring and development tool to ensure that the quality of our customer service is at an extremely high level. This quality assurance standard includes a mix of research, management and operational models and, most importantly, practical experience of our providing services. The standard has particular focus on delivery, timeliness, information and organisational culture. There is also emphasis placed on developing customer insight, understanding the user’s experience and robust measurement of service satisfaction.

In 2009 we were one of the very first organisations to achieve The Information Standard. This scheme was developed by the Department of Health to help the public identify trustworthy health and social care information. We are assessed annually to ensure that our information production processes continue to meet the requirements of The Information Standard and this quality mark.

Our charity has also achieved Investors in People advanced recognition bronze status. This ensures the quality of our internal processes and training, and shows that our workforce is experienced and knowledgeable.

There are three principles behind the Investors in People framework:
Leading: Developing leadership skills at all levels to deliver outstanding results
Supporting: Providing support to staff at each stage of their learning so they can deliver the best results
Improving: Continuously looking for ways to improve in order to constantly outperform

The investors in people programme has already been very successful in helping us to learn how to work together more effectively to a common purpose.
We have consulted widely with our stakeholders about what they expect from us. Following this consultation we have made the following service standard commitments to our customers.

- We will listen to you
- We will provide you with an excellent level of service
- We will provide that service in a friendly and timely manner
- We will treat you fairly and sensitively

Life after Stroke services are delivered, underpinned by the following principles:

**Understanding needs**

Stroke can be a frightening experience which can have a major impact on your quality of life. Understanding your needs and aspirations enables us to provide the support that you need.

**Providing information**

We know that receiving reliable information at the right time can help people to cope with the aftermath of stroke and make choices that can improve their quality of life.

**Support**

We understand how stroke changes lives and we will work with you to help you to adjust to the changes that stroke brings.

**Influence**

We believe that no one understands stroke better than people who have been affected by it. This is why we strive to ensure those affected by stroke are involved in and have influence over issues surrounding stroke.
What we provide

Life After Stroke Services

We currently provide a total of 313 services across the UK.

We also provide 127 Voluntary groups and 49 Speakability Groups across the UK.

The services we offer are grouped under the following broad categories:

• stroke recovery service
• information, advice and support
• stroke prevention
• communication support
• re-ablement and social inclusion
• carer support.

Stroke Association Voluntary Groups play an important role in our work. Sitting along our Life After Stroke Services, our Voluntary Groups help us to provide long-term social and peer support. They also provide people affected by stroke with reliable information on stroke and help to raise awareness of stroke in their local community.

Funded from voluntary sources such as donations and general fundraising, and supported by our Life After Stroke Services, our growing network of Voluntary Groups ensures we can continue to support people affected by stroke in their local community for the long term.

Following the merger with Speakability, Life After stroke Services are beginning to work more closely at a local level with Speakability groups. These peer support groups encourage people with aphasia to practice their communication skills in a safe environment and regain their self-confidence.

Fundraising

We campaign for better stroke prevention and care. Whether we are providing support through our Life After Stroke or Information Services, funding pioneering research, campaigning or providing Life After Stroke Grants to help improve the quality of stroke survivors lives, we rely upon voluntary income to help fund these activities.

Our fundraising team is accredited by the Fundraising Standards Board self-regulatory scheme.

The Fundraising Standards Board works to ensure that organisations raising money for charity from the public do so honestly and properly

As members of the scheme, we follow the Institute of Fundraising’s Codes of Fundraising Practice and comply with the key principles embodied in the Codes and in this Promise.

Quality Improvement Plan 2016 - 2017
Stroke Information Services

Our Stroke Information Service provides a valuable support service for stroke survivors, their families and carers.

The service provides information about stroke, emotional support and details of local services and support groups. Our information production processes have been awarded The Information Standard.

We are ambitious about developing and improving our service further. Our vision is for the Stroke Information Service to be the trusted source of support and information for anyone affected by stroke, whenever they need us. Our focus for the coming year is to improve the capacity, reach, remit and accessibility of the service, putting the needs of a wide range of people affected by stroke at the heart of our planning.

Stroke Training

We work with stroke survivors and leading stroke experts in the design and review of all our training and education packages, to ensure they meet the learners' needs. Our training is designed to explain and explore the complexity and prevalence of stroke.

We believe it is essential that everyone who works with those affected by stroke has the knowledge and skills required to give the best quality care and treatment. This is underpinned by the Care Act (2014), NICE guidelines and the Stroke Strategy (Department of Health 2007). Our courses are designed to help providers and individuals deliver person-centered care that addresses need.

Our training officers are experts in stroke. They use their experience and working knowledge to engage learners, making the courses interactive and relevant to their roles. We provide cost-effective training to groups in the workplace, or to individuals at various locations around the UK.
Life After Stroke Services provides services in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. We have a number of very ambitious customer service aims to work towards.

Our Satisfaction Surveys, completed by our clients, have given us some vital evidence to track how we are progressing against these aims.

The response rate for these surveys is 33%; this is lower than last year. Pilots are beginning in May 2016 to trial methods to improve the response rate. During the 2015/16 year, 3,581 Satisfaction Surveys were returned to us.

Performance on our aims and other targets are reviewed in regular Services Directorate and regional quality improvement meetings.

We value the feedback of our clients and we have developed tools to ensure consistency and accuracy when gathering this feedback. These tools are included in our Quality Toolkit, which was launched in March 2016. Every service user has the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience with our services through the Satisfaction Survey, which is sent out to them when they are discharged from the service.

Alongside the Satisfaction Surveys, we have begun holding telephone surveys for every service on an annual basis, with feedback events being held when necessary. Comments and suggestions received are then reviewed by service management teams and agreed actions are included in the Service Development Plan (in the Quality Toolkit) are taken to improve our services as a direct result. Progress against Service Development plans is reviewed in Supervision meetings.

Our aims

1. We aim to contact at least 95% of our service users within three working days from the date we are made aware that you would like to receive our service.

What we achieved:
Currently, 84% of service users are contacted within 3 working days. Whilst this is a small decrease in performance since last year (85%), the overall trend over recent years remains one of gradual improvement.

During 2015-16, five regions achieved more than 90% of services users being contacted within 3 working days, with one region attaining 94%.

2. We aim to provide at least 95% of our service users with information to help improve your health and wellbeing, in a way you can understand.

What we achieved:
The most recent Satisfaction Survey showed that 97% of service users felt they had been provided with information that they needed. Pleasingly, performance increased by 1% compared to the same time last year. The 2015-16 results showed that 98% of service users who replied felt that the information they were provided with was easy to understand.
3. We aim to provide all of our service users with:

- Information to help them reduce their risk of stroke
- Details about other local services that may be able to help them

**What we achieved:**
We continue to strive to achieve these targets. The most recent satisfaction survey results showed that 84% of respondents said that we provided them with information on how to prevent a stroke. On average, 88% of those who felt they needed support from other local services were signposted to these facilities; this is an increase in 5% since last year.

4. We aim to help at least 95% of our service users to understand what has happened, identify their needs, and express their goals and aspirations.

**What we achieved:**
The most recent satisfaction survey results showed that 89% (up 1% since last year) of respondents said that they thought our services helped them to express their goals, and 94% said that they felt our services helped them to express their needs, this is a 2% improvement on last year.

We have recently introduced changes to our service model, introducing a standard way of assessing, reviewing, and identifying what our service users want to achieve. As a result, we hope to see an increase in positive responses from service users in regards to how we help them address their needs and achieve their desired outcomes.

**What we said:**
We will provide service users with opportunities to influence issues surrounding stroke, our charity and the services we provide.

**What we achieved:**
Survey responses showed 74% of service users said that we sought their views on wider issues surrounding stroke, which is up 3% since last year.
What we said:
We aim to:

• Agree, with service users, the support we can provide and how often this will be reviewed
• Work with service users to help them identify their personal goals and regularly review them
• Encourage and help service users to achieve their personal goals

What we achieved:
From our recent Satisfaction Survey results, we have encouraged 91% (up 2% from last year) of service users to achieve their personal goals, and helped 88% (up from 87%) express their future hopes. 72% (up by 2% last year) said that we regularly reviewed their goals with them.

The service model includes reviews of clients’ progress. The Stroke Recovery Service has set review points in a service users’ recovery journey – at 3 months, 6 months, and 12 months after their Initial Assessment. These regular review points will ensure we help the service user to the best of our ability.

What we said:
We will always aim to act quickly to put things right if we are not meeting our standards.

What we achieved:
We listen and respond to any concerns that our service users may have. Informal complaints in Life After Stroke Services received during the year have decreased by 69% from that of the previous year.

What we said:
We aim to embed quality review cycles in regions and countries’ operations.

What we achieved:
The Quality Toolkit was developed using regions and countries’ tools and input, to provide a standard set of tools for managing quality. The toolkit introduced “Key Quality Indicators” which enable services’ performance to be measured against certain indicators that include:

• Number of referrals received
• Engagement rate, the percentage of referrals we actually engage with
• Number of assessments carried out
• Percentage of people with 1 or more needs met

This enables services’ performance to be monitored and compared against each other, within regions and across Life After Stroke Services. This development is the first step towards a new work stream to improve services’ performance and delivery.

What we said:
Life After Stroke Services are in the process of introducing outcome measurements and anticipate generating targets for these in the next year.

What we achieved:
The Stroke Recovery Service was piloted in 2015, and the new service model was introduced to all Life After Stroke Services in January 2016. All services are now working to identify service users’ needs, desired outcomes and actions, which are regularly reviewed. Validated Tools were introduced at the same time. Data will therefore be available from later in 2016.
To put in place any recommendations made during our external assessment processes, and continue with the assessment processes.

**What we said:**
**Customer Service Excellence**
We aim to keep our high level of compliance with this standard and aim for additional areas known as compliance plus.

**What we achieved:**
In June 2015 we were successful in achieving the highest level of compliance plus for the CSE standard.

**What we said:**
**Investors in People**
We aim to maintain our Investors in People bronze award, using the standard as a developmental framework to drive forward change and improvements to support our organisational development.

**What we achieved:**
In September 2015 we successfully achieved advanced recognition and maintained the Investors in People advanced Bronze standard.

**What we said:**
**The Information Standard**
We aim to continually review our information production system to ensure that we are providing high quality information in line with the Information Standard.

**What we achieved:**
In January 2016 we were successful in achieving the Information Standard. We will continue to work with the Information Standard in order to maintain a high level of information production.

**Take forward recommendations from our external Customer Service Excellence assessment.**

**What we said:**
**Access** – We need to identify how our service users/custonmers access our services and use this information to drive improvement.

**What we achieved:**
We actively track how people access Stroke Association and how they are referred to us with 72% being referred and contacting us through health professionals.

**What we said:**
**Internal benchmarking (within Life After Stroke Services)** – We need to start benchmarking internally within our countries and regions.

**What we achieved:**
As part of our drive to improve what we do we have started to robustly map key performance areas between regions helping us to understand how we can develop and improve. Key Quality Indicators were introduced across all services in March 2016 to enable benchmarking. Indicators will be used in Supervisions and Team Meetings.

**What we said:**
**Trend identification** – We need to look at three years’ worth of our data and start to identify trends and use these identifiers to improve quality.

**What we achieved:**
4 years of Satisfaction Survey data has been charted. It shows gradual and sustained improvements have been made in 92% of areas. The trends showed that areas of improvement were “goals”. Knowledge of this informed the move from identifying “goals” to identifying clients’ needs, desired outcomes and actions. Training in this new approach was delivered in December 2015 – January 2016, in readiness for the introduction of Stroke Recovery Services and the new service model on 18th January 2016.

It is the expectation that regions and countries use the tools in the Quality Toolkit to inform where improvements are needed. The Key Quality Indicators will join the Satisfaction Survey data in being reviewed at a regional, country, and national level. Regional action plans and feedback gathered from service user feedback events is being gathered in centralized folders for regional and national scrutiny and review.
Over the year 2015-16 our Stroke Information Service answered 14,574 enquiries from people affected by stroke. This included:

- 9,396 calls
- 4,825 emails
- 146 Facebook enquiries
- 207 enquiries by other methods.

**What we said:**
We aim to answer 100% of written enquiries within five working days, and 80% within three working days

**What we achieved:**
Between April 2015 and March 2016 we answered 92% enquiries within 5 working days; 76% of these were answered within 3 working days. 8% enquiries were answered after five working days. We answered fewer enquiries within five working days compared to last year. There are two reasons for this: we have had a smaller team for much of the year, and when we recruited new staff, more experienced staff were involved in training and ongoing monitoring of work, which created delays in response times.

**What we said:**
We aim to answer 80 per cent of calls that are made to the helpline during opening hours.

**What we achieved:**
Between 1 April 2015 and 31st March 2016 we answered on average 49% of calls made during opening hours. This is significantly lower than our target and was due to a combination of factors including a smaller team, unplanned staff absence, and more time spent following up calls, particularly by newer helpline officers.

**What we said:**
We aim to achieve no less than 95 per cent satisfaction rate from people who have used our service.

**What we achieved:**
We carried out our annual user feedback survey in February 2016. The results showed that 67% respondents said that they were satisfied with the level of service they received overall. Other key findings here:
- 98% respondents said that they could contact the service at a convenient time.
- 72% respondents said that the service helped them by providing relevant information
- 60% respondents said that the service fully met or exceeded their expectations.

We also gathered service users’ feedback throughout the year and this showed a 92.6% satisfaction rate. These combined results show an average satisfaction rate of 80%.
What we said:  
We are the only UK charity solely focussed on stroke research. We will strengthen our role as a fully engaged partner and leading voice on the future research agenda.

What we achieved:  
- We made three new Priority Programme Awards use the psychological impacts of stroke and we made one new Priority Programme Award into haemorrhagic stroke.  
- We have been working in partnership with other funders to develop a new programme into vascular dementia, our third Priority Programme area.  
- We continue to fund awards across the whole stroke care pathway.

What we said:  
We want to use the evidence from research to challenge the status quo, build new consensus, and influence health and social care policy and practice, research funders and public understanding.

What we achieved:  
- We held an expert round table on vascular dementia to allow us to engage with senior experts and understand what the main issues and research gaps were in this disease area.  
- We collaborated with experts to develop a ‘State of Play’ review in vascular dementia and then developed a lay summary for service users and those affected by stroke and dementia to engage with the process.  
- We held a priority setting workshop to agree and set our research priorities in this field with service users and research experts.  
- We held a round table meeting on thrombectomy to help us gain a view of the feasibility of a the national roll-out of thrombectomy services in the UK.  
- We responded to a NICE consultation on thrombectomy.

What we said:  
Research funding and research capacity need to go hand in hand. A stronger funding base for stroke research needs to be supported by increased research capacity. We will therefore strengthen our commitment to developing the next generation of research leaders.

What we achieved:  
- We have funded two further lectureships in year 2 of this new flagship programme to support mid-senior level academic careers in stroke research.  
- We have funded five new Fellowships, two postdoctoral and one postgraduate. This is the highest number yet, reflecting the strengthening and capacity building of the research community at this career stage.

What we said:  
We want stroke survivors to benefit from widespread coverage of evidence-based services provided by the Stroke Association. The design of new and existing services will be underpinned by evidence. We will generate new evidence of what works to improve life after stroke and use that evidence to inform the design and delivery of our schemes.

What we achieved:  
- We are still working closely with our commissioned consultants to support the external evaluation of our Stroke Recovery Service.
What we said and what we achieved - Stroke Training

**What we said:**
Commit to being a driving force for increasing the standards of care given to stroke survivors.

**What we achieved:**
In the first year of training and education becoming one of the five key strategic aims for the organisation, we have been working with other departments within the Association to raise our profile and highlight the need for developing stroke knowledge in those who care for stroke survivors and those most at risk of stroke.

We have launched phase 1 of the Care Award, with 5 care providers working towards their Bronze award.

We have provided Level 2 training to 185 care staff, benefitting 532 residents.

One of these care providers has already completed the award. They embraced the nature and purpose of the award, and are already seeing a positive effect on their residents within their nursing home. They are keen advocates of the Care Award and their feedback will be an essential part of reviewing the structure and outcomes of the award to ensure its continued success into the second phase of the pilot and beyond.

We delivered level 2 and level 3 qualifications to all of the staff on the Solihull Hospital’s Stroke Ward. This enabled them to become the first stroke ward in the UK to become fully qualified in stroke. We produced a video with them, so they could explain the positive impact this has had on the ward, the stroke survivors they care for and them as a team. https://youtu.be/btqa3V2lRic

**What we said:**
Add value to your organisation’s business, by educating professionals to provide the best care to stroke survivors.

**What we achieved:**
Building on the development of the Level 2 Stroke Awareness qualification on the eLearning platform from the Skills for Care Innovation Grant, we have now delivered this qualification to a total of 367 students. This has aided the development and implementation of the Care Award, allowing more access to the qualification through the distance learning method of teaching.

We built on the success of the Professional Masterclass from last year, and presented a series of three further Masterclasses around the UK. For these we invited leading stroke experts to speak to a range of health and social care professionals on the topic of the ‘Hidden Effects of Stroke’. A total of 152 people attended the three events and the feedback we received was excellent, with many stating how this will help them improve their working practices.

During 2015/16 our trainers delivered Vascular Health Awareness Leads training in Scotland through Scotland Department of Health funding. This enabled us to train a total of 147 Stroke Awareness Leads, who have already cascaded their knowledge to 891 of their colleagues.

**What we said:**
Agree requirements with you and deliver quality training in accordance with the delegates and their learning needs.

**What we achieved:**
We carried out a full review of all our training courses. This included:
- all 15 modules of our Life After Stroke Training
- our qualification courses – QCF Level 2 & 3
- Supporting communication
- Communication in Clinical Practice
- Vascular Health Training (Scotland)
- Training for Trainers (Cascading Stroke Aware sessions)
What we said and what we achieved - Fundraising
Our fundraising team is accredited by the Fundraising Standards Board self-regulatory scheme.

What we said:
The Fundraising Standards Board works to ensure that organisations raising money for charity from the public do so honestly and properly.

As members of the scheme, we follow the Institute of Fundraising’s Codes of Fundraising Practice and comply with the key principles embodied in the Codes and in this Promise.

• We are committed to high standards.
• We are honest and open.
• We are clear.
• We are respectful.
• We are fair and reasonable.
• We are accountable.

What we achieved:
Our work relies heavily on the generosity of our supporters without which we could do very little.

Over the last year we have been able to help more people than ever before. We continued our drive to fund vital research into the treatment and prevention of stroke, and provided funding that supported this goal.

We continued to provide a valuable resource of support and information to stroke survivors, their families and carers.

Whether we are providing support through our Life After Stroke or information services, funding pioneering research, campaigning or providing Life After Stroke Grants to help improve the quality of stroke survivors’ lives, we rely upon voluntary income to help fund these activities.

As members of the Fundraising Standards Board we continue to be committed to the their high standards in all aspects of our fundraising activities.
The Stroke Association is committed to the provision of practical help and support, and aims to provide services and information to the highest possible standard. We actively encourage our customers to make their views known immediately if they are not satisfied with the service we provide.

What we said:
We aim to resolve complaints as quickly as possible, and will seek to respond to you regarding the outcome of your complaint within 20 working days of us receiving the complaint.

What we achieved:
During 2015/2016 we had a total of 32 complaints. These complaints were fully investigated and resolved satisfactorily.

We use the information we receive through the formal and informal complaints and compliments process to improve the service we are providing to our customers.
We are continuously working to improve the quality of the services we offer to people affected by stroke.

In order to fulfil this commitment to quality, we have set ourselves a series of priorities over the next year.

Life After Stroke Services

**To meet and exceed the existing standards for excellence detailed in our What you can expect from us document for our Life After Stroke Services, and continue to monitor how we are performing against those standards.**

**STANDARD 1 – Understanding needs**

We will help you to understand what has happened, and to identify and express your needs, goals and aspirations.

**STANDARD 2 – Providing information**

We will provide you with a range of information that helps to meet your needs.

**STANDARD 3 – Support**

We will provide support and encouragement to help you achieve your goals. We understand how stroke changes lives. We will work with you to help you adjust to the changes that stroke brings.

**STANDARD 4 – Influence**

We will provide you with opportunities to influence issues surrounding stroke, our charity and the services we provide.

**Our aims**

Here are some of the aims we have set ourselves to help us improve our service to you.

1. We aim to contact at least 95% of our service users within three working days from the date we are made aware that you would like to receive our service and within five working days to introduce the service to you.

2. We aim to provide at least 95% of our service users with information to help improve your health and wellbeing, in a way you can understand.

3. We aim to give our service users opportunities to provide feedback on our services (this will be by telephone surveys, focus groups and surveys).

4. We aim to embed quality review cycles in regions and countries operations’

5. Life After Stroke Services are in the process of introducing outcome measurements and anticipate generating targets for these in the next year.
Our commitment 2016-2017

Quality framework

Customer Service Excellence
We aim to maintain the highest level of compliance plus with this standard.

The Information Standard
We aim to continually review our information production system to ensure that we are providing high quality information in line with The Information Standard.

Investors in People
As an organisation we have already achieved the enhanced standard for IiP and are currently making the transition to the new standard ahead of our next assessment in 2018.

With the development of our corporate strategy our organisational development will be about ensuring that the Stroke Association is committed, ‘fit for the future’ and has the people needed to deliver its strategic ambition.

It will play a vital part in ensuring that our organization’s culture, values and environment support and enhance organisation performance and adaptability.

Stroke Training

• Provide extensive resources to stroke professionals from the health and social care sectors.
• Build a network of education ambassadors who can champion stroke training to carers
• Campaign for stroke specific education and training across the Stroke Care Pathway
• Create annual review programme for all courses
• Develop Care Home Awards
• Domiciliary and Personal Assistants engagement with QCF Qualifications

Stroke Information Services

This year had been a challenging one for the Stroke Information Service and our overall performance reflects this. We have continued to provide a service despite significant management and helpline staff shortages for much of the year. In addition, 3,492 more call attempts were made this year than the previous year which reflects a broader upward trend in demand for our service. While we recruited new helpline officers in the second half of the year, their training and ongoing checking of work for accuracy and quality continued to impact upon the availability of more experienced staff. Following a review of the service this year, we are making changes to how we structure and provide our service. These include recruiting more helpline officers so we can respond to more enquiries, and updating our processes for training new staff as well as trialling new opening hours to include evenings and weekends.

• We aim to answer 80% of all written enquiries within three working days and 100% within five working days.
• We aim to answer 80% of calls that are made to the helpline during opening hours.
• We aim to achieve no less than 95% satisfaction rate from people who have used our service.
Research and Information

- We are the only UK charity solely focussed on stroke research. We will strengthen our role as a fully engaged partner and leading voice on the future research agenda.
- Research funding and research capacity need to go hand in hand. A stronger funding base for stroke research needs to be supported by increased research capacity. We will therefore strengthen our commitment to developing the next generation of research leaders.
- We want to use the evidence from research to challenge the status quo, build new consensus, and influence health and social care policy and practice, research funders and public understanding.
- We want stroke survivors to benefit from widespread coverage of evidence-based services provided by the Stroke Association. The design of new and existing services will be underpinned by evidence. We will generate new evidence of what works to improve life after stroke and use that evidence to inform the design and delivery of our schemes.

Fundraising

As members of the scheme, we follow the Institute of Fundraising’s Codes of Fundraising Practice and comply with the key principles embodied in the Codes and in this Promise.

Listening and responding

- We aim to resolve complaints as quickly as possible, and will seek to respond to you regarding the outcome of your complaint within 20 working days of us receiving the complaint.

If you would like any more information on our commitment to quality please email quality@stroke.org.uk

Or call us on 0115 871 3949
We are the Stroke Association

We believe in life after stroke. That’s why we support stroke survivors to make the best recovery they can. It’s why we campaign for better stroke care. And it’s why we fund research to develop new treatments and ways of preventing stroke.

We’re with you every step of the way, together we can conquer stroke.

Stroke Helpline: 0303 3033 100  
Website: stroke.org.uk  
Email: info@stroke.org.uk  
From a textphone: 18001 0303 3033 100

We are a charity and we rely on your support to change the lives of people affected by stroke and reduce the number of people who are struck down by this devastating condition. 
Please help us to make a difference today.