



Summer 2023

Stroke News

For everyone affected by stroke

Stroke
Association

"I can be myself."

**Keith and Dave talk
about why their local
stroke group is important
to them.**

This issue:

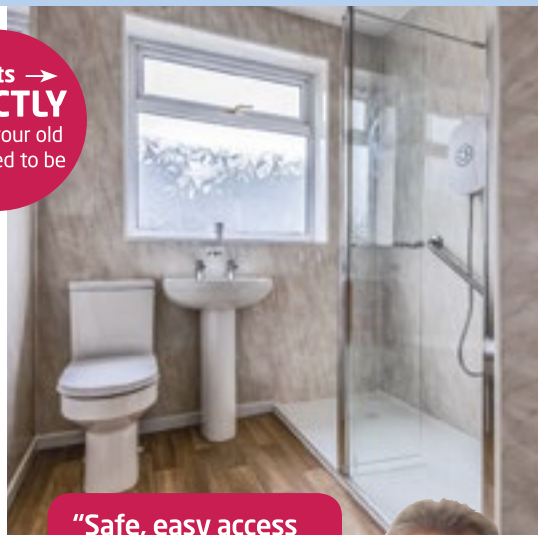
- Being discharged from hospital
- Carers supporting each other online
- Watch our new aphasia documentary

TRANSFORM YOUR BATHROOM - TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE

Old bath out! New shower in!

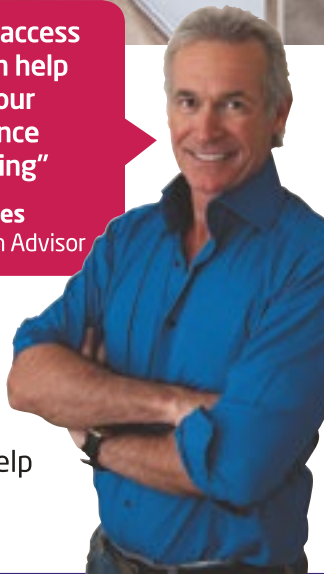


← Fits →
EXACTLY
where your old
bath used to be



"Safe, easy access
bathing can help
maintain your
independence
and wellbeing"

Dr Hilary Jones
GP and Health Advisor



Don't struggle getting in and out of your old bath when you can enjoy safe, comfortable bathing again. Let Mobility Plus transform your bathroom with one of our superb, easy entry showers.

- Easy access showers, baths and wetrooms tailored to you
- Bathrooms of all shapes and sizes
- Complete design and installation service
- Finance options to help spread the cost*

MOBILITYplus 
www.mobility-plus.co.uk

For your free brochure freephone
0808 115 3918
Please Quote Ref MCH401

*Subject to eligibility.

Contents

Features

8 Stroke groups mean "comradeship" and "caring" Keith and Dave share and what their stroke group means to them

16 Community Connectors
Follow Danny's journey into volunteering for the Stroke Association

30 Carers support online
How Lea found support at our stroke cafes

Editor **Christine Webster**

Published by **Stroke Association**,
1 Sterling Business Park, Salthouse Road,
Brackmills, Northampton, NN4 7EX

Advertising **Square7 Media**.
Contact **Ethan Hall**
ethan@square7media.co.uk
020 3832 2879

Volume 41.2 Summer 2023
© Stroke Association 2023

Guidance

14 Being discharged from hospital after a stroke

40 Staying safe at home

42 Financial help after a stroke

Contact us on **0300 3300 740**, email supporter.relations@stroke.org.uk or visit stroke.org.uk/strokenews to:

- Subscribe to three editions of Stroke News per year for free (online, in print or audio)
- Change your preferences to online to help save the charity money
- Unsubscribe.





Editor's letter

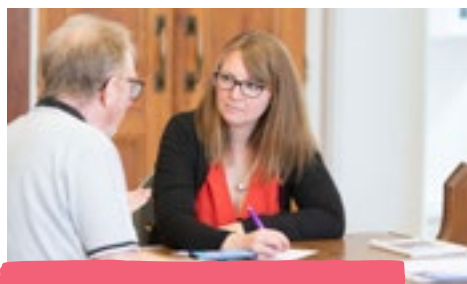
In this edition, we're celebrating the community's role in stroke recovery. Our cover story follows stroke survivor Keith, who had a stroke when he was 67 leaving him unable to speak and in a wheelchair. On page 8, Keith shares his story and explains why the Cuckfield Stroke Communication Group has been an invaluable part of his recovery.

May saw the launch of our national aphasia awareness campaign, with the release of our documentary film, 'When the Words Away Went'. On page 26, Julie, one of the three stroke survivors in the film, talks about

living with aphasia and finding her voice.

Plus, our Helpline Team answer questions about being discharged from hospital (page 14) and we share the latest research news (page 38).

I hope you enjoy this issue and please keep sharing your stories with us.



Christine Webster, Editor

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information provided in this magazine is accurate, but we cannot guarantee accuracy and the information provided does not constitute legal or other professional advice. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not always to be taken as the opinions of the Stroke Association. Advertisements, products or services listed are not necessarily recommended by the Stroke Association. Stroke News is printed on paper from sustainable sources. The Stroke Association is registered as a charity in England and Wales (No 211015) and in Scotland (SC037789). Also registered in Northern Ireland (XT33805), Isle of Man (No 945) and Jersey (NPO 221).

Over to you

The day began like any other – my husband, Kevin, and I sat in bed drinking a cup of tea.

I went to use the bathroom to wash, but Kevin found me sobbing on the side of the bed. My first hazy memory was seeing a room full of paramedics. I was being very aggressive and obnoxious to everyone, which was so out of character for me.

There was a neurologist with the stroke ambulance team and amazingly a CT scanner too. They did not give me the clot busting drugs as there was some evidence of slight haemorrhage.

An MRI scan at the hospital showed a bilateral stroke at the back of my brain, which is quite rare, but explained why I didn't have the usual stroke symptoms.

My right hand and right leg wouldn't work properly, but 18 months on I am pretty much back to my old self. I do still have a few neurological issues and slight problems with my right side, but I'm able to live a full life once more.

Annette Stalley.

Stroke Helpline: **0303 3033 100**

Find your local services, clubs and groups: **stroke.org.uk/support**

Join our online community: **mystrokeguide.com**

Find information about stroke: **stroke.org.uk/publications**



Do you have something to share?

Email **strokenews@stroke.org.uk** or write to us at Stroke News, Stroke Association, 1 Sterling Business Park, Salthouse Road, Brackmills, Northampton, NN4 7EX.

Keeping you on the move at home



THERA-Trainer tigo

- ✓ Exercising is possible from a chair or a wheel chair
- ✓ Exercising of legs and/or arms is possible
- ✓ Improves metabolism and vitality
- ✓ Active and passive movement (with or without motor support)
- ✓ Encourages cardiovascular system
- ✓ Improves levels of stamina and flexibility
- ✓ Strengthens the muscles
- ✓ Increases mobility

Rental plan available:

Regular exercise at a low price?
With THERA-Trainer UK you can choose whether to rent or buy.

Inflation proof: We guarantee no price increases during the term of your rental contract.



Simply scan the QR-Code for more information about the THERA-Trainer tigo.

Visit our website for future updates, new products and much more – www.thera-trainer.co.uk

Choose the right bike that suits both your needs and your budget - Contact us for a free and no-obligation demonstration at home or request a brochure.

THERA-Trainer UK Ltd.
T. 01908 564100 | info.uk@thera-trainer.com | www.thera-trainer.co.uk

From our Chief Executive

Community support is vital when recovering from the effects of a stroke. The sense of belonging and knowing that others are going through the same experience as you can feel reassuring and help to reduce feelings of isolation.

We have a wonderful network of Stroke Association support groups who give their time to run fun and engaging sessions. These present opportunities to meet other stroke survivors and learn new skills. Find out more about how one of our support groups is helping their local community on page 8.

Our Stroke Helpline also provides a safe space where you can open up and share what you hope to achieve in terms of your life goals. You can call our

Helpline on **0303 3033 100** or visit **stroke.org.uk** if you need support.

I was excited to attend the premiere of our new feature-length documentary. 'When the Words Away Went', at the British Film Institute in London in May. The film is part of our latest campaign to raise awareness of aphasia and its impact on stroke survivors and their families. It features three stroke survivors with aphasia who tell their stories, in their own words, as they journey to find their voice and rebuild their lives. It is emotional and uplifting, and I highly recommend watching it at **stroke.org.uk/documentary**

Thank you for your continued support.

Juliet Bouverie OBE

Stroke groups mean “comradeship” and “caring”

It’s a beautiful sunny Wednesday in West Sussex, and there’s a buzz of excitement coming from the village hall where the Cuckfield Stroke Communication Group meet.



Today is a singing session at the Cuckfield group – part of our UK-wide network of groups for stroke survivors and carers. It’s always a popular activity, and the members, including stroke survivor Keith, are excited to begin.

“You get to do things here that you wouldn’t do at home,” says Keith. “Whether that’s speech, singing, ballet or art. Some of

the art I have done here, I have taken home. I have bought some brushes so I can do it myself.

“I’ve just turned 70 but I only feel about 50. I don’t feel old. I don’t want to do things that are for old age pensioners. And you don’t have that here.”

Keith had a stroke in May 2020. Keen to continue his recovery, get

out of the house and meet new people, he joined his local group.

“It’s great to come here and talk to people,” says Keith. “They have helped me be more confident. You can talk about what you like. They’re not judgmental.”

Fellow group member, Dave, who had a stroke in 2014, agrees: “There’s great

comradeship. It is nice talking to people who understand and a good opportunity to practise speech. I look forward to every Wednesday. The club always has so many interesting activities.”

Run by our amazing volunteers, stroke support groups enable stroke survivors and carers to meet others who understand their challenges and to try things again.



"My wife and I can't speak highly enough of Carolyn and her team"

Dave, stroke survivor

Volunteer, Carolyn, has been leading the group in Cuckfield for over 15 years. "We support stroke survivors to make new friends, raise confidence, improve their communication and have fun through lots of different activities," says Carolyn. "We do picture quizzes, golf, music - and even ballet and samba rhythm drumming."

Carolyn is supported by an enthusiastic team of volunteers, including Karen. "When people come into a new group, it can be

a bit daunting, so we help them for the first few weeks until they settle in and feel happy to mix more with other people," says Karen.

"I enjoy seeing people gain confidence and start to make friends. Some people are wary to start with, they don't think the group will be for them. But it's surprising how quickly they adapt."

As well as making sure everyone has fun, the volunteers also support people with their speech



"I enjoy making people smile. When we're doing a group activity together, like singing, there's such an uplifting feeling in the room."

Jane, volunteer

and language skills. "We give people time to be themselves," says Karen. "We don't dismiss them because they can't talk or put words into their mouths. We support people to have the confidence to try, and to know that no-one's going to judge."

Keith feels that attending the group has helped his speech. "I am better than I used to be," he says. "I am sitting here talking to you now, I wouldn't have done that otherwise. I find that tremendous."

What does the Cuckfield group mean to Keith? "It means freedom," he says. "I can be myself, right or wrong, it doesn't matter. You are free to be your own person."

Dave agrees. "What the group means to me is friendship, caring and wonderful people. Nothing is too much trouble. My wife and I can't speak highly enough of Carolyn and her team."

It's not just members who enjoy the group. Jane, who also volunteers there says: "I love making people smile. When we do an activity together, like singing, there's such an uplifting feeling in the room. Volunteering is such a positive thing to do. The feedback you get back from the members is more than you put in. It's so lovely and friendly."

With their voices warmed up, and song sheets in hand, Keith and Dave are ready to join in the singing. But first, Keith has some advice for other stroke survivors: "Join a group like this. As simple as that. And be yourself."



Find your local group at
stroke.org.uk/groups



"I can be myself, right or wrong, it doesn't matter. You are free to be your own person"
Keith, stroke survivor

Wheelchaircars.co.uk



**FREE NO
OBLIGATION HOME
DEMONSTRATIONS**



**USED VEHICLES
FROM £2995**

Tel: 0161 793 5934

**Full details on our website,
www.wheelchaircars.co.uk**

Being discharged from hospital after stroke

Going home from hospital is an important step in your recovery. But understanding what equipment and on-going care you'll need can be overwhelming.

Simon from our Stroke Helpline answers some commonly asked questions.

Q What happens when I get discharged from hospital?

When you're ready to leave hospital, your stroke team will work with you to agree what support you'll need at home and put together a discharge plan. This will cover all the arrangements for your continued rehabilitation and care at home. This could include carers coming in to help you get washed and dressed, adaptations for your home or visits from speech and language therapists to help with communication difficulties.

Q Where can I get equipment from, such as a hospital bed?

Occupational therapists and your hospital stroke team will look at what equipment you'll need to manage safely at home before you're discharged from hospital. You can keep the equipment for as long as you need it.

Occasionally, there can be issues with equipment being delivered in time. If this happens, you or your carer can contact the hospital discharge team, occupational therapist or therapy team to chase up missing equipment.

Q Will my physiotherapy or speech therapy continue at home?

Your community stroke team will help you with your continued care and rehabilitation once you leave hospital. However, how often you receive rehabilitation will vary depending on how much rehabilitation you need, where you live and the



availability of community support team.

If you don't get further support, speak to the hospital stroke team who can advise, or talk to your GP for a referral to your local physiotherapy service.

Q Who else can support my on-going care?

Contact your local authority to arrange a support and care needs

assessment. This is usually done by an occupational therapist or social worker who will visit your home to find out what support would help you. This could include aids, such as handrails and bathing equipment, or practical help from a paid carer.

They'll also do a financial assessment to see how much, if anything, you'll need to contribute towards the cost of your care.



Call our Stroke Helpline on **0303 3033 100**, email **helpline@stroke.org.uk** or visit **stroke.org.uk/discharge** for more support.

You can also download our 'Equipment for independent living and mobility' guide at **stroke.org.uk/equipment** or call **0300 3300 740** to order a print copy.

Community Connectors

We have an amazing team of volunteers, known as Community Connectors, who help us raise awareness of stroke and our charity.

Many are stroke survivors or have a personal connection to stroke. They all share an enthusiasm for building relationships with people, places and organisations in their communities, to help improve the experiences of people affected by stroke.

Danny, 50, is a Community Connector who volunteers in south west England. The former draughtsman had his first stroke in 1995, caused by a blood clotting disorder he was unaware of. Danny's second stroke in 2013 had a major impact on his balance, coordination and speech.

"I heard about the Stroke Association after getting involved with a disability rights group and decided to start volunteering just

before the Covid-19 pandemic," says Danny. "My role mainly focuses on delivering awareness presentations and running my own brain injury peer support group.

"I enjoy the social aspect of being a Community Connector. The role empowers me to get involved with my local community. I can use my experience of stroke to bring others together."

Danny feels that the interactions he has within the community have a real impact. "Sharing information about stroke and encouraging people to think about their own health and take better care of themselves is what I find most rewarding.

"I've led sessions for the Department for Work and Pensions, GKN Aerospace and a group of teachers in Newport, as well as other local businesses. A lot of organisations are interested in our work to increase knowledge of stroke amongst their



"I enjoy the social aspect of being a Community Connector. The role empowers me to get involved with my local community."

colleagues, raise funds for our charity and help to prevent future strokes."

Danny is also involved in the Community Connector Voices group, where he and fellow volunteers discuss ideas for the role's future.

"Being a Community Connector has given me more confidence," says Danny. "I've spoken publicly a few times in the past but delivering our stroke awareness presentation and sharing my personal story means I have to be vulnerable. I found this challenging to begin with, but in doing this, I feel like I have better acceptance of my own experience of stroke."



If you're interested becoming a Community Connector, visit stroke.org.uk/VolunteerOpportunities to see what's coming up in your area.

Campaigning in Wales

The tireless campaigning of the stroke community in Wales led to the Welsh Government's publication of the Quality Statement for Stroke in 2021.

Since then, we have been working with Welsh Government to make sure the Statement leads to better stroke care.

To keep government focus on stroke, in May this year we held our first event in the Senedd (Welsh Parliament) since the Covid-19 pandemic.

The event gave stroke survivors the opportunity to tell government and NHS decision makers – like Shakeel Ahmad, Welsh Government Clinical Lead for Stroke – about areas requiring improvement in stroke care.

Michael shares his story at the Senedd

Michael, 29, of Port Talbot, spoke at the event. Michael had a stroke in January 2019 at just 24 years old.

"As a younger stroke survivor, part of why I'm campaigning is to show it can happen to anybody," says Michael. "I never thought I'd have a stroke. I thought it was something that happened if you led an unhealthy lifestyle or when you're a bit older.

"It's also important that people are aware of the hidden effects of stroke. My main struggle was psychological first of all.

"Seeing a psychologist earlier would have really helped my recovery. I'd left hospital six months after my stroke in a wheelchair, with very poor speech, very emotional and still struggling to come to terms with life post stroke.

"My physiotherapist at the time told me, 'There's no prognosis of how much better you'll get'. I wasn't ready to hear it. That is something people don't often realise: the mental battle post stroke is just as tough as the physical.

"I had to wait a year to see a psychologist. I didn't realise at the time, but I needed that help early on."





Michael with Joel James MS

Fortunately, Michael was able to connect with Neath Port Talbot Stroke Group after attending a World Stroke Day event soon after his stroke. He has attended the group ever since.

He says the variety of activities and chance to meet other stroke survivors has been "amazing", and an "absolute necessity" for a stroke survivor. As he continues on his recovery journey, Martin even climbed Pen y Fan in 2022, raising over £3,000 for stroke survivors.

And he sees campaigning as a part of his "duty" to help other stroke survivors.

"The psychological side of stroke care needs to be better," Michael says. "I was in a dark place and didn't see any future at all. I had to work on that first before I could focus on improving physically.

"I feel like it is my duty to tell politicians and decision makers what needs to change to improve stroke care. The Senedd event gave me the chance to share my



Michael with Altaf Hussain MS

achievements and successes, but also remind decision makers of the importance of support for stroke survivors, as well as making sure they hear from people affected by stroke.

"Many people told me that my experience of stroke really spoke to them. There is nothing more impactful than politicians and clinicians hearing from a stroke survivor. I hope to keep being involved in campaigning so that we can improve stroke care for future generations."

"I feel like it is my duty to tell politicians and decision makers what needs to change to improve stroke care."



Get involved

Join Michael and campaign to transform stroke services by joining our Campaigns Network. To join or share your story, go to stroke.org.uk/campaigns or contact us on campaigns@stroke.org.uk or 020 7566 0341.

"Stroke shaped who I am today"

Stroke can affect anyone at any age. Jess was 10 when she had a stroke due to a heart condition in 2006. Now in her twenties, Jess is passionate about raising awareness of childhood stroke and our new childhood stroke support services. Here she tells her story and shares what she's learned from her experiences:

"I was at home one evening, when suddenly, I felt really strange. I couldn't stand up or speak. My parents took me to hospital, where they discovered I'd had a stroke.

"My stroke affected my speech, and emotional and mental health. It caused fatigue and I permanently lost the use of my right arm.

"The first couple of years after my stroke were the hardest, trying to rebuild my life with my new needs and disabilities.

"What motivated me was my family, and desperately wanting to go back to school. It was hard for me to make and keep friends due to my aphasia and fatigue. However, it's easier now, and I have many people who care about me.

"The thing that challenges me the most as an adult is the mental and physical fatigue. Some days I need to be at home doing nothing for the day. But that's fine. I rest until my mind or body is recharged.

"I am proud of every obstacle I've overcome due to my stroke. It has shaped me to be the woman I am today."

"Despite this, I try to make every day fulfilling. Keeping a job didn't work out for me, so I volunteer at a youth club and at a learning disability charity. I have a beautiful dog who loves going out for short walks and having her belly rubbed. I love being with my caring boyfriend and seeing my devoted family.

"Having a stroke when you are a child or adolescent is hard. Trying to learn about your stroke and understand your emotions can make you feel like your head is about to explode. It's scary because you feel like you're the only young person who has had a stroke. But you're not alone.



"It's normal to grieve for your old life, but you're still that person - you just need to adjust to your needs and possible disabilities.

"Recovery after stroke can be slow and frustrating but be patient and don't be hard on yourself. Your mind and body are working the best they can to recover. When you get fatigued, you must listen and rest. Your motivation, a good mind-set and a good routine will help. Don't give up.

"If the Stroke Association's childhood stroke services existed when I was a child, it would have helped my family and me tremendously. I wish that my family had services too, because a stroke doesn't affect you only, it affects everyone in your life.

"Now I'm living my new altered life and I'm happy. I am proud of every obstacle I've overcome due to my stroke. It has shaped me to be the woman I am today, and I wouldn't change my life one bit, past and present."



Our Childhood Stroke Support Team provides practical information and emotional support to children and young people affected by stroke, their families and carers, teachers and professionals.

Contact our Stroke Helpline on **0303 3033 100** or visit **stroke.org.uk/childhoodstroke** to find out more about our services and resources.

SAMSUNG Galaxy Tab A8

easology



Introducing The Tablet That Makes Tech Easy!

The all-new Samsung Galaxy Tab A8 easology is specially designed for ease-of-use, yet it is also packed with the very latest technology....

Technology is central to our lives, yet are you sometimes left wondering why it is not easier? That's where the Samsung Galaxy Tab A8 easology comes in.

Easy To Use

Designed with ease in mind, this Samsung easology tablet makes the latest technology available to all.

SPECIFICATIONS

- Easy-to-use interface
- Big 10.5" HD screen
- 32GB storage
- All-day battery
- Front and rear cameras

Exclusively available from the easology store for £229.99

The easology Home Screen Explained

The Home Screen is split into 4 main sections:

TOP RIGHT: Four quick contacts you can assign to friends and family, or anyone you might need to contact easily.

TOP LEFT: Features the time, date and weather for your area.

MIDDLE: A list of your favourite apps. Download apps from the Google Play Store and add them to your home screen.

BOTTOM: A row of apps you are likely to use the most, including a handy magnifier, camera, settings, and internet.

HOME BUTTON: A single tap on this rounded square will return you to the Home Screen.



Watch online at www.easology.net/a8

Find clearer layouts, easy navigation, large touch points, big text and icons, and more.

Stylish, Sleek And Powerful

The Samsung Galaxy Tab A8 easology is perfect for searching the internet, video calls, watching videos, social media and much more.



ORDER BY PHONE (Local Rate)

0118 418 1217

Mon-Fri. 08.30 - 20.00 Sat. 9.00 - 14.00



ORDER BY WEB

www.easology.net

When the Words Away Went

Aphasia affects 40% of stroke survivors, but there's a huge lack of public understanding about the speech and communication disorder. We've created a new feature-length documentary, 'When the Words Away Went', to try to change this. The film follows the lives of three stroke survivors with aphasia on their journey to find their voice and rebuild their lives.

Julie Foster, 36, from Tyne and Wear, is one of the stroke survivors who featured in the documentary with her family.

Following a stroke in 2013, Julie had a second stroke in November 2015. It took away her ability to speak, and at 21 weeks pregnant, she sadly also lost her baby.

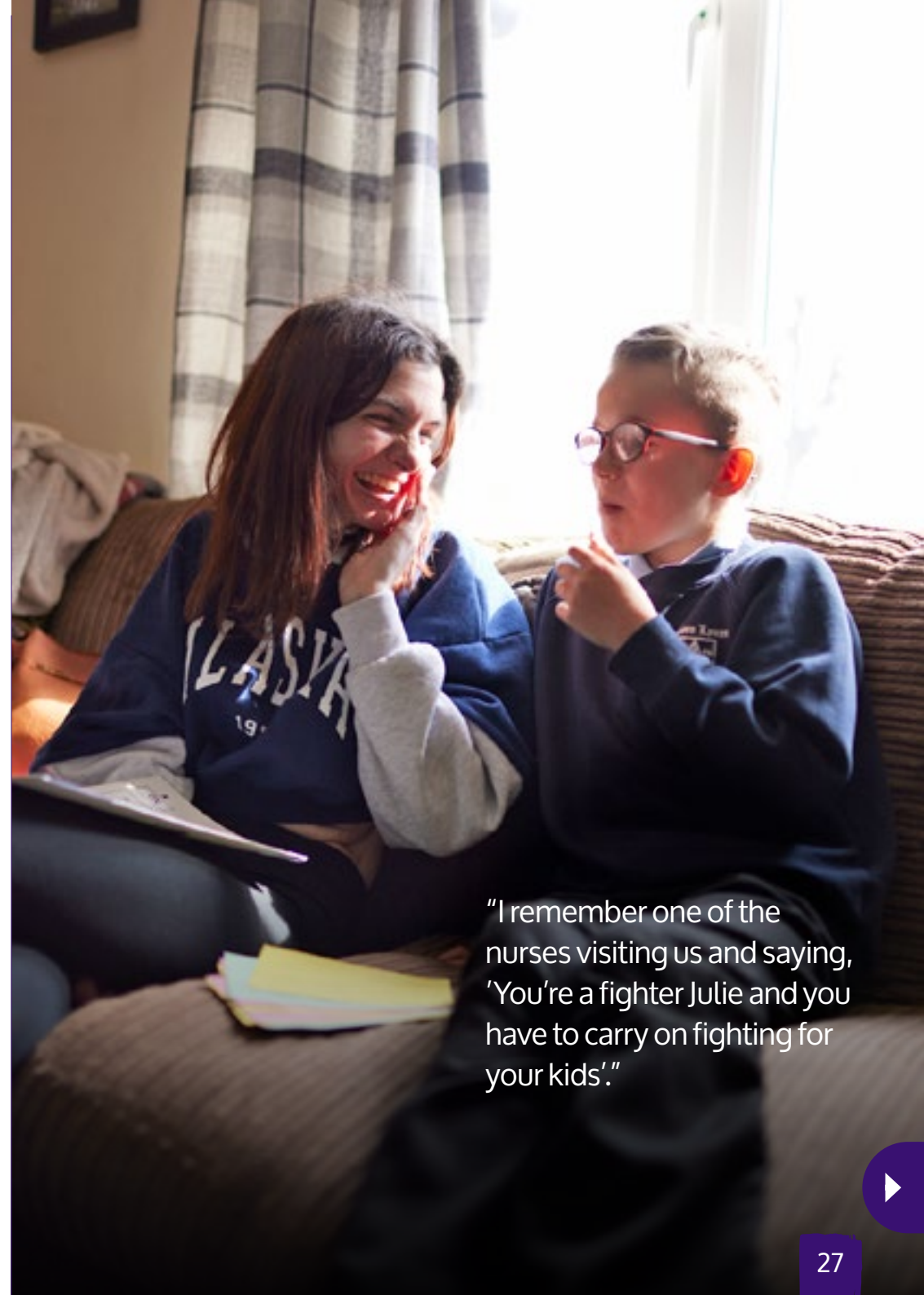
At the time, Julie was in and out of consciousness and doctors suspected that she may not survive.

Tragically, Julie was told that her pregnancy may have caused the stroke as her blood was thickening and her hormone

levels were so high. Due to her risk of another stroke that could be fatal, Julie was left with no choice but to terminate her pregnancy.

"It was devastating and to make it worse, Stephen had to make the decision as I couldn't communicate at all," says Julie. "I remember one of the nurses visiting us and saying, 'You're a fighter Julie and you have to carry on fighting for your kids'. I knew I had to carry on for the three of them."

Julie was not able to speak for months, unable to even say her children's names. With a lot of hard work, intensive speech



"I remember one of the nurses visiting us and saying, 'You're a fighter Julie and you have to carry on fighting for your kids'."

and language therapy and Stroke Association support, Julie's speech has improved immensely. But she still experiences daily challenges with her speech and reading.

"I get frustrated with not being able to find my words," says Julie. "My spelling and writing is also affected. I go to shops and they rush you. I've even been told when I get on buses that I've been drinking."

"I can't read my kids bedtime stories and I used to love reading – it's just so much information."

"After my stroke I was encouraged to attend a Stroke Association group by my Stroke Support Coordinator. This was a brave thing to do, as I wasn't leaving the house to take part in everyday activities. After attending a few times, I really got into it – talking with other stroke survivors and their carers. I now run the group alongside my volunteers."

Julie says helping other stroke survivors has become her goal in life. She is particularly

passionate about teaching younger generations about stroke and aphasia – a journey that the filmmakers were keen to follow.

"I am a positive person and I want to help people with aphasia as much as possible," she says. "I really believe that kids in school need to be taught more about stroke and aphasia. I agreed to prepare and give a talk about my stroke to a small group of pupils at the local primary school."

Though the thought of opening up her life to film cameras was daunting, Julie was determined to take this step.

"It was a privilege to be involved because I have always wanted to raise awareness of aphasia following my own experience," Julie says. "During my recovery, I was presented with all sorts of barriers in terms of people's understanding of my condition, and their misconceptions. I felt it was about time for people to be made more aware of the condition."

"In the lead up to the interviews and filming, I was very nervous – I didn't know if my communication challenges would allow me to do it. On the day of the filming, I felt excited, and my nerves had disappeared."

And after the success of her first school talk, which features in the documentary, and the overwhelmingly positive public reaction to 'When the Words Away Went', Julie is fuelled with newfound confidence to take her message further.

"The school talk went really well, and the children were great," she says. "I have already been approached by another school to give another speech. I am thrilled, and happy to do so."

"I want the documentary to help people with aphasia know they are not alone. We are all in this together and there is support out there. I hope it will inspire them to not give up and know things can improve over time with hard work and determination."



You can watch 'When the Words Away Went' on stroke.org.uk/documentary

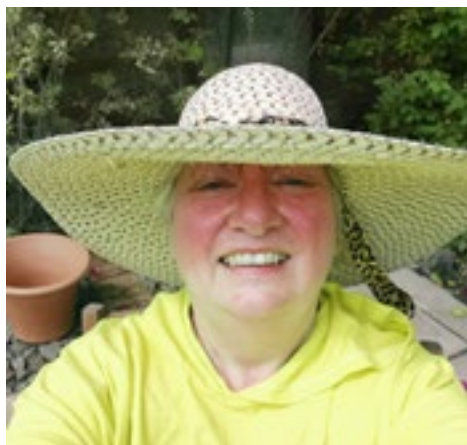
If you or someone you know needs our support, contact us on **0303 3033 100** or visit stroke.org.uk/aphasia

Carers support online

When Lea's husband, Simon, had a stroke in April 2020, their lives changed overnight. Simon's right side was affected by the stroke, and at first, he struggled with walking and using his arm. During the three and a half weeks he was in hospital, Simon regained some mobility, but still needed a lot of support.

Lea, from Edinburgh, found herself feeling anxious about Simon coming home. "I was terrified," she recalls. "I worried about everything. What if he fell? What if he had another stroke? How would I cope with the responsibility?"

"Simon had very limited movement in his shoulder, arm, wrist, hand and fingers. I had to help him dress and watch him as he came down the stairs backwards as he couldn't hold onto the banister with his right side. I helped him with medication and cut up his food, which I still do. He was in a lot of pain due to his shoulder, so I helped with his exercises."



Being so focused on Simon started to take its toll on Lea's health and wellbeing. She felt overwhelmed but didn't know where to turn.

"What I needed was someone to talk to, who understood what I was going through," says Lea.



We run online cafes for carers, stroke survivors and young stroke survivors in Scotland. If you're interested in joining, please email us at **EngagementTeamScotland@stroke.org.uk**

We also host online and in-person cafes for carers and stroke survivors around the UK. Visit **stroke.org.uk/groups** to find support near you.

"Simon heard about the Stroke Association's Scotland online carers cafe and encouraged me to join."

Our stroke cafes are online support groups, who meet on Zoom every week. "The support I've received has been invaluable," says Lea. "I can talk about my experience as a carer freely and without judgement. I feel less alone listening to other peoples' stories. We give each other useful tips on looking after ourselves and managing the challenges of being a carer."

"The cafe helped me to accept the situation I was in and develop a pragmatic view of how to deal

with the impact of stroke, both on me and my husband. I now feel less anxious and saddened by the situation. It is what it is, and when I need help, it's great to have the cafe there."

Inspired by her experiences and wanting to be there for others, Lea is now a cafe volunteer too.

"I'd encourage anyone looking for support to join. Sharing stories can be a tremendous support for yourself and others – it can help get you through some of those difficult days. Apart from anything else, it's good to meet new people, and have a blether over a cup of tea!"

Christmas card competition winner



Congratulations to Katie Ryan-Palmer, the winner of our 2023 Christmas card competition, with her beautiful 'Reindeer in the Snow' design.

Katie, 25, was getting ready to begin the second year of her architecture degree when she had a subarachnoid haemorrhage in August 2018, aged 20. She was in an induced coma for 16 days following her stroke.

With drawing forming a core part of her studies, Katie found herself turning to art as a source of therapy and healing as she started her recovery.

"I drew a little prior to the stroke," says Katie. "However, I was not as quick to reach for a sketchbook when explaining anything or as free with a pen or pencil as I have been since and am now.

"After my stroke creating art was one of the only outlets where I felt I could participate without making a mistake or requiring correction.

"Creating is liberating and healing. It has encouraged me to express who I am inside and provided

"To me, the togetherness of the reindeer symbolised a stroke survivor and supporter."

me with a voice at times when explaining myself wasn't easy."

Katie was determined to return to university. With the support of her family and friends, she has since graduated and is now studying for a Master's degree in architecture.

Throughout her recovery, Katie found stroke information and support on the Stroke Association's social media channels – where she also learned of the Christmas card competition.

"I decided to enter the competition firstly because I wanted to give something back to the Stroke Association, which has given me so much reassurance through social media and the website when I have had questions and worries," says Katie. "Secondly, I wanted to tell the



story of my experience in the hope that I could inspire other people – especially young people.”

For Katie, the image of the reindeer in her Christmas card design represents the importance of support networks for stroke survivors.

“To me, the togetherness of the reindeer symbolised a stroke survivor and supporter,” she says. “I know that I would not be where I am today, post stroke, without all of mine. United, the reindeer represent a celebration of the nameless army of people who aid stroke survivors in their recovery.”



All of our lovely cards, including Katie’s brilliant ‘Reindeer in the Snow’ design, are available from our Christmas shop from 8 August. Visit stroke.org.uk/Christmas or call **0300 330 0740** to order yours.

To enter the 2024 stroke survivor Christmas card competition, visit stroke.org.uk/cardcomp24 or call **01604 687775** or email cardcompetition@stroke.org.uk to find out how to submit.

Stroke destroys lives

Every five minutes, stroke destroys lives. Stroke can cost people their ability to move, communicate and lead their everyday lives. We are dedicated to helping people affected by stroke to rebuild their lives.

If you can, please support others whose lives have been changed by stroke. You can make a donation by visiting stroke.org.uk/donating, by calling us on **0300 3300 740** or by completing the form below.

I enclose my total gift of £

Funds raised will go towards vital services and pioneering research to help rebuild the lives of people affected by stroke.

I enclose a cheque made payable to Stroke Association OR please debit my: ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ CAF Charity Card

Card no: – – –

Expiry date: /

Signature:

Date: / /

SN23DON
STRK0103

Make your gift worth 25% extra with Gift Aid

To enable us to claim the tax already paid on your donation, please tick the relevant box below. This will mean that if you are able to give £20, Gift Aid would make your gift worth £25.

giftaid it

☐ I am a UK taxpayer and would like to Gift Aid this donation and any donations I have made in the past four years, or I make in the future to the Stroke Association. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax each tax year (6 April to 5 April), than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all of my donations, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Date: / /

☐ Sorry, I am not a UK taxpayer, and therefore cannot take part in Gift Aid.

Return your form

Please detach this form and return it to us using the envelope enclosed, or post it to:
Stroke Association, Bumpers Way, Bumpers Farm, Chippenham SN14 6NG



Keeping in touch

We would love to send you information about the difference you can make to families affected by stroke through campaigning, volunteering, donating and through your own fundraising. Please tell us how you'd like us to stay in touch by filling in your details below.

How would you like to hear from us?

☐ Email ☐ Text ☐ Phone

SN23DON
STRK0103

Your name:

Please enter your phone number or email:

Address

Postcode

Our Promise

Your privacy is our priority. We promise to keep your details safe and will never sell them. We will also keep in touch by post about how we can continue to support you, and opportunities to support us. If you would like to change the way you hear from us, just call **0300 3300 740** or email supporter.relations@stroke.org.uk. How we protect and use your personal data is set out in our privacy policy at stroke.org.uk/privacy.

© Stroke Association 2023. The Stroke Association is registered as a charity in England and Wales (No 211015) and in Scotland (SC037789). Also registered in the Isle of Man (No 945) and Jersey (No 221), and operating as a charity in Northern Ireland.

Stroke
Association



02392 245570
www.wavmob.co.uk

7 Stratfield Park Elettra Avenue
Waterlooville Hampshire PO7 7XN

Are you looking to meet new people?



Stroke
Association



Why not join in one of our free **online stroke activities**. From sessions where you can learn more about stroke to interactive, fun and social quizzes.



Or you can chat to people on our vibrant **online forum**. This community is a place to ask questions, share experiences and talk about things important to you.

Connecting with people who've had a stroke, and their families, can help support recovery and increase your confidence. All from the comfort of your own home.

Visit stroke.org.uk/finding-support to find your own online community.

Predicting stroke risk after a transient ischaemic attack

Transient ischaemic attack (TIA) is a type of stroke whose symptoms resolve by themselves within a few hours. A TIA means you are now four times more likely to have a stroke in the next year. It's therefore vital to get medical help right away.

Prompt treatment with blood thinners can reduce stroke risk after a TIA, but it can be hard to know who to give them to since not all TIA patients will go on to have a stroke and blood thinners can have serious side effects for some people.

We're funding Professor Philip James and the PREDICT-EV team at Cardiff Metropolitan University, who think they may

have found a way to predict which TIA patients are likely to go on to have a stroke so that they can be given targeted treatment to prevent this from happening.

Research aims

PREDICT-EV is based on particles called extracellular vesicles (EVs), which are released by almost all cells in our bodies and are vital to the body's functioning.

Previous research has shown that blood samples from people who've recently had a stroke have particularly high levels of one type of EV. The PREDICT-EV team think that these may cause blood to form clots at random, increasing stroke risk.



Learn more about our research at stroke.org.uk/research. You can also support stroke research by donating what you can at stroke.org.uk/donating or calling 0300 3300 740.

To find out if this is the case, and whether EV levels can be used to predict TIA patients' stroke risk, the team will take and analyse blood samples from TIA patients and those who haven't had a stroke or TIA, and perform a blood clotting test (PT test). They will track which participants have a TIA in the following year and see if there is a link between stroke risk, EV levels and PT test results.

Then, they will use the SAIL databank – a Welsh population databank containing information on GP and hospital admissions over the last 20 years – to get a

broader understanding of the links between TIA, stroke risk and PT test results.

Research benefits

If the PREDICT-EV team are correct that EVs are linked to stroke risk, EV analysis and PT tests could be used to personalise treatments to help reduce the risk of stroke after TIA. This could even be done retrospectively for people who've had a PT test at the time of a TIA. Ultimately, this should mean that fewer people who've had a TIA go on to have another stroke.

Staying safe at home

Mobility, visual and some cognitive problems, as well as fatigue after stroke, can make moving around your home more challenging. Knowing you can get about safely is important for your confidence and independence. Here, Careline365 share some tips to help you to improve your safety at home.

Safe walkways

One of the simplest ways to improve safety at home is to keep all walkways (hallways, stairs, doorways) clear to help prevent falls. Removing trip hazards such as cables, loose mats and curling rugs can make a huge difference. Make sure your hallways and stairs are well lit so you can see potential obstacles.

Have an emergency plan

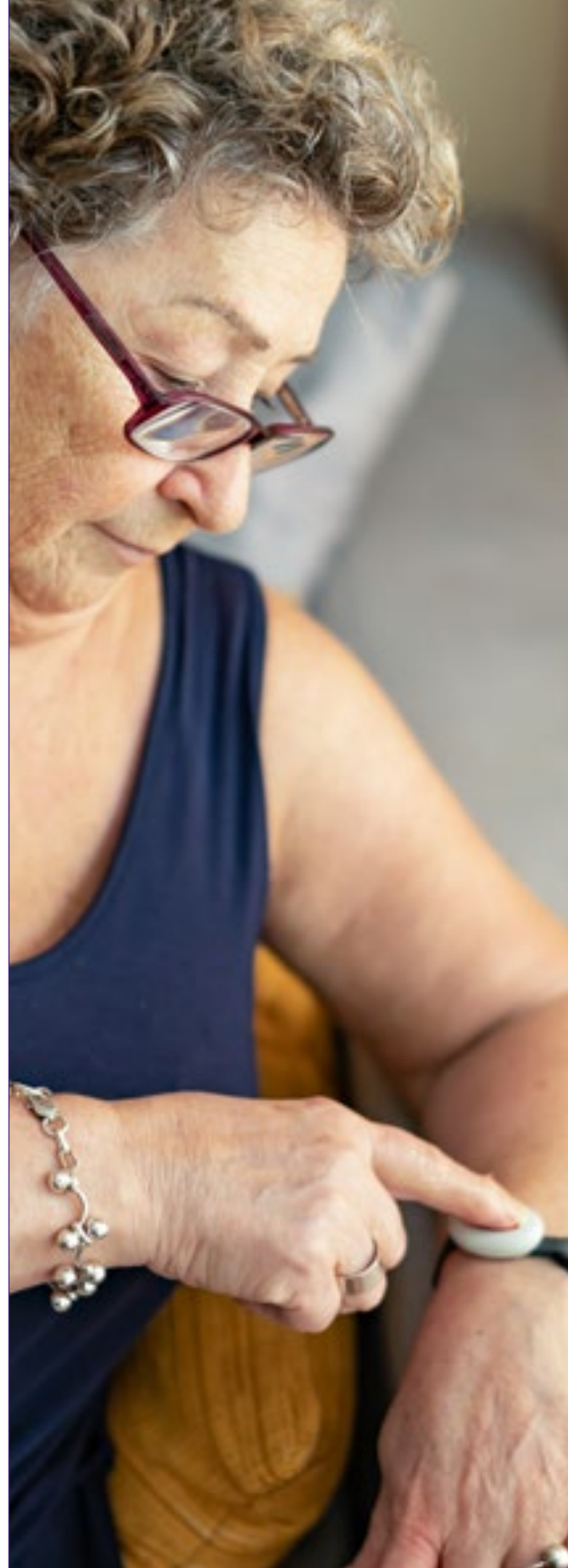
When you've had a stroke, it's natural to worry about experiencing another medical emergency. Consider making an emergency plan, so if something happens, you have reassurance that you can get help. For example, making arrangements with family or getting a personal alarm.

Improve accessibility

Installing ramps to prevent you tripping on steps, or handrails to help you walk from room to room, or to get in and out of bed, can make it easier to get around and reduce the risk of falling. If you struggle with the stairs, consider having a stairlift installed too.

Purchase a personal alarm

Personal alarms enable you to get help if you have an emergency at home. The alarm is usually worn on a pendant around your neck or on your wrist. If you need assistance, you press the button and it sends out an alert to your family or a monitoring service. Some personal alarms even come with fall detection and GPS trackers.



Use a mobility aid

If you have a mobility aid, such as a walking stick or frame, you should try to use it at home too, especially if it's been recommended by your therapist. It's important to remember that mobility aids exist to support your independence, not to take it away. Your mobility aid will also offer more support than your furniture as you move around.

Ask for help

If there's a task you can't do safely then ask someone to help you. Or leave it if it's less important.

Download our 'Equipment for independent living and mobility' guide from stroke.org.uk/equipment or call **0300 300 740**.

To find out more about Careline365's personal alarms call **0800 030 8777** or visit careline.co.uk. Use code "SA15" to get a £15 discount when you buy a Careline alarm. For each purchase, Careline365 will also donate £40 to the Stroke Association.

Financial help after a stroke

Dealing with the aftermath of stroke can be tough. You may need to take time out of work, and family members can also find they need to reduce their hours to help with care. This can be a real worry, but financial help is available through the benefits system.

1 Benefits – Many people are not aware that they can get help and support. You can check what benefits you might be able to get by using an online benefits calculator. These include **entitledto.co.uk** and **turn2us.org.uk**. You can also get individual advice from organisations including Citizens Advice, Independent Age and Age UK.

2 Cost of living help – To help with higher costs, there are some extra payments and funding available. Visit **helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk** for up to date information

to help with the cost of living, including bills, childcare, housing and travel.

You may also be able to get help via your employer, local council and other organisations:

✓ **Energy grants** – If you are struggling to pay energy bills, contact your supplier. Many energy companies have schemes to apply to if you are finding it difficult to pay gas or electricity debts, for example the British Gas Energy Trust. Citizens Advice also provides information about grants available from energy suppliers to help you pay off energy debts.



For more information, visit **stroke.org.uk/financial-support**, or contact our Stroke Helpline on **helpline@stroke.org.uk** or **0303 3033 100**.

✓ **Council and local authority grants** – Some local councils offer grants to help people on a low income. The amount you may get depends on the criteria set by your local council. You may be offered vouchers for food or fuel, clothing or emergency travel. For England and Scotland, contact your local council. For Wales, contact the Discretionary Assistance Fund online, for Northern Ireland, apply for discretionary support online.

✓ **Food banks** – You usually need to be referred to a food bank by a professional such as a Citizens Advice service, your GP or a social worker. Your local

council can give information about food banks and other crisis support in your local area. Visit **citizensadvice.org.uk** for more advice.

✓ **Sick pay from your employer** – If you were working before your stroke, your employer may have a company occupational sick pay scheme. Speak to your employer about what you are entitled to.

✓ **Carers allowance** – If you care for someone at least 35 hours a week and they receive certain benefits, you may be able to receive Carer's Allowance. Visit **gov.uk/carers-allowance** to apply.

Puzzles

Puzzles can be a fun way to exercise your mind and improve concentration, understanding and memory.

Word search

Y S D L I M P E T
D H C N L F H V C
E E L S A G A R C
E L I K F S A A N
W L F C U B O V Y
A S F O S E V A W
E T S R B Q F J O
S E A G U L L S B
H S I F R A T S L

WAVES
SAND
ROCKS
SEAGULLS
SHELLS

CRABS
STARFISH
SEAWEED
LIMPET
CLIFFS

Across

- 1 Noob (6)
- 4 Coming (6)
- 9 Rain, hail, snow etc (13)
- 10 Even-tempered (7)
- 12 As late as (5)
- 13 Meticulous (11)
- 17 Do-nothing (5)
- 18 Unstable (7)
- 20 Shrink (13)
- 22 Piece of cake (6)
- 23 Musical pulse (6)

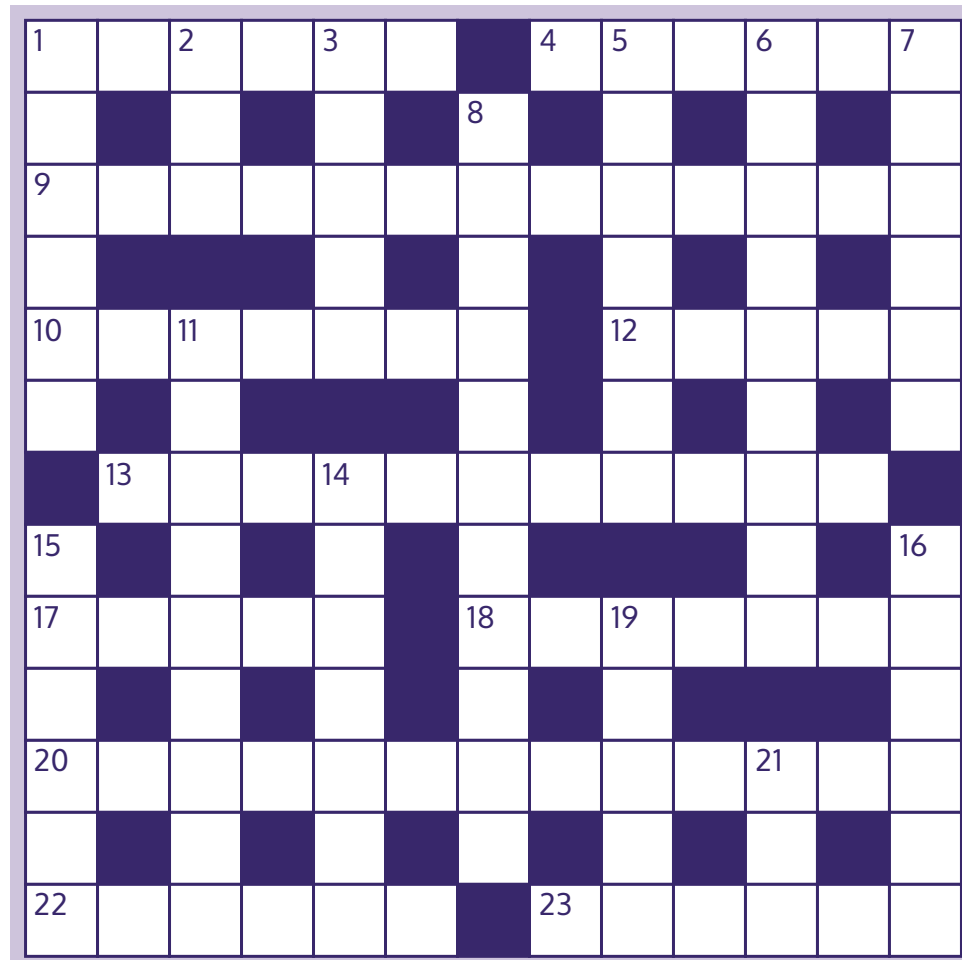
Lottery

For your chance to win £1,000 every week, play the Stroke Association Charity Lottery. Find out more at lottery.stroke.org.uk.

Down

- 1 Sibling's son (6)
- 2 Compete (3)
- 3 Ascend (5)
- 5 Vamoose (2,1,4)
- 6 Being (9)
- 7 Snarl-up (6)
- 8 Believer in free will (11)
- 11 Pure (9)
- 14 Tusked sea mammal (7)
- 15 Clear (6)
- 16 Method (6)
- 19 Instruct (5)
- 21 So far (3)

Solutions
see page 50



With thanks to The Times/News Syndication who granted us rights to this crossword.



leuchie
NATIONAL RESPIRE CENTRE

Tailored short breaks
with 24 hr nursing care
leuchiehouse.org.uk
Speak to Jo or Katy to
book on 01620 892864



Denis Duncan House
Leuchie's fully accessible, self-catering
holiday home in Dirlston, East Lothian.

To find out more and book, visit
denisduncanhouse.co.uk

Stroke News

For everyone affected by stroke

To advertise your products
or services in Stroke News
and reach over 50,000
readers, please contact us
to find out about
the opportunities that are
available:

020 3832 2879

ethan@square7media.co.uk

Are you suffering with a dry mouth?

Swallowing problems after a stroke can lead to a dry mouth.
This can impact your oral health and affect your ability to
speak, swallow and eat.

**Oralieve supplements your natural saliva, helping to bring
effective and lasting relief.**

Try Oralieve today with
15% off your first order*
using code SN15 at checkout.
Free delivery on orders over £25.

Visit www.oralieve.co.uk
or scan the QR code

For more information
please contact via email
hello@oralieve.co.uk
or phone 01582 439122.



*Discount code is valid on single items only. Multi packs are already discounted.

Oralieve®



f Oralieve
@Oralieve_UK

"At 19, I had a stroke"

"The doctors said I'd be in a wheelchair
for life. So I made a promise to myself –
'I will walk and talk again'. And I did.
By attending my local communication
support group I was able to improve
my speech and rebuild my confidence."

Amber, stroke survivor and Stroke Association volunteer

Every five minutes in the UK a life is shattered,
and a family is torn apart, by stroke.

And for so many survivors like Amber, the road to
recovery is long and desperately lonely. If you or
someone you love has been affected by stroke,
you'll know the devastation it causes.

But you can change the story.

Find out how a gift in your Will could help more
stroke survivors like Amber in the future.

Call **020 7566 1505**

email legacy@stroke.org.uk

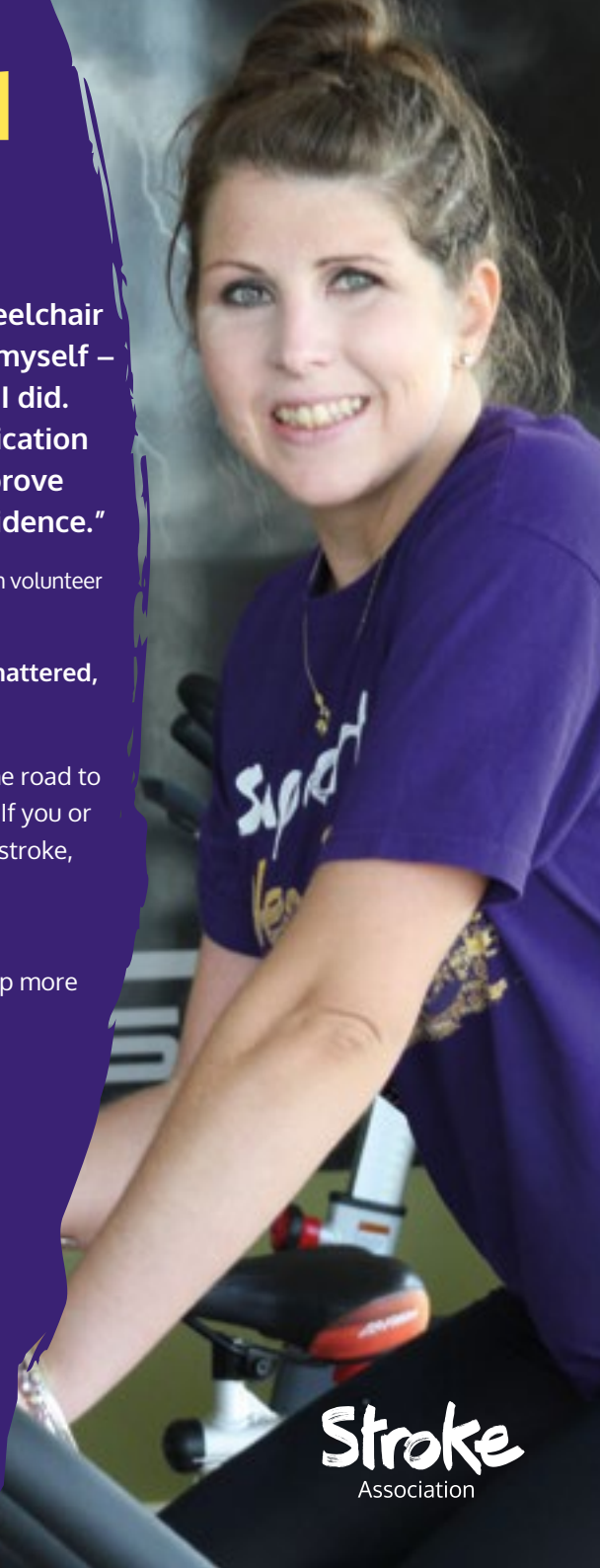
or visit stroke.org.uk/legacy

Rebuilding lives after stroke

The Stroke Association is registered as a charity in England
and Wales (No 211015) and in Scotland (SC037789). Also
registered in the Isle of Man (No. 945) and Jersey (No. 221),
and operating as a charity in Northern Ireland.

© Stroke Association 2023

Stroke
Association



Rebuilding lives after stroke

Our charity supports people to live the best life they can after stroke. But rebuilding lives is a team effort and we need your help. A huge thank you to everyone who has gone the extra mile to fundraise, volunteer and campaign with us. Your support means we can reach even more people who need us.



Cammy McKinnell

Congratulations to Cammy McKinnell who completed the UK Three Peaks Challenge. Cammy had a stroke in 2013, aged 27. Together with his friends, he scaled the three highest peaks of Scotland (Ben Nevis), England (Scafell Pike) and Wales (Snowdon) in 23 hours and 51 minutes, raising over £6,000 for the Stroke Association.

Chez Vous

Thank you to London restaurant, Chez Vous. They chose to support us after co-owner and chef, Laurent Pacaud, had a stroke. "We're delighted that we raised £5,978, as well as awareness of stroke," said Martin Bradley, business partner and chef.



Find out what events we've got coming up on page 50 or make a donation at stroke.org.uk/donating

How does your donation help?



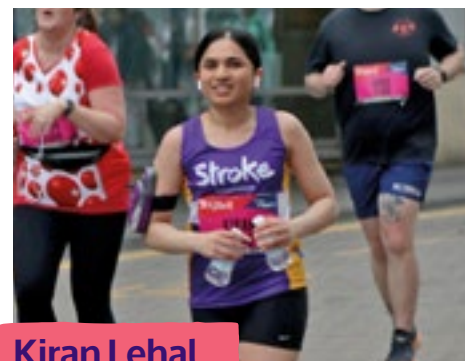
£10 supports our Helpline to answer a call from someone who urgently needs support after a life-changing stroke.



£25 could be part of a hardship grant for a stroke survivor who is struggling to pay for basics like food and clothing.



£50 could help us be there for children and families through our childhood stroke support services.



Kiran Lehal

Congratulations to our Great Birmingham Run participants, including Kiran Lehal. She completed the half marathon, and raised over £1,000 in memory of her father who passed away from a sudden ischaemic stroke.



Volunteer spotlight

Lori Rowsell volunteers with Nailsea Stroke Survivors Club.

"I was 48 when I had a stroke. I had a young family and was an accountant. When I was told I had 'limited capability for work', I cried. I felt useless.

"A Stroke Association Support Coordinator invited me to a stroke support group. Before I knew it, I was the Chair! It made me feel valued.

"I now run two stroke support groups, I'm part of a patient involvement group and help to plan the Stroke Group Network Conference.

"Volunteering has helped me to 'get back out there.' I've realised that I have more to give and my experience can make a difference."

Find out how you can volunteer at stroke.org.uk/yoursupport

Join Team Stroke

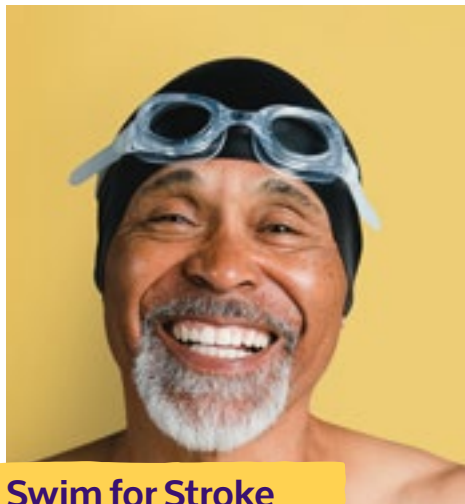
Get involved and fundraise at home, or join us at exciting events around the UK:

Thames Path Challenge 9-10 September

Challenge yourself to the 25km, 50km or 100km walking routes along England's famous river. Get 25% off the registration fee when you sign up with the Stroke Association at ultrachallenge.com/thames-path-challenge

Vitality 10,000 24 September

You can walk, run or jog this iconic 10k around central London, taking in some of the capital's most famous landmarks on the way. Sign up at stroke.org.uk/vitality



Swim for Stroke

Take to the water at a time and place that suits you and challenge yourself to swim 1.3, 7, 13 or 20.5 miles! Go to events.stroke.org.uk/swim to find out more and sign up.

For more events and ways to get involved in our work, see stroke.org.uk

Crossword solution

Across: 1 Novice, 4 Advent, 9 Precipitation, 10 Equable, 12 Until, 13 Painstaking, 17 Idler, 18 Rickety, 20 Psychoanalyst, 22 Doodle, 23 Rhythm

Down: 1 Nephew, 2 Vie, 3 Climb, 5 Do a bunk, 6 Existence, 7 Tangle, 8 Libertarian, 11 Unalloyed, 14 Narwhal, 15 Lipid, 16 System, 19 Coach, 21 Yet

Y	S	D	L	I	M	P	E	T
D	H	C	N	L	F	H	V	C
E	E	L	S	A	G	A	R	C
E	L	I	K	F	S	A	A	N
W	L	F	C	U	B	O	V	Y
A	S	F	O	S	E	V	A	W
E	T	S	R	B	Q	F	J	O
S	E	A	G	U	L	L	S	B
H	S	I	F	R	A	T	S	L

medimotion

GET MOVING EVERYDAY...

Stay active with

RECK MOTOMed.

Passive, motor assisted, active movement.
For loosening, strengthening & endurance



muvi
Train arms & legs together

NEW



loop
Innovative height adjustment

MOTOMed training can:
Reduce muscle stiffness and
increase range of movement.
Improve circulation, walking ability,
cardiovascular function.
Used extensively in UK hospitals,
therapy centres and private homes.

Interest free
hire/buyer plan
available.
Call now for a **FREE**
demonstration.

**01559
384097**



Interactive gaming



Co-ordination training



Children's



Bed Model



Parkinson's

tel: 01559 384097

sales@medimotion.co.uk www.medimotion.co.uk

RECK
MOTOMed.
www.motomed.com

Looking to become more independent and confident by reducing falls and trips and making walking less of an effort while living with the effects of a stroke?

*91% of FES users report a reduction in the incidence of falls after using FES.**

*OML Patient Survey 2022



Functional Electrical Stimulation (FES) restores and improves movement to assist with walking, grasping, shoulder or bowel function leading to improvements in daily living activities, quality of life and reduced pain.

FES is a treatment which involves applying small electrical pulses to the nerve, activating the muscle which has become weakened due to a neurological condition.

Odstock Medical Ltd (OML) is the leading provider of FES treatment and equipment to the NHS.

FES is a recommended treatment in the National Guidelines for Stroke by the Royal College of Physicians

What our FES patients say...

“ It (FES) enables me to walk. Without it, I suffer from the textbook dropped foot. It improves my balance immensely and I can walk safely both upstairs and across uneven ground. ”

For more information:

Web: www.odstockmedical.com

Email: enquiries@odstockmedical.com

Call: 01722 439540

11-005-0026 v2



Scan here