



Friends Newsletter

Winter Edition 2009

Dear All,

Welcome to the bumper winter edition of the Friends of the NSF newsletter, and hasn't it been a cold start to the season! Victoria has already seen its first snow falls, for the year, a stark contrast to the heat and bushfires that we had during February. The office is busy with activity and stroke support services are rapidly growing across the country.

NSF Updates

We would like to welcome eight new stroke support groups to the program:

QLD:

- Gossip Coffee Aphasia Group
- Luscious Coffee Aphasia Group
- Beenleigh Stroke Club
- Logan Stroke and Brain Injury Club

Victoria:

- Cranbourne Stroke Support Group
- Aphasia Support Group
- Central Victorian Stroke Support Group

NSW:

- Australia Aphasia Association (AAA).



Blood pressure awareness program

The 2009 **Know your numbers** week long campaign was a huge success with over 500 pressure stations offering free blood pressure checks in Queensland and Victoria at various public locations including Pharmacies Rotary Clubs, YMCA branches, Community Health Centres and Hospitals.

Over 160 Queensland pharmacies will be offering free blood pressure checks all year round. If you live in QLD and would like your free blood pressure check please visit the NSF website at www.strokefoundation.com.au or call Belinda Wilkinson on 03 9670 1000.

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DEATH BY PIZZA



A new analysis has revealed that 94% of pizzas sold in Australia are overloaded with salt. Just three slices of takeaway pizza can contain the entire daily salt intake for an adult, which is 4 grams per day. Salt is a leading cause of high blood pressure, and high blood pressure causes more deaths than anything else. According to experts, it's the hidden salt in many of our every day foods that causes this serious health risk. The pizza with the highest sodium was **Pizza Hut's BBQ Meat Lovers**, which provided **327%** of an adult's recommended daily amount of salt (13 grams). More than two thirds of takeaway pizzas contained double the daily recommended amount of salt for an adult and four takeaway pizzas contained as much as three times. "Bread, processed meats and cheese are all high salt products so combining them into one meal eaten in fairly large amounts as a pizza is deadly.

In addition to checking the label and buying low salt foods when we do our weekly grocery shop, all of us can benefit from eating less salt

by following these guidelines when eating out:

1. When ordering pizza, choose vegetable or chicken toppings instead of pepperoni, bacon, or extra cheese.
2. When buying ready to eat packaged foods, choose low-salt options: compare products to find the one lowest in sodium using the per 100g column on the Nutrition Information Panel.
3. Limit fast foods such as burgers, fried chicken and pizza.
4. Keep healthy snacks such as dried fruit & nuts or fresh fruit at hand.
5. When dining out at a restaurant, ask for sauces and other condiments to be served on the side rather than on the meal.
6. Don't add salt to your food at the table when dining out.
7. Avoid ordering dishes that contain high salt ingredients including Asian sauces, cured meats and cheeses.
8. Don't be afraid to ask the restaurant or take-away food outlet about the salt content of their meals and ask them not to salt the fries!
9. The National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia has set a Suggested Dietary Target of 1600mg sodium (4g salt) for overall health.
10. Salt is listed on food labels as sodium. To convert grams of sodium into grams of salt, you have to multiply by 2.5.



The countdown to National Stroke Week begins only 14 weeks to go!

A **new** and **fresh** look to the FAST campaign will be launched during National Stroke Week this year. The campaign will again promote the early warning signs of stroke with the introduction of a **new visual element**.

While recognition of stroke warning signs is improving, there are still many people who do not know the warning signs of stroke. The new elements to the FAST campaign aims to help people remember the key warning signs; face, arms, speech and time to act FAST. Acting FAST can save a life.

We need your help to continue promoting the FAST campaign in your community by displaying FAST information and/or holding an event during the month of September.

Stroke Week Packs

The packs provide a sample of what resources are available for National Stroke Week, which you will receive in early August. There will be a great range of FAST merchandise to make your activity stand out!

The NSF is providing all these items free of charge (excluding t-shirts, which have been discounted for you to \$19.20 incl. GST, normally \$24.00). Order additional resources, such as wallet cards and posters via the resource order form in your Stroke Week pack.

Stroke Week Activity Grants

The Stroke Week activity grants are now open for your group to apply, **but be quick as there are limited grants this year!**

If you would like to apply for the \$200 grant, you will automatically receive a FREE Stroke Week pack. If you are not applying for the grant or are a consumer please register via the website at www.strokefoundation.com.au/stroke-week-national-stroke-week

Please find attached the application form for the grant.

Applications open now!

Grants are limited. Don't miss out, get your application in ASAP!

Applications for grants close on Friday the 24th July 2009

Grants will be distributed week commencing 3rd August 2009

Packs will be sent early August

Acquittal Report must be submitted by 30th October 2009



strokesafe™ awards!

The strokesafe™ awards is an opportunity to recognise the support and efforts of community groups, health professionals, and workplaces who hold an activity during the month of September, that promotes Face, Arms, Speech and Time to act FAST.

If you run an activity, you can enter the strokesafe™ awards by filling out an application form, which will also act as your Acquittal Report.

Stay tuned for the second edition of Stroke Week News 2009 available in August.



All inquires regarding National Stroke Week and Friends: Email swissell@strokefoundation.com.au

faith hope courage

STROKE OF ART 2009

In past years we've asked stroke survivors to share their artistic talent with us for our Stroke of Art , now we're asking for words of inspiration.

We invite anyone who has been touched by stroke to post us your message of "faith, hope, courage" for *Stroke of Art* 2009.

We will provide you with a *Stroke of Art* postcard for you to write a personal message on, which can express anything about your experience; based around the theme of *Faith, Hope, and Courage*. The postcards will make up our 2009 exhibition at Parliament House NSW in August.

Entry Details

To order your postcard pack or email us your message & we can write it on a postcard for you, log on to our website:

www.strokefoundation.com.au/upcoming-events/

OR

Phone Jasmine Lesnik on (03) 9670 1000.

All postcards must be received by Friday 26 June 2009.



“Dream, Believe, Achieve”: Stroke Self Management Research Project

As part of the research project, the Dream, Believe, Achieve program is being tested against an existing program for people with any long term health condition, not just stroke.

In total 143 stroke survivors took part in the research program. Information is being collected on what people thought of the program as well as how it impacted on their stroke recovery journey. The results of the research are expected in early 2010.

Dream, Believe, Achieve Stroke Self Management Program

We are pleased to announce the program has been up and running now for the last couple of months, in Victoria’s metropolitan Western region and on the Mornington Peninsula.

We are looking for more participants to run a third program in the Peninsula, while the first program will start in the Austin Health area next month.

We are working closely with hospital teams in these areas to

ensure new stroke survivors know about the program.

The program runs for 2.5 hrs, for eight weeks. It is designed to help stroke survivors to get their lives “back on track” after stroke and cover topics such as:

- Sharing the stroke journey.
- How does stroke make you feel?
- Moving towards a healthy lifestyle: learning to be stroke safe for life.
- Moving towards a healthy lifestyle: working with health professionals.
- Moving towards a healthy lifestyle: leisure activities, social support and financial matters.

For further information please contact Belinda Bailey, Stroke Educator on (03) 9670 1000.

Now you’re our Friend be our Fan!



Do you have access to the internet and want more regular updates from the NSF? The National Stroke Foundation now regularly updates its fans on Facebook, on Twitter



and on our new blog. To stay in touch and learn more about what we have been up to, follow our **tweets** at www.twitter.com/strokefdn visit the **Facebook page** at www.facebook.com/people/National-Stroke-Foundation/81740861169 or check out the **blog** on www.strokefoundation.com.au/blog

What's happening around the country

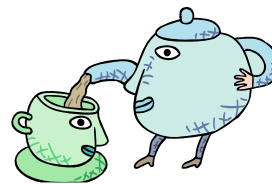
Research Projects

Calling all Young Stroke Survivors!

Having a stroke at any age is traumatic, but experiencing stroke in late adolescence or early adulthood can be particularly distressing. My name is Kate McGurk, and I had a stroke when I was 20. I am now 25 and doing an honours degree in psychology about the perceptions of peer support by younger stroke survivors. I would like to individually interview up to 10 younger stroke survivors about their experience of stroke and the peer support they did or did not receive after their stroke. My research will identify the particular needs of young stroke survivors, and aims to inform policy makers and service providers to improve the resources available for young stroke survivors specifically.

If you (or someone you know) had a stroke in the last 5 years and were under 35 at the time, and are willing to talk about those experiences, please contact me on kmcgurk@student.ecu.edu.au or 0431 837 275. This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of Edith Cowan University in Western Australia and is funded by the National Stroke Foundation.

Attention: Queensland stroke survivors in the Logan Region



TOP UP CLUB **A Stroke Maintenance Group**

The Community Integrated Rehabilitation Service at Logan Central Community Health Centre, offers a long term ongoing support program called the 'Top Up Club' for stroke survivors to continue exercising once discharged from a rehab program.

Weekly group sessions are offered on an ongoing basis for as long as clients wish to attend. The Top Up Club is supervised by an occupational therapist or physiotherapist, but clients attending the group are responsible for carrying out their own exercises and activities. Clients who attend Top Up



Club say they feel more confident to do daily tasks as well as reporting more motivation to complete their exercises over time. Stroke survivors also find the social side of the group beneficial as they get a chance to talk to other 'strokies' sharing in their achievements.

For more information contact the Logan Community Integrated Rehabilitation Service Metro South Health Service District.

Victoria, do you want to be involved?

Type 2 Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease and Complementary Medicine

A study based at Monash University is underway to look at the use of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) practitioners by people with Type 2 diabetes and/or cardiovascular disease. This study provides an opportunity for people with Type 2 diabetes and/or cardiovascular disease to provide information to the researchers to better understand their perspectives and needs.

Interested consumers are invited to participate in an interview or focus group. The required characteristics of participants are as follows:

- Aged between 55 and 74 years - based in Victoria (metropolitan or regional)
- Diagnosed by a doctor at least 12 months ago to have Type 2 diabetes or/and cardiovascular

- disease (including hypertension controlled by medication)
- Advised by doctor to manage the condition(s) through diet, exercise and/or oral medication
- Visited any type of CAM practitioner since the diagnosis.
- to help address the related health concerns.

All participants will remain anonymous in the research findings Interviews take about an hour and held at a convenient place for the participant. If expenses are incurred for taking part (car parking, taxi or public transport) reimbursement of up to \$20 is available upon presentation of receipts.

Further information

If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please contact Rachel Canaway at Monash University:

Tel:(03) 9903 4507 ;Email:

rachel.canaway@med.monash.edu.au

StrokeConnect – Phone Peer Support

Victorian volunteers needed

The NSF is excited to be piloting a peer to peer phone support program. We are currently looking for enthusiastic volunteers who have time to help other stroke survivors and carers on their recovery journey by providing peer support over the phone.



For further information about the program and training please contact Jo Smith, Project Officer Stroke Support on (03) 9670 1000.

Western Australia

From Tom Benson

Stroke Support Groups

The Stroke Support Groups in WA are alive and well, in the last 3 months many of the groups have reported an increase in membership and an increased interest in the programs that are being offered to stroke survivors and their families through these groups.

The Northern Districts Group recently hosted a Teddy Bears Picnic at Rotary Park in Wanneroo-organised by group Patron, Dot Newton. This was a very successful day which saw stroke survivors and their carers spend the afternoon out in the sun for a picnic lunch. The event was open to all groups and prizes were offered for the best dressed Teddy, well done to the group and their sponsors.

Both the **Osborne Park and Swan Districts Groups** are closely affiliated with the respective Stroke Units and are delivered on hospital grounds. The programs being offered by these groups have been of great interest to members with some exceptional speakers from these units delivering presentations. This is a great way

of educating survivors as well as their families about the outcomes of stroke and what they need to do to self manage their condition.

The big topic at all group meetings at present is the planning for National Stroke Week. There is no greater asset during this time than having stroke survivors out there manning stalls, answering questions and proving to the public that there is life after stroke. If you would like to get involved in a stroke week activity then please contact the WA office for more information on 08 9346 3574.

WA Forum

The NSF will be holding its first stroke support group forum on June 17th. Two participants from each group have been invited to attend this forum with regional groups invited to teleconference in for sessions of interest. The forum will provide an opportunity for group leaders to come together to learn from one another and to share their experiences in running support groups.

Rebecca Naylor, Divisional Director of Stroke Support at the NSF will introduce the new StrokeConnect program to be launched later in 2009. The forum will allow participants to provide input into the development of new project materials.

The forum will have two guest speakers: Dannie Butcher from



Fitness WA will be talking about the Heartmoves Program and John Otago from Technology Assisting Disabilities will be discussing various programs and technologies available to support families in their life after stroke.

Invitations to this event have already been distributed to group leaders.

Council on the Ageing WA

The Council on the Ageing WA (COTA) promotes the interests of all older Australian, irrespective of their origin, situation or background. We provide a variety of programs to promote well-being of older people.

Living Longer Living Stronger program enables people over 50 to engage in affordable, high quality, strength training activities over the long term. The program is currently conducted through 70 health and fitness centres across WA.

A Peer Educator can run a number of programs free of charge, for your group on a variety of topics including:

- **Medication Management**
3 sessions including:
 - Medicines without mix-ups
 - Brand name or generic Medicine, choosing wisely'
 - More than medicines

- **Beyond Maturityblues**
This program aims to raise awareness of depression and associated issues in older people.
- **Working Together to Prevent Crime**
This program aims to provide practical advice and strategies to help you actively reduce the incidence of crime and make your life safer and more relaxed.

In July **Act Belong Commit** a pilot program for positive mental health will run in Joondalup, Mandurah and Rockingham.

For further information on any of the programs or to become a member phone (08) 9231 2133 or visit the website www.cotawa.asn.au.





Tasmania

Stroke Support Groups From Narrelle Byatt

SURVIVE & REVIVE



The Southern SSG has experienced a revival in numbers and enthusiasm this year welcoming many new members. The first meetings for the year were inspiring as members shared recent successes and goals. They also provided feedback on activities that laid the foundations for planning for 2009.

Groups have provided an opportunity for members to socialise, share with others in similar situations and to learn more about relevant health and wellbeing issues and services available.

This year's meetings have included presentations on community aged care, disability and other

support services. A particular focus has been on maintaining a healthy life-style and keeping both mind and body active. The SSG enjoyed a social afternoon at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

This year, meetings have included short presentations by a stroke survivor on 'sharing a passion,' which to date has included painting, joining a choir and sport. This has been inspiring as many of these passions have been newfound interests to replace other activities that may have had to be forgone since experiencing their stroke, which has brought a new lease on life.

The Meander Valley SSG meets at the Westbury Community Centre to share lunch, support and attend activities. Although still small in numbers, the group benefits from the support and the social outing.