

Stroke must be a priority for the next Government



"The impact of stroke is huge and growing. Every day, I see stroke devastate lives and stroke survivors struggle to make the recoveries they deserve. It's vital the next Government commits to improving stroke prevention, treatment and ongoing care. We look forward to working with MPs across the new Parliament to transform the lives of those affected by stroke."

Juliet Bouverie
Chief Executive
Stroke Association



Strokes happen when the blood supply to part of the brain is cut off. Stroke affects 1.2 million people in the UK. This is set to rise to 2.1 million by 2035. It's also our fourth biggest killer. Stroke must be a key clinical priority for the next decade, to improve the lives of the tens of thousands affected each year. And there's a huge cost to our economy if we don't act. Stroke already costs our society £26 billion a year, expected to more than treble by 2035. That's why we're calling for three key simple and achievable actions from the next Government:

The Government must remain committed to preventing strokes

9 in 10 strokes are preventable and associated with modifiable risk factors, yet over 100,000 happen across the UK each year. Risk factors include high blood pressure, atrial fibrillation (irregular heartbeat) and lifestyle factors, like diet and smoking. By targeting those most at risk, thousands of strokes can be prevented every year.

Stroke patients must receive timely treatment in a specialist stroke unit

There's a postcode lottery of hospital stroke care across the UK, and your chances of surviving a stroke are dependent on where you live. For example, mechanical thrombectomy, a game-changing and hugely effective treatment, is only available to a fraction of those who could benefit from it. The Government must ensure that all stroke patients are treated in high quality specialist stroke units, equipped and staffed 24/7 to deliver world-class treatments. This will save lives and reduce the chance of disability.

Stroke survivors must have access to sufficient rehabilitation and long term support

Stroke is the leading cause of adult disability in the UK, and devastates lives in an instant. To make matters worse, many stroke survivors feel abandoned once they leave hospital, despite living with physical and cognitive disability, or mental health problems. It's vital the Government makes sure that stroke survivors have access to the right amounts of rehabilitation and ongoing support, to help them rebuild their lives after stroke.

"I had to learn to walk again."

Erin had a severe stroke in April 2012, aged 29. "In about half a second, there was a bang in my head, a contained explosion. I later found out it was a blood vessel that had burst. The headache was the worst you could possibly imagine. I started throwing up. I had my eyes closed for about three weeks following the stroke. At first, the light was like needles. I never lost my speech, but I had to learn to walk again. I was very slow at first, but I was very motivated to get back to it. Even today I struggle with fatigue and headaches. I say to myself 'That was me, but it's different now'."



Would you like to find out more?

If you'd like to know more or find out how you can help people like Erin, please contact Beth in our Campaigns Team. You can also sign up to receive updates by joining our community of campaigners.

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