

Stroke Association Research Strategy 2026-2031



Finding **strength**
through **support**

Accessible summary

This document is an **accessible summary** designed for **people with aphasia** and others who may have **access needs**.



Changing stroke research



Introduction

- **Every day**, another **240 people** in the **UK** survive a **stroke**.
- Stroke can take away **movement, communication, sight, or independence**.
- Stroke affects people of **all ages** and **backgrounds**.
- Some people have a **higher risk**. This includes people who live in **deprived areas** and people from **Black** and **South Asian** backgrounds.
- Stroke research has not had the **funding** or attention it deserves.
- Stroke research funding in the UK has **fallen** by almost **20%** in recent years.
- Research gives **hope** for better **prevention, treatment, and recovery**.

Our research strategy objectives



- The Stroke Association's purpose is to **reduce** the **devastation** of **stroke**.
- **Research** helps **prevent** strokes, **improve** stroke **treatment**, and **support** a better recovery.
- In **partnership** with the **James Lind Alliance** (JLA), we have identified the most **important** unanswered stroke **research questions**.
- We also looked at **priorities** from the JLA Childhood Neurological Conditions Partnership, that include **childhood stroke**.
- We will **invest £15 million** to support stroke research which will **improve life** for stroke survivors.
- We have **four objectives** at the centre of our research strategy.
- They will help us to build a **new era** in **stroke research**.
- We want to create **lasting change** for people affected by stroke.

1. Get more funding and resources for stroke research



We want **stroke research** to have the **people, skills,** and **money** it needs.

We aim to:

- **Create a Stroke Research Academy** to find, train, and **support** talented **researchers**.
- Help researchers build clear **career paths**.
- Share **research stories** that **inspire** people to **fund** more stroke research.
- Work **together** with governments, charities, and businesses to bring in **more funding**.
- **Offer flexible funding** so good research can keep going.

Our aim is to **build a strong research community** which improves life after stroke.

2. Involve people in research



- Stroke survivors, carers, clinicians, and communities **improve the relevance, quality, and impact of research.**
- We want meaningful **involvement** to be **standardised** across research.

We will:

- **Strengthen** and expand **Stroke Voices in Research**, a **group** of stroke survivors, carers, and family members who **review funding** applications, **advise researchers**, and sit on **panels**.
- Encourage universities, funders, and clinicians to make people affected by stroke **active partners** in **research**.
- **Connect survivors** to **research opportunities** across the UK.
- **Remove barriers** so people from underserved communities can be heard.

This means the research will be closer to **real life**, and this makes it **more useful** and **fair**.

3. Help research make a difference sooner



Stroke survivors should **benefit** from research **faster**.

Research into treatments can take **15-20 years** to become **routine care**.

We **aim** to **speed** this **up**.

We will:

- **Fund research** that helps **new discoveries** become **real changes** in care.
- **Support pilots** and **share learning** so useful ideas spread quickly.
- **Learn** from **every project** and use that learning to **improve care** across the UK.
- Work with the health system to **fix problems** that **slow down progress**.

4. Make stroke research a national health priority



- **Stroke** is the **4th** biggest **killer** in the UK and the main **cause** of serious adult **disability**.
- Stroke **impacts individuals**, their **family, community** and the wider **NHS** and **economy**.
- We aim to make sure **stroke** research is **recognised, prioritised** and properly **supported** like other major health conditions.

Funding stroke research



- We want to spark **new ideas** and **support** stroke researchers to become leaders.
- This will give the UK the **skills** and **knowledge** needed to **improve** stroke care.



Funding projects

- We will **fund** new **research** based on the priorities set by people affected by stroke.
- The **focus** will be putting **research** into **clinical practice**.



Building partnerships

- We will **achieve more** by **working** in **partnership**.
- By teaming up with funders, we can make sure **stroke research** is a **national priority** with the required funding.



Flexible funding that drives change

- Big discoveries **do not** always need **big grants**.
- We will introduce **flexible**, quick-access **funding**.
- This will turn **research discoveries** into everyday **practice**.

A step-by-step plan for progress



- We are **improving** how we **award research** projects, so it is fair, attractive, and relevant.
- We want our **funding** to help **researchers** feel **supported** and inspired in their careers.



Supporting new ideas with honesty

- As a **member** of the **Association of Medical Research Charities** (AMRC), we use their **principles** to make sure **every pound** we spend brings the **greatest benefit** to people affected by stroke.
- To support this work, we will set up a **Research Strategy Advisory Group**.
- This **group** will include **researchers, clinicians, stroke survivors, and partners**.
- They will **offer** independent **advice** and ensure we stay **focused, fair, and effective**.

Measuring impact

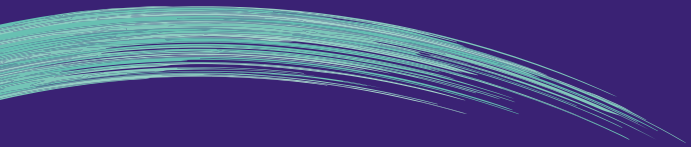


- It is important to **demonstrate** the **difference** our research makes.
- We want to **show** how our research **funding** leads to **better** evidence, **policy** and **practice**.
- Over time, we will **create** a clear and open **system** to **measure** and **share** our **impact**.
- This will help us **show** the **value** of our **research**.

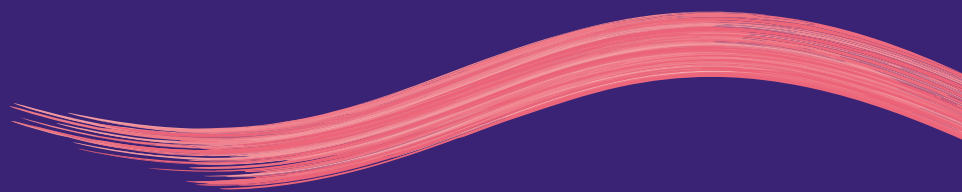
Thank you



- We are **thankful** to stroke survivors, carers, family members, researchers, and professionals who **shared** their **views**.



Remember, you are not alone.
We are here to support you
throughout your recovery,
whenever you need us.



Contact us

Stroke Support Helpline: **0303 3033 100**

Textphone: **18001 0303 3033 100**

Email: **helpline@stroke.org.uk**

Website: **stroke.org.uk**



Finding **strength** through **support**