



October 27, 2023

Win on World Stroke Day: Free blood pressure check to help save the lives of North Island workers

This World Stroke Day (29 October), North Island businesses have a unique opportunity to help save the lives of their staff by reducing their risk of stroke. One lucky business can win a one-day visit from Stroke Foundation's Health15 Team: a specialist mobile outreach service designed to identify and prevent the risk of stroke in the workplace.

The Health15 workplace visit, valued at \$3000, will include support and advice on how to prevent stroke, as well as practical health checks to ensure employees are aware of any personal risks.

High blood pressure is a leading cause of stroke, but many New Zealanders don't check their blood pressure regularly due to the cost of visiting their health provider or convenience barriers. It's called the silent killer as there are no obvious signs of the onset of high blood pressure, and many people don't realise their increased level of risk until they have a major medical event.

For the winner of this competition, their staff can have their blood pressure checked onsite for free. If high blood pressure is detected, stroke risk can be reduced by managing it through healthy living and medication where necessary, and the Health15 team will be on hand to provide specialist advice to anyone in this situation.

"We aim to reduce the barriers to blood pressure awareness and management," Jo Lambert, Stroke Foundation Chief Executive, says. "Up to 90% of strokes are preventable. With the right support, knowledge and tools, people can significantly reduce their risk of preventable conditions, like stroke, as well as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer."

Originally set up to meet the needs of the construction industry, Health15 was co-founded by The Stroke Foundation and The Building Intelligence Group (TBIG).

"We know construction workers often work long hours, carrying out physically demanding work at a fast pace. This can make it hard to prioritise a healthy lifestyle or take the time to attend important health appointments. But they aren't the only ones," says Jo, "and this World Stroke Day we are keen to raise awareness of the risks of stroke and how they can be prevented in other workplaces."

In Aotearoa, one stroke takes place every 55 minutes, 64,000 people are currently living with the aftereffects of their stroke, and there are more than 300,000 who are indirectly impacted. The annual cost to the economy is estimated to be \$1.1 billion and it's set to rise to \$1.7 billion by 2038 if we do nothing. Getting a basic health check in place at work can help prevent a stroke and takes no more than 10 minutes.

To win the visit from the Health15 team, businesses are encouraged to like and comment on the Stroke Foundation's competition post on LinkedIn and Facebook. The competition opens on 27 October and closes at midnight on 30 November 2023.

See www.stroke.org.nz for more information about the key risks for stroke and how to prevent them.

Case Study – “I didn't even realise!” How a Wellington shopper discovered her high risk of stroke and heart problem before it was too late.

Janet had her blood pressure checked at one of the Stroke Foundation's community outreach vans on a whim and was surprised to find her blood pressure was higher than expected. This prompted a visit to her doctor, an adjustment in medication, and strict monitoring over the next few weeks. During this time, Janet also discovered she had developed Atrial Fibrillation (AF), another major risk factor for stroke. "I certainly didn't know I had it and certainly didn't have any symptoms of it."

Janet is now awaiting surgery to correct her AF and feels lucky that she caught it before it was too late. "One small random visit has led to a number of preventative measures. It's always a good idea to have a checkup, even if you don't think you're unwell," she says. "There can be things going wrong and you don't realise it."

- ENDS -

Media enquiries:

The Stroke Foundation of New Zealand

Jess Winchester, General Manager - Marketing and Fundraising,
jess.winchester@stroke.org.nz Telephone 022 4578812

About the Stroke Foundation of New Zealand

The Stroke Foundation is a national charity in New Zealand focused on the prevention of and recovery from stroke. For over 40 years, we have actively promoted ways to avoid stroke and

dedicated ourselves to working closely with stroke survivors across the country. The generosity of New Zealanders enables us to help thousands of stroke survivors every year, providing them with critical services to ensure the best possible outcomes – not just for themselves, but also for their family/whānau and carers too. To find out more about the Stroke Foundation, go to www.stroke.org.nz