

Return to work for stroke survivors

stroke.org.nz



Being in paid work has many benefits: not only financial independence, but also it builds our confidence and self-

esteem, improves our sense of well-being, allows us to develop new skills, gives us a sense of community, and provides structure in our daily lives.

This leaflet outlines how Stroke Aotearoa New Zealand's free Return to Work service can help you to re-enter the workforce after a stroke. Your medical professional can refer you to this service, or you can reach out to our team using the contact methods below.

Quick references

Free helpline:
0800 STROKE (0800 78 76 53)

Email support:
help@stroke.org.nz

Online information:
stroke.org.nz/affected-by-stroke/

Return to Work service for stroke survivors

Many stroke survivors successfully re-enter the workforce after a stroke. Some people have a job they can return to, while others need to find a new role. Having support throughout this process can make a big difference, and Stroke Aotearoa New Zealand is here to help. Since establishing the service in 2007, our Return to Work Advisors have supported hundreds of people to achieve their work goals and confidently re-enter the workforce.



Who can use the Return to Work service?

The Return to Work Service is available to people who have experienced a stroke and who meet the eligibility criteria set by the Ministry of Social Development:

1. Aged 15 – 64
2. NZ Citizen or Permanent Resident or Australian Citizen

This service is free and can be used by stroke survivors all over Aotearoa, whether you have a job to go back to or you need to find new employment.



“ I found my interaction with the Return to Work Advisor was very inspiring. The examples of others who had returned to work after a stroke helped me plan my return to work. This gave me the confidence to start the process. ”

There is hope

Many people can return to work after a stroke, despite what early days can look like. We

encourage you not to make big decisions about work before talking with a Return to Work Advisor. If you involve us as soon as possible, your Advisor can support you in early conversations with your employer to answer their questions and provide the best opportunity for a successful return to work.



How the service works

Your medical provider can refer you to the service, or you can reach out to us yourself.

One of our Return to Work Advisors will then contact you. Your Advisor will carry out a full assessment to learn about your skills, your work goals, and what's currently stopping you from working.

Together, you and your Advisor will prepare a plan to help you achieve your work goals. A key part of this plan is finding ways to manage your return to work, like developing a graduated return to work plan and identifying coping strategies. While you're working through your plan, your Advisor can also work with your employer so they can give you support to make your return as easy as possible.



When both you and your employer are ready for your return to work, your Advisor will support and monitor your progress.

It may take you up to 6 months or more to work through your plan. You may start part-time and then build up to full-time. Each person is different. Your Advisor will continue to support you until you are settled into your job.

“ I have been back at work for almost a year now. I am loving the people contact. I am lucky to have had great support from my managers and colleagues. ”

About Stroke Aotearoa New Zealand

Stroke Aotearoa New Zealand is the national charity dedicated to stroke prevention and improving outcomes for stroke survivors and their whānau. The generosity of individuals allows us to provide every aspect of our life-changing services.

If you want to find out more about donating or fundraising to help protect the lives of people living in your community, please call **0800 45 99 54** or email fundraising@stroke.org.nz.

