

The hospital team

Doctors

- **The acute (or emergency) doctors** who admit a patient make the diagnosis and stabilise the condition of the patient
- **The consultant** is a specialist who supervises the other doctors
- **The geriatrician** is a consultant who specialises in the disorders of older people
- **The registrar** is a doctor with several years' experience, in training to be a consultant
- **The house physician** is a doctor with day-to-day responsibility for the care of patients in the ward
- **The rehabilitation doctor** is a physician with special skills in the management of stroke, who will monitor treatment and progress and provide information to other team members
- **The psychiatrist**, a doctor specialising in the working of the mind, is consulted if disorders such as depression or anxiety result from the stroke
- **The neurologist** is a doctor with specialised knowledge of the brain and nervous system, who is called in as required.

Nurses

- **The nurses**, who are experienced in the special needs of people with stroke, provide day-to-day care, liaise with the various therapists, and facilitate the day-to-day practice of the rehabilitation plan. They are able to give advice and information
- **The charge nurse** (ward manager) is in charge of the ward
- **The staff nurse** is allocated a small number of patients to care for during each shift
- **Nurse aides** do general nursing duties and assist staff nurses.

Others in the hospital team

- **The social worker** helps the person and their family to adjust to changes the stroke makes in their lives, and provides a link with community services and assistance
- **The clinical psychologist** specialises in understanding and treating social, behavioural and emotional problems associated with stroke
- **The neuropsychologist** is a clinical psychologist who has special training in assessing brain functioning, eg, memory, problem solving, word skills, information processing, and may do tests to establish the severity of any thinking-related problems
- **The physiotherapist** will assess the physical effects of the stroke and plan an individual therapy programme that enables the person to re-learn movement and balance
- **The occupational therapist** works with the person to optimise independence and safety in day-to-day activities
- **The speech-language therapist** assesses swallowing and communication problems, then advises on diet textures, swallowing techniques, and a communication recovery programme
- **The orderlies** help with the daily physical care and transport in hospital of the person with stroke
- **The chaplain** is available to discuss personal or spiritual matters with the person and family/whanau
- **The household staff** provide meals and help make a cheerful and comfortable environment in the ward
- **The ward clerk** is the receptionist on the ward and is responsible for filing, records, appointments and other organisational matters
- **The pharmacist** obtains and distributes any medication prescribed and specialises in drug treatment details

- **The dietitian** offers support, counselling, and advice on foods and changes in food preparation which may be required if swallowing or digestion are affected
- **The laboratory staff** analyse blood and other samples to provide information about medical conditions
- **The radiologists** do x-rays and scans and help to interpret the results of these tests
- **Māori and Pacifica health workers** can guide you through the health services, in a way that fits with your cultural beliefs. They can help with family, whanau and community issues that might affect treatment, care and rehabilitation.