



## ERIN'S STORY

Erin was just 29 years old when she had a stroke. Her life was suddenly turned upside down and she wondered how this would affect her three children who were aged just seven, five and two. With your help, we were able to provide support through our Community Stroke Advisor service, helping Erin and her family to understand the impacts of stroke and assist through recovery.

Erin was dropping her children off at school one day when she stumbled and fell to the ground. Erin's husband helped her to her feet, but he knew something serious was wrong as she struggled to hold on to him. "I didn't feel dizzy or anything, I just couldn't walk properly," Erin told us. "I was adamant that everything was ok, and it was just a funny turn." Erin recalled, "I needed to pick some things up from the shops and that was my main priority at the time! When we got home, things started to get worse. At that point, my husband noticed the signs of a stroke, so took me to hospital."

A stroke can be identified by understanding the well-known acronym, F.A.S.T. Face – is their face drooping on one side? Arm – is one arm weak? Speech – is it mixed up, slurred or lost? Take action – time is critical, call 111 immediately.

Arriving at hospital, Erin received a CT scan and was told that she may need emergency brain surgery to stop a bleed. They discovered that she had an Arteriovenous

Malformation (AVM), which is an entanglement of abnormal blood vessels lodged deep in her brain. One of the weakened blood vessels ruptured and this is what caused Erin to have a stroke.

Recovering in hospital, but desperate to return home to her young children, Erin left hospital without fully understanding the impact of her stroke.



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*...Erin's story continues inside...*

“After two weeks in hospital, I thought that I would be fine, but being back home was more of a challenge than I expected. I was at home for another two weeks, but I wasn’t making any progress.” Erin recalled.

Erin returned to hospital for rehabilitation, which is where she met one of the Stroke Foundation’s Community Stroke Advisors (CSAs), Lynette.

Erin told us, “when we met, I was still trying to wrap my head around the fact that I had experienced a stroke. Lynette helped me to understand that recovery would be a process and she has been there every step of the way.”

The biggest struggle for Erin was that it affected her whole family. She found it difficult not being there for her children when they needed her. “I just wanted to feel like a mum again,” Erin explained.

Lynette provided Erin with advice and resources to make things easier for her family, helping to turn those small steps into something that the children could help with too, making them feel more involved in the recovery process. Erin shared, “I’m just so grateful for the help that I’ve received and for being able to get to this point. Every step is a celebration and I understand now that my recovery will take time.”

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**I WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW THAT BY SUPPORTING THE STROKE FOUNDATION YOU’RE NOT JUST HELPING THE ELDERLY, BUT YOU’RE HELPING KIDS, MUMS, DADS AND OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS THROUGH RECOVERY TOO.**

Lynette has helped Erin and her family to navigate their way through Erin’s stroke recovery. “I ask Lynette so many questions so that I can help other people understand what a stroke is, that recovery can often be a long journey and that a stroke can affect anyone of any age. I want people to know that by supporting the Stroke Foundation you’re not just helping the elderly, but you’re helping kids, mums, dads and other family members through recovery too. Your support helped me!”

Everyone is affected by stroke differently, but with your support, we can continue to offer services which help people throughout their recovery. Help us on our journey to fight stroke and provide more New Zealanders with the support they need.

## MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



We’ve all been hit by the global pandemic of COVID-19. There’s a lot of uncertainty around us right now, but what is clear, is that we will do all that we can to ensure the support and safety of those closest to us – our family, friends and neighbours. For the Stroke Foundation, that support extends to our clients and staff.

We may be on lockdown, but New Zealanders will still be affected by stroke and it’s important that we continue to look out for each other.

We have estimated that around 670 people will have a stroke over the four-week lockdown period. Even during the coronavirus pandemic, it’s important that if you think

someone is having a stroke, you seek immediate medical attention. The sooner they reach hospital, the greater the chance of recovery.

Please don’t be concerned about being a burden on the health system. Stroke is a medical emergency and urgent care is needed.

As we continue to adapt and adhere to the guidelines put in place by the Government and Ministry of Health, we know that we’re still able to make a difference to those who need us, because of the wonderful supporters we have, like you, who enable us to progress and respond to change when needed.

Our services wouldn’t be available without your support. You’re making a huge difference to the lives of thousands of New Zealanders across the country.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Vivian'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue background.

**Mark Vivian**  
Chief Executive Officer

## HELPFUL TIPS

We know that the last few weeks have been a challenging time with restrictions put in place to help manage the spread of coronavirus.

We are taking the necessary steps as advised by the Government and Ministry of Health to ensure the safety of our teams and clients.

In light of this, we wanted to share with you some helpful tips to help protect yourself and others.

**PLEASE STAY AT HOME.** You can leave your house to access essential services like buying groceries, going to the pharmacy or going for a walk to enjoy some exercise, but the main piece of advice is to stay at home. This is the best thing we can all do to stop the spread of COVID-19.

**WASH HANDS** for at least 20 seconds with water and soap and dry them thoroughly:



**AFTER COUGHING, SNEEZING OR BLOWING YOUR NOSE**



**AFTER VISITING A PUBLIC SPACE, INCLUDING PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND MARKETS**



**AFTER TOUCHING SURFACES OUTSIDE OF THE HOME**



**AFTER TOUCHING MONEY**



**BEFORE EATING OR HANDLING FOOD**



**AFTER USING THE TOILET**



**AFTER CARING FOR SICK PEOPLE**

**KEEP YOUR HANDS AWAY** from your mouth, nose and eyes.

**KINDNESS** is an incredibly powerful way to show that you are united against COVID-19. Make sure you look after others at this time by checking in on older relatives or vulnerable people; talking to friends, whānau and neighbours over the phone; or dropping essential supplies like food or medicine to those at home.

The messaging around keeping safe is important to share. We also want to alert you to the F.A.S.T. messaging so that you can understand the signs of a stroke at this time. Please do not delay contacting the emergency services if you or someone you know is showing signs of a stroke.

**SIGNS OF STROKE**

**F** **FACE**  
DROOPING ON ONE SIDE

**A** **ARM**  
WEAKNESS ON ONE SIDE

**S** **SPEECH**  
MIXED UP, SLURRED OR LOST

**T** **TAKE ACTION**  
— CALL 111 —  
IMMEDIATELY

**THINK FAST**

If you see **ANY** of the signs, **call 111 immediately.**

## OUT AND ABOUT

**WAITANGI DAY CELEBRATIONS:** The team attended the Waitangi Festival 2020 at the Waitangi Treaty Grounds back in February. Ngati Hine Health Trust set up an area dedicated to health promotion and our team offered free blood pressure checks throughout the day. It was a great opportunity to share vital information about stroke and stroke risk factors to the community.

**LIFE AFTER STROKE SEMINAR:** On Monday 16 March, the team in Auckland held a seminar dedicated to helping those who have been affected by stroke as well as their family/carers. With speakers including a clinical psychologist and a researcher from the Centre for Brain Research, it was an opportunity for New Zealanders to better understand stroke and ways to manage life after stroke.

**H2H SEMINARS:** Returning home after a stroke can be a challenging and anxious experience for everyone involved. Working with Nelson Hospital, we have partnered up to provide 'Hospital to Home' or H2H Seminars. The seminars will provide practical information and advice in a supportive and realistic way about

how to cope with the challenges of life after a stroke. These events are currently on hold and we will share information about new dates in due course. If you'd like to join, please contact our team on [nelson@stroke.org.nz](mailto:nelson@stroke.org.nz) or call **03 545 8183**.



## VIRTUAL CHALLENGE

To encourage New Zealanders to keep active during the lockdown period and help reduce the risk of stroke, as well as helping to raise funds to support our critical services, we've launched a virtual challenge to walk the length of New Zealand.

As a team, we will track the 3,000 kms that it takes to walk the length of both islands from Cape Reinga down to Bluff. Our goal is to reach \$7,500 – the equivalent of the weekly operational cost for our CSAs throughout the country. It's simple to join, check out our [Everyday Hero page](#) and join the Stroke Foundation's 'Virtual Walk of New Zealand' today. Make a self-donation to your page and log you daily kilometres.

Log the steps you do around the house, the garden or your block and let's see how far we can go!

Don't forget, if you're walking around your neighbourhood, keep that 2 metre distance from those outside of your bubble!



## GETTING INVOLVED

In June, we will be launching our Beanie Up campaign for the second year running.

Last year, we invited New Zealanders to “beanie up” for stroke and purchase a beanie to support our critical services for stroke survivors.

This year, we have some exciting new beanie designs to share with you.

In addition to our original grey beanie, we now have a navy-blue beanie, a light blue pompom beanie and a smaller cream beanie with two pompoms.

Because of your support last year, we've been able to extend the campaign so that it runs from June to August. Let's all “beanie up” for stroke survivors this winter.

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### OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

Donating online is a simple way to help those affected by stroke, particularly at this time.

#### MONTHLY GIVING

A monthly gift, no matter how large or small, is a fantastic way to support our work today and also helps us to plan for the future.

To set up a payment, visit:

[www.stroke.org.nz/support-us](http://www.stroke.org.nz/support-us)

Alternatively, give us a call on 0800 78 76 53 to organise this over the phone.

#### SUPPORT US ANY TIME

We need your support to ensure that those affected by stroke are supported and empowered at this time.

Support us by donating online at:

[www.stroke.org.nz/donate-today](http://www.stroke.org.nz/donate-today)

# BEANIE UP!

\$10

\$20



**Beanie Up! and support stroke survivors**

# STROKE CHAMPIONS

This year was the first year the Stroke Foundation participated in both the Wellington and Auckland Round the Bays events. Our supporters set themselves some incredible goals to help raise awareness of stroke and support those who have been affected by stroke.

In Wellington, we recruited a team of 42, made up of local Wellingtonians, Stroke Foundation employees and DHB health professional supporters. Tackling either a 6.5km, 10km or a half marathon walk or run, the team managed to raise an incredible \$14,788 to help put a new Big Blood Pressure Check Van in the lower North Island.

In Auckland, 27 fundraisers took part in the 8.4km fun run, six of whom were stroke survivors. In total, the team managed to raise \$12,445. All donations from this event will go towards helping those who have been affected by stroke, supporting our CSA service.

We know the many challenges that stroke survivors face during recovery, so to have them join our team and set themselves an ambitious goal was incredibly inspiring to see.

Trudi Kendall from Lepperton was just 33 years old when she experienced a stroke last year. Trudi's sister-in-law suggested taking part in Ports of Auckland Round

the Bays. Trudi explained, "when I saw that the Stroke Foundation was involved, that encouraged me to join. It was something to look forward to and something to work towards." Trudi and her family managed to raise \$2,700 for the Stroke Foundation!

We're incredibly proud and thankful that so many people joined our teams and wanted to support us in our journey to #fightstroke! Thank you to all those who supported us and got involved.



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