



July 25, 2022

Wellington

Stroke charities announce merger

For immediate release

The Stroke Foundation of New Zealand and Stroke Tairāwhiti Incorporated have announced their intention to merge in a bid to achieve their mission to reduce strokes, improve outcomes and save lives.

All services offered by both charities will continue, with Stroke Tairāwhiti teaming up with the Stroke Foundation's Midland Region team which covers the rest of the central North Island.

The Boards of both charities have entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), with the merger planned to take effect from 31st December 2022.

Ensuring stroke care is 'sustainable' in the long term

The charities said the merger will allow them to increase population health awareness that prevents strokes, as well as ramp up life-after-stroke services to people who have experienced a stroke, and their whānau.

Given the changes in the health system, with the establishment of Te Whatu Ora (Health NZ) and Te Aka Whai Ora (Māori Health Authority), both charities believe that by working together they can better meet the needs of the stroke-affected community of Aotearoa, providing essential community services.

John Gommans, Chair of the of the Stroke Foundation of New Zealand Board, said - "We are delighted that we will be joining with Stroke Tairāwhiti to assure the long-term sustainability of stroke services in the Tairāwhiti region. The signing of this MOA demonstrates our joint commitment to do more for more people who are affected by stroke across Aotearoa and learn from each other in pursuit of equitable outcomes for all, and the continuous improvement of our services."

Jan Ewart, President of Stroke Tairāwhiti said – "There are many benefits to be gained from joining New Zealand's national stroke organisation, while still maintaining our local workforce, services, and community connections. We believe that both our organisations will be stronger by working together within the new health and disability system."

More people needing complex life-after-stroke care

With over 9,500 experienced in Aotearoa every year, stroke is the single biggest cause of serious adult disability in New Zealand (2018).

By taking a proactive approach to securing the best care for their local communities, both charities are looking to prepare themselves for a future where stroke incidence is set to rise dramatically – with a 40% increase (2018) predicted by 2028. The Foundation estimates that more than 64,000 people are living with the direct impact of stroke in Aotearoa.

Just last year, the Stroke Foundation's Community Stroke Advisors (CSAs) worked with 4,500 stroke survivors and their families, providing home visits, rehabilitation advice, workplace advocacy and referrals to health professionals.

Stroke Tairāwhiti has been operating as an incorporated society since 1993, in a region of more than 43,000 people. The charity's major activities are the provision of life after stroke support to more than 60 people a year, the delivery of a range of rehabilitation services in the community and, raising awareness of the risks of stroke through health promotion campaigns.

The merger between the two charities is subject to the final approval of the Charities Commission.

- ENDS -

Source

- Ministry of Health (2018). Mortality and Demographic Data 2015, retrieved 14th August 2018, from <https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/mortality-2015-data-tables>
- Ranta, A. (2018). Projected stroke volumes to provide a 10-year direction for New Zealand stroke services. NZ Med J

Notes to editors

- While stroke is the leading cause of disability and the second-biggest single cause of death in New Zealand for all adults, Indigenous, and ethnic minority groups are disproportionately impacted.
- Ultimately, 75% of all strokes are preventable and high blood pressure is the leading risk factor for stroke, that is modifiable.
- Diets high in salt are a leading cause of high blood pressure, with New Zealanders estimated to eat double the recommended amount of salt in their daily diet. Other common causes of high blood pressure include being overweight, smoking, drinking too much alcohol, not exercising and diabetes.
- Both the Stroke Foundation of New Zealand (Registration Number CC49241) and Stroke Tairāwhiti Incorporated (Registration Number CC23115) are registered with the Charities Commission.

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The Stroke Foundation of New Zealand

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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 the Foundation has actively promoted ways to avoid stroke and is dedicated to working closely with stroke survivors across the country. The generosity of New Zealanders enables the Foundation 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 their family/whanau and carers too. To find out more about the Stroke Foundation, go to www.stroke.org.nz

About Stroke Tairawhiti Incorporated

Stroke Tairawhiti Incorporated achieved charitable status in 1993 and employs a Stroke Community Coordinator who works with stroke survivors in the Tairawhiti region. The service covers an area from the East Cape in the North and the Whararata Ranges in the South and works closely with the Tairawhiti Hauora Hospital to ensure good outcomes for the stroke community. To find out more about Stroke Tairawhiti, go to www.stroketairawhiti.org