

REDUCING RISKS AND IMPROVING OUTCOMES

A photograph of several people, mostly older adults, in a swimming pool. They are holding onto a metal handrail along the edge of the pool. The water is blue and rippling. The background is slightly blurred, showing more people in the pool.

Fighting
stroke
in New Zealand

STRATEGIC PLAN **2014 - 2019**



BACKGROUND

In July 2013 after three years of discussion and consultation the Stroke Foundation of New Zealand became a single national organisation after operating for many years as a federation of five separate bodies. The most important reason for the amalgamation was to ensure the Foundation was in the best position to adapt to our changing world. We aim to constantly improve our existing services to meet the future needs of people with stroke and their carers, innovate to address the incidence of stroke, and we must satisfy the future demands of funders and donors without whom we could not operate.

In the months following amalgamation the Foundation embarked upon a review of its situation – looking at

where we are now and where we want to be 20 years from now. This involved exploring trends that could impact on the organisation, the work we do and how we do it. It involved researching and understanding changes happening in the world, in New Zealand demography and social arrangements, in the health and NGO sectors, in medical advances, in government policy and funding, in technology, and in philanthropic giving. We have considered our organisation's strengths and our challenges.

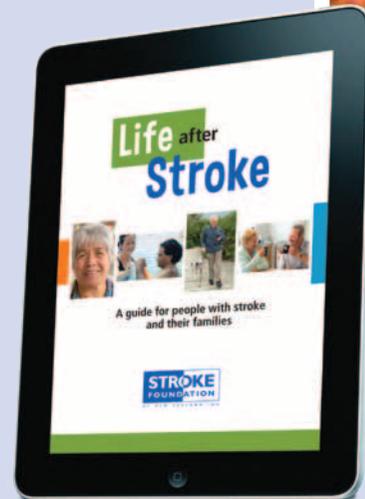
The strategic planning project involved staff, the board of directors, our contacts in the medical and health services, donors, stroke clubs and stroke survivors across the country. The aim was to find out what we and

our stakeholders thought the biggest challenges in the future would be for us and for our community, and to identify the most important areas for action and how we might best tackle them.

The fundamental objectives of the Stroke Foundation remain the same – reducing risks and improving outcomes. But the growing threat of stroke demands a gear shift in the intensity and impact of our progress towards those objectives. How can we take the fight to stroke, reduce those risks decisively, and transform people’s experience of life after stroke? This document represents our answers to those questions

and is a summary of the plan which emerged from the strategic planning project. It sets out our long term goals and how the Foundation intends to build its capacity, grow in scope and

stature and increase its effectiveness over the next five years in response to an environment which is continually changing – socially, technologically, medically and politically.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Strategic Priorities in this document set out how the Foundation will have a bigger impact by helping to change the way health services work and make it easier for people to make healthy, positive choices for themselves. It also sets out the way we need to grow and develop our own skills, knowledge and systems in order to achieve more for New Zealanders in the future.

Our strategic priorities are presented as four pillars supporting the determination to reduce risks and improve outcomes. These four pillars are:

1. **Creating a stroke-savvy society in New Zealand**
2. **Strengthening health system responsiveness for people with stroke**
3. **Aligning our staff and systems with our purpose**
4. **Building powerful platforms.**

These four priorities are in turn underpinned by a focus on:

- Working with Māori
- Collaboration
- Efficacy
- Health Equity.

Within each strategic priority we have identified the main '**big shifts**' required to achieve our aims – that is, what changes in attitude or approach need to be made in the way we work, or in the way society thinks, or in the way certain systems operate such as the health services. Below that we spell out some of the **specific actions** which will help to bring about these shifts.

REDUCING RISK, IMPROVING OUTCOMES

Strategic Priorities

Some of the Big Shifts needed

Which means working to...

Creating a stroke-savvy society in New Zealand

From **informing** to **catalysing** behaviour change

From **disconnected good ideas and actions** to **actions** focused on areas of biggest impact for social change

From **individual health issues** to **collective and whole of society** approach

Create enabling conditions for healthy life-styles
Empower New Zealanders to live healthy lives
Create a supportive, accessible and inclusive environment for those affected by stroke

Strengthening health system responsiveness for people with stroke

From **acute DHB focus** to extended understanding of the rehab pathway

From **CSAs* as recipients of referrals** to CSAs as a conduit

From **primary health care neglect** to **proactive risk factor** management

From **inference of results** to **evidence based results**

Increase effectiveness of primary and secondary stroke prevention
Reduce ethnic disparities
Improve post-acute and rehab provision and outcomes
Improve stroke risk factor management

Aligning our staff and systems with our purpose

From **"the stroke lady"** to **recognised stroke professional**

From **separate business units** to an **integrated organisation**

From **one size fits all** to **planned, bespoke design**

From **techno-naive** workforce to **technology embracing workforce**

Align the organisation's systems, culture and workforce to the new priorities
Increase cultural aware-ness and competencies across the organisation
Develop the CSA role
Diversify our client services
Develop a tech-embracing workforce

Building powerful platforms

From **reliance on donation dollar** to **diversified funding streams**

From **low organisational visibility** to **respected voice on stroke**

Increase revenue
Improve the profile of the organisation and its brand recognition
Increasing our reputation as New Zealand's authoritative voice on stroke

Our decisions will be made through the lens of, and underpinned by a focus on:

Working with Māori

Collaboration

Efficacy

Health Equity

Creating a stroke-savvy society in New Zealand

The combination of an ageing population in New Zealand and an unsupportive environment for healthy lifestyles mean that an increase in the incidence of stroke is inevitable unless there is a significant change in how we live, learn, work and grow. At the same time the country faces a range of challenges which are likely to put a strain on health funding over the coming decades. Stroke also affects certain populations disproportionately, such as Māori, Pacific and Asian people. The Stroke Foundation therefore needs to take a more deliberate approach to influencing the systems which can have a major and lasting impact on reducing risks and improving outcomes.

We need to help shape a society where it's easy for people to make healthy, stroke-savvy choices. This involves everything from food labelling, smoke-free policies and government leadership on salt reduction to urban planning around transport and recreation facilities. We know that giving information about healthy lifestyles isn't enough on its own. People need to be supported in positive behaviour change

and the context in which they live has to make healthy choices the easy ones.

The Stroke Foundation can also help society to create a smoother path for those affected by stroke. A stroke-savvy society builds the needs of people with impaired mobility or cognition into the way it plans the environment and the services it provides, and it supports people who are learning to speak again, or people who just need more time to make day-to-day decisions.

The Stroke Foundation can't create these changes on its own, but by thinking at a whole-of-society level and partnering with others working towards similar goals, we can increase the numbers living in ways that reduce their risk of stroke, and accelerate society's acceptance and accommodation of people living with stroke.

The stroke affected community has a role to play here too and we envisage stroke clubs, carer support groups and other stroke specific networks contributing to this social and environmental integration and improvement at both a local and a national level. Advocacy, lobbying, partnership and community engagement cannot be undertaken solely by the Foundation; we want to empower the

stroke affected community to play a part in shaping its own future.

Strengthening health system responsiveness for people with stroke

Across the wider health sector there are a range of services and interventions that can contribute to stroke prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, but at the moment they are not joined up as well as they could be, from the perspective of either health professionals or patients. In a health system optimised for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation from stroke there would be clear, highly visible, universally understood 'best practice' systems which were based on evidence, seamless and designed to benefit users.

The Stroke Foundation is in a unique position to lead the drive towards such a stroke-focused health system. It is the only organisation with both an independent position and the ability to take a 'whole-of-system' perspective on stroke. The Stroke Foundation has the ability to influence change within the system by targeting work at specific issues along with partners who have overlapping goals.

It means optimising the way the full range of health services work, so that their collective impact on stroke prevention, recognition, treatment and post-stroke re-enablement is as powerful as it can possibly be.

Aligning our staff and systems with our purpose

For the Stroke Foundation as a whole to work smoothly and efficiently we must align the concrete (systems, structures, tools, roles, skills etc) with the abstract (our mindset, culture, approaches, habits and 'the way we do things around here') to support the best possible delivery of effort towards the goals and strategic priorities.

This means not simply keeping IT systems up to date and tinkering with our procedures; it means having the courage to re-evaluate our whole approach to what we do, shifting our culture from coping with problems to anticipating and conquering them. We must consider how computers are changing the way everyone lives and be equipped, materially and psychologically, to embrace technology and exploit the interconnection that it brings to help us achieve our aims. We also need to ensure our focus is on outcomes – what are

we achieving, and how are we measuring and evaluating it?

It is no longer enough for us to simply deliver certain services and perform various functions. We have to prepare ourselves to deliver a more effective future.

Building powerful platforms

Growing a financially strong organisation involves developing more diverse sources of funding. Income diversification allows the organisation to plan and invest in medium and long term programmes with confidence, and to maintain a critical independence from any one funding source.

Similarly, increasing the platform of a well recognised and respected voice on stroke will enable the organisation to be heard more, and to achieve more. A more authoritative voice will help to ensure the Stroke Foundation can persuade others to work towards the same goals and seed or catalyse more projects to create the change needed for a stroke-savvy society in relation to prevention, treatment and post-stroke support. And in turn it will help us to raise more money.



The Stroke Foundation has a proud history of serving the stroke affected community for over thirty years, and has done so by adapting to stay relevant and effective. The **Strategic Plan 2014-19** continues this tradition, and will ensure that the organisation is the best it can be, to deliver the best that is possible for stroke prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.



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