



Workplace Toolkit

Why promote F.A.S.T.

Why promote F.A.S.T. in the workplace?

Over 9,500 strokes are experienced in Aotearoa each year – that averages one every 55 minutes.

Of those who experience a stroke, 25–30% are under the age of 65 years and therefore of working age. Stroke is Aotearoa's leading cause of serious adult disability, and a common cause of workplace absenteeism.

A stroke can affect an employee's confidence, self-esteem, financial independence, and wellbeing. For workplaces, it means a loss in productivity as the employee rehabilitates. This will vary depending on the severity of the disability experienced but in most cases, roles need to be adjusted as the employee returns to work. In the worst-case scenarios, some employees are never able to return to work.

The good news is that we can do something to reduce these statistics because:

- over 75% of strokes are preventable
- we can recognise the signs of a stroke and act F.A.S.T.
- the risk factors for stroke are well known and most are treatable. When someone reduces these risk factors, they also reduce their risk of other illnesses.

By promoting the F.A.S.T. message in your workplace, you are empowering your employees, colleagues, and their whānau to take action when they recognize someone is having a stroke, ensuring they have the best chance of recovery after stroke.

There is strong evidence that workplaces which prioritise health and wellbeing have better employee engagement, reduced absenteeism, enhanced reputations and are an employer of choice, and have higher productivity. Employees who work in places which prioritise health and wellbeing have improved wellbeing, greater morale, higher job satisfaction, and take their positive behaviours home which can in turn positively influence the health of their wider whānau.

Utilising your workplace Health and Safety meetings are the ideal time to promote the F.A.S.T. message as it shows you are caring for your staff, engaged in their health, and equipping them with the tools to recognise the signs of stroke and take F.A.S.T. action in their workplaces, neighbourhoods, and wider communities.