A CAREGIVER’S GUIDE TO STROKE RECOVERY
The Stroke Survivor

Anna, Len, and Jeff are survivors of stroke and while their experiences are unique, they share with your loved one stories of unexpected, life-changing events.

As stroke survivors, these individuals have shared their personal stories in the hopes of providing caregivers and their loved ones with stories of inspiration, motivation, and perseverance. They demonstrate that stroke recovery is possible and people living with the effects of stroke can go on to live happy and fulfilled lives.

“Fifteen years ago, I woke up to find the course of my life changed forever.

The day before, I was a physically active, healthy person leading the normal life of a father of two young sons, 7 and 10 years old. Overnight, I had a severe brain stem stroke that left me unable to walk, to talk, and completely paralyzed on my right side.”
- LEN

“My stroke story begins on a beautiful island in the Bahamas.

I was there enjoying a much-needed vacation with my two children and my pet when the unimaginable happened. I was struck by a massive brain stem stroke.”
- ANNA

“One minute I was painting a ceiling in my home, and the next I was on the ground, experiencing pain like I had never felt before. I was terrified, felt helpless and thought this was the end. I don’t really remember the next few hours, but when I awoke I was lying in a hospital bed with doctors standing over me. I had suffered a massive brain stem stroke that left me completely paralyzed on my right side and unable to speak, swallow, eat or breathe on my own.”
- JEFF

More than 400,000 Canadians live with the long-term effects of a stroke. That means there are potentially more than 400,000 caregivers who also need help and support.

Sometimes we forget that the caregivers themselves have experienced significant life changes after their loved one has suffered a stroke. They too struggle with meeting new challenges and are searching for new paths to happiness, health, and independence. In order for caregivers to effectively help with their stroke survivor’s rehabilitation and life circumstances, they must first look after their own physical and mental wellbeing.

A caregiver’s attitude is important to the health and wellbeing of the person for whom they care. As a caregiver, it is important for you to take care of yourself, as well as your stroke survivor. Eat well, get enough sleep, manage stress, and continue to make time for the things you enjoy. You are not being selfish by tending to your own needs; rather you are ensuring that you can be the best possible caregiver without compromising your own wellbeing.

Our second issue of A Caregiver’s Guide To Stroke Recovery offers useful information to help you be the best caregiver to your loved one. In this guide, you will find information on stroke recovery and spasticity, how to communicate with stroke survivors, and maintain healthy relationships, existing aphasia camps, and other helpful resources. You will also find inspiring real-life stories about other caregivers and stroke survivors that will encourage you to see that there is life for everyone after stroke.

The human brain is much more adaptive than once believed. Advances in our knowledge of neuroplasticity—the brain’s lifelong ability to reorganize neural pathways based on new experiences—suggests our brains are not hardwired with fixed neuronal circuits; rather, they are responsive and flexible. This provides hope to stroke survivors and their caregivers. Recovery is always possible.

Stroke Recovery Canada is dedicated to supporting caregivers and stroke survivors alike. We hope this guide can serve as a tool to help you through your journey as a caregiver. Please contact us to find programs and services in your community.

Spasticity

Occurs when a stroke damages a part of the brain that controls certain muscles in the body and the muscles become tight and stiff and resist being stretched.1

Aphasia

A brain injury, such as a stroke, can damage the left side of the brain. This damage can cause aphasia. People with aphasia may have difficulty talking, understanding speech, reading and/or writing.1
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Saluting Stroke Caregivers

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“A key to the quality of recovery is support from fellow stroke survivors and their caregivers... the people who have first-hand experience.”

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Carol Miller-Hall received a phone call that would change her life in ways she never imagined. At the age of 49, her husband had suffered a stroke while driving a van. With that one phone call Carol went from being a typical spouse, just going about her every-day life, to being blindsided from this tragedy and becoming a caregiver to her husband. Just a year and a half after her husband’s stroke, Carol found herself speaking to a group of people telling her story - something she never imagined she would be doing.

“I had struggled to breathe, let alone put into words my experience and how it came to be a caregiver. I was still very much feeling raw with hurt. I learned from my caregiver support group that I was not alone in this experience, which was life changing for me. From the support group that virtually saved me, and all of the other caregivers who have volunteered their time and many loyal friends that will be there for me to share and use when I climb to the top of the mountain with the unknowns yet to come.”

Six and a half years ago Carol Miller-Hall became a caregiver to her husband. Just a year and a half after her husband’s stroke, Carol connected with the Gueldt Wellington Stroke Recovery Chapter, which was in the early stages of starting a caregiver group. “I will be forever grateful for the caregiver group that virtually saved me from feeling alone with this terrible thing called stroke, and handed me a bucket for my tears with compassion and understanding. You see, they knew just how I felt, and what I was going through.”

Carol talks about her feelings of grief, and how she seemed to dwell on blaming herself and taking on her husband's hardship. She was grieving the loss of certain pieces of the man she once knew and loved, and was learning to accept the changes that came with him having a stroke. Carol encourages other caregivers to accept all the help that is offered to them and learn to ask questions, and recommends joining a support group to help with the journey and all that comes along with being a caregiver. As Carol expressed, you will reach points throughout your climb as a caregiver where it may seem impossible to continue. It is during these times of struggle and doubt that you must reach out and accept the support and love that groups, resources, and other caregivers have to offer. You can rest assured that you will one day reach the top of your own mountain, and maybe, like Carol, you will be able to share your climbing tools with others.

Catherine’s Story: New Opportunities

Catherine Eastase was only 14 years old when she had a massive stroke. Although her parents, Michelle and Ed, were divorced, they quickly committed to working together to help their daughter. Catherine’s stroke made her parents realize that nothing in life can be taken for granted, and that every moment must be cherished. Ed, Michelle, and Catherine’s older sister Anne-Marie, took turns being with Catherine at the hospital, and later at the rehabilitation centre, and then at home. It hasn’t been easy, but nine years later, Catherine has overcome tremendous challenges, and is preparing to go to university.

When asked what helped, Michelle says, “We considered ourselves part of the rehabilitation team, together with doctors, nurses, and therapists. We constantly tried to learn as much as we could about stroke, and advocated on our daughter’s behalf, asking medical staff to find solutions for various problems. To receive help, most often we only needed to ask, but sometimes we had to be more persistent. We also sought and accepted support from everyone: our family, hospital, rehabilitation centre, and Catherine’s school. That way, the responsibilities were spread out, and nobody burned out.”

The key lesson Ed learned as a caregiver was to never give up and that improvement is always possible. “For nine years, Catherine had spasticity in her left wrist and ankle, interfering with her ability to use her left hand and walk,” he says.

“We didn’t have a treatment for this. Only last year, Catherine’s godmother, a nurse, learned about some of the newer methods to treat spasticity, and we obtained a referral to a spasticity clinic. Now Catherine can raise her left arm above her head, and her left hand is stronger. She also walks with less of a limp. It just goes to show you that rehabilitation techniques are always advancing, and Catherine’s quality of life continues to improve.”

A stroke may change what a person can do, but everyone has different talents and strengths. So it becomes a process of rediscovery. “I had to give up snowboarding,” says Catherine, “but I discovered painting and golf.” Immediately after the stroke, I was scared, and then depressed, but when I saw my parents full of hope and fighting for me, I also committed to my recovery. I had to work hard at physical therapy and at restarting my education after a two-year delay. At times, my life felt like constant work. But things are really looking optimistic now. I learned that hard work and commitment can make a big difference.”

Catherine and her parents demonstrate that love, commitment and optimism can help to better manage the shock and life change caused by stroke. A stroke can bring people together and encourage new opportunities and interests. You have the ability as a caregiver to inspire your loved one with strength, optimism and opportunity, and you can choose to become a part of the rehabilitation team and make the most out of a difficult situation.
Life as a Caregiver

Carol’s Story: The Climb

“Touched three-quarters of the way up the mountain, and have picked up along the way a toolbox of coping skills and many loyal friends that will be there for me to share and use when I climb to the top of the mountain with the unknowns yet to come.”

Six and a half years ago Carol Miller-Hall received a phone call that would change her life in ways she never imagined. At the age of 49, her husband had suffered a stroke while driving a van. With that one phone call Carol went from being a typical spouse, just going about her every-day life, to being blindsided from this tragedy and becoming a caregiver to her husband. Just a year and a half after her husband’s stroke, Carol found herself in the Guelph Wellington Stroke Recovery Chapter, which was in the early stages of starting a caregiver group.

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Catherine’s Story: New Opportunities

Catherine Eustace was only 14 years old when she had a massive stroke. Although her parents, Micheline and Ed, were divorced, they quickly committed to working together to help their daughter. Catherine’s stroke made her parents realize that nothing in life can be taken for granted, and that every moment must be cherished. Ed, Micheline, and Catherine’s older sister Anne-Marie, took turns being with Catherine at the hospital, and later at the rehabilitation centre, and then at home. It hasn’t been easy, but nine years later, Catherine has overcome tremendous challenges, and is preparing to go to university.

When asked what helped, Micheline says, “We considered ourselves part of the rehabilitation team, together with doctors, nurses, and therapists. We constantly tried to learn as much as we could about stroke, and advocated on our daughter’s behalf, asking medical staff to find solutions for various problems. To receive help, most often we only needed to ask, but sometimes we had to be more persistent.”

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The Impact of Stroke on Your Loved One

A stroke can cause damage to the brain either by interrupting blood flow to the brain or by causing the blood vessels in the brain to rupture.

This type of damage to the brain cells may impair their function, which may result in the loss of movement, sensation, and/or thought processes, including speech.¹

The effects of a stroke vary, and the outcome depends on the area of the brain affected and the degree of damage. Individuals who have survived a stroke may experience any of the following symptoms:²

• Loss of control of movement and/or feeling in some parts of the body
• Changes in muscle tone on the side affected by stroke
• Some stroke survivors may lose the ability to contract their muscles, while others may experience involuntary muscle contractions
• Difficulty sitting, standing, or walking
• Reduced ability to balance
• Problems with speaking and/or understanding speech
• Confusion and/or poor memory
• Reduced control over their bladder or bowel
• Difficulty swallowing
• Reduced control over emotions

¹ "At the age of 36, I now had to learn even the basics because the stroke had also caused a severe left side neuropathy and even damaged my vocal chords. My days of being a busy mom, carpooling, and taking my children to their sporting events were now replaced with learning how to conquer the most elementary tasks: learning how to walk, write, and even see." — ANNA

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- Reduced control over emotions
Recognizing Spasticity After Stroke

Spasticity refers to a condition when the muscles become tight and stiff and resist being stretched. The degree of spasticity may vary from mild muscle stiffness to severe, painful, and uncontrollable muscle spasms. This post-stroke condition can limit coordination and muscle movement, and can make daily activities such as bathing, eating, and dressing more difficult. The restriction of movement can make day-to-day life a struggle for both the stroke survivor and caregiver.

Spasticity can cause long periods of strong contractions in major muscle groups, causing painful muscle spasms, which can produce:

- A tight fist
- Bent elbow
- Arm pressed against the chest
- Stiff knee
- Pointed foot (known as foot drop)
- Stiffness in the arms, fingers, or legs

Studitions show that spasticity affects more than 65% of stroke survivors, usually within weeks or months following a stroke. Spasticity can worsen over time, and therefore it is important as a caregiver that you watch for spasticity in your stroke survivor and inform his or her doctor so they can receive appropriate care as soon as possible.

Treatment for Spasticity

There are many strategies and treatments for spasticity. In order to achieve the best results possible, a mixture of therapies and medications are often used to treat spasticity. Some available options include:

- Braces – Putting a brace on an affected limb
- Exercises – Range-of-motion exercises
- Stretching – Gentle stretching of tighter muscles
- Movement – Frequent repositioning of body parts
- Medications – Medications are available to treat the effects of generalized spasticity
- Botulinum toxin A (Botox®) injections – Botox® can block the chemicals that make muscles tight

“Since the treatment is designed to reach specific goals in terms of a patient’s function, botulinum toxin A (Botox®) injections are used as a first-line treatment for focal spasticity,” says Dr. Farooq Ismail, physiatrist at West Park Healthcare Centre in Toronto.

- ITB Therapy – A programmable, battery-powered medical device that stores and delivers medication to treat some of the symptoms of severe spasticity
- Surgery – Surgery on the muscles or tendons and joints may block pain and restore movement
Recognizing spasticity

After a stroke, damage to the brain can block messages between muscles and the brain causing arm and leg muscles to cramp or spasm, kind of like a bad charley horse. Studies show that spasticity affects more than 65% of stroke survivors, usually within weeks or months following a stroke.1,2

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Recognizing and Managing Spasticity After Stroke

Generalized spasticity
Spasticity affecting the whole body.7

Focal spasticity
Impairment and activity limitation around the joints.7

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• Botox® injections—Botox® can block the chemicals that make muscles tight
Beyond Stroke Website
In addition to your loved one, approximately 400,000 other Canadians are living with the effects of stroke. There are many resources that exist to provide support for stroke survivors and their caregivers. The website,

www.beyondstroke.ca

was created to help you better understand the physical challenges many people face after they have had a stroke. While support for stroke survivors and their caregivers tends to be greatest immediately after a stroke, many find it becomes more difficult to find the right kind of support weeks, months, and even years after a stroke has occurred. This website offers advice and reassurance as to how best to deal with long-term physical challenges associated with stroke, and provides information on:

• What may be causing the physical challenges after a stroke
• How physical challenges might be treated
• How Stroke Rehabilitation Physicians can help
• How you can get the additional help you need

The website also provides a search tool to help you locate a Stroke Rehabilitation Physician by region.

See the HELPFUL RESOURCES section to locate a physician in your region.

"These injections are a simple, effective treatment with virtually no side effects. When Botox® is injected into specific muscles, it promotes muscular relaxation, thereby reducing spasticity and helping the patient function more normally. To enable a patient to hold a spoon, these injections may have to be administered in varying amounts for different fingers. The effects are reversible after about three months, allowing the spasticity balance to be modified to the desired level. Botox® injections are usually followed by intensive physical therapy, which involves determining ‘anti-spastic’ body positions (in which the spastic muscles are stretched) and doing stretching and range of motion exercises."

Help for spasticity
"A patient with spasticity may require a great deal of assistance with daily living because his or her abilities are limited. A very spastic patient may even require several people to complete morning and evening routines," says Dr. Ismail.

"In milder cases, spasticity can affect a person’s balance, making it difficult to walk. Spasticity can make it impossible for a stroke survivor to drive, or even unclench an affected hand. If a clenched fist cannot be opened to be washed, a skin infection may result."

Managing spasticity with assistive devices, aids and home adaptations can help ensure your loved one’s safety and reduce their risk of spasticity-related falls. Physical and occupational therapists will recommend the appropriate aid(s) as well as safety procedures, maintenance, and proper fit. Some modifications that can be made to the home to improve safety include:

• Ramps
• Grab bars
• Raised toilet seats
• Shower or tub bench
• Plastic adhesive strips on the bottom of the bathtub
• Braces, canes, walkers, and wheelchairs

Talking to a doctor
"Spasticity is often overlooked because stroke survivors have many other problems," says Dr. Ismail. However, it shouldn’t be. The caregiver should alert the medical team to potential spasticity and ask for a referral to a spasticity clinic. If you suspect your loved one has excessive spasticity, talk to his or her doctor and ask for a referral to a spasticity clinic. Describe the symptoms you have observed and how they interfere with daily activities. Try to be very specific. Avoid general statements such as “I would like my stroke survivor to be able to move.” Instead, use specific observations such as “his nails are digging into his palm” or “her elbow is twisted, and she has difficulty dressing herself.” Describing specific concerns will help your doctor understand the impact of spasticity on your and the stroke survivor’s lives, and will enable your stroke survivor to receive an appropriate assessment.

Rehabilitation for Your Stroke Survivor

Presently, many stroke survivors who suffer from spasticity remain untreated or undertreated, even though effective therapy is available.

Once the acute crisis of a stroke has passed, the long process of recovery begins.

For many stroke survivors, this includes the hard work of, and commitment to, rehabilitation. Often, therapy involves both inpatient and outpatient care at a rehabilitation centre. As a caregiver, you will need to understand what rehabilitation services are offered, which service will best benefit your stroke survivor’s specific needs, what actions need to be taken, where to go for information, and who to contact when you have questions.

Common forms of therapy include physiatry, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, podiatry, and social work, all of which are described here in detail. Community reintegration is also an important aspect of rehabilitation and is also discussed at the end of this section.
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Physiatry
Physiatrists are physicians who specialize in physical medicine and rehabilitation, a medical specialty that deals with the evaluation and treatment of stroke survivors whose functional abilities have been impaired.15

The role of physiatry in stroke recovery
A physiatrist will help the stroke survivor to regain function after the stroke by leading a team of healthcare professionals that may include rehabilitation nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, therapeutic recreational specialists, and social workers. These rehabilitation specialists work together to improve the stroke survivor’s recovery with the goal of restoring as much of their independence as possible.14

When to see a physiatrist
Help is available for people who have had a stroke, even many years later. There are specially trained Stroke Rehabilitation Physicians who treat people dealing with the aftermath of stroke every day.

It is important to have your stroke survivor assess any physical challenges caused by their stroke so they can receive any necessary treatment.

You can have your loved one answer the following assessment questions on a repeated basis to get a sense of how their post-stroke symptoms are progressing.1

1. Since your stroke or last assessment, do you have more difficulty walking or moving safely from bed to chair? □ YES □ NO
2. Since your stroke or last assessment, do you have more stiffness in your arms, hands, and/or legs? □ YES □ NO
3. Is this interfering with activities of daily living, sleep or causing pain? □ YES □ NO

If your stroke survivor answers “YES” to any of the questions above, he or she may benefit from seeing a Stroke Rehabilitation Physician.

Physiatrists promote exercise, education, and lifestyle modifications in stroke survivors following a stroke and encourage the adoption of healthy behaviours, which can reduce a stroke survivor’s risk of having a subsequent stroke or suffering other cardiovascular events.

Physiatrist in Canada
The Canadian Association of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (CAPM&R) is a member service organization that represents Canadian physiatrists and promotes their pursuit of excellence in the field of physical medicine and rehabilitation. The CAPM&R was founded in 1952 and has over 400 members today. The CAPM&R website provides links to regional physiatrists listed by province: http://capmr.ca/about-capmr/what-is-a-physiatrist/. See the HELPFUL RESOURCES section to locate a physiatrist in your region.16

Physiotherapist
Physiotherapists are primary healthcare professionals who combine their in-depth knowledge of the physical body and how it works with specialized hands-on clinical skills to assess, diagnose, and treat symptoms of illness, injury, or disability.14,15

The role of physiotherapy in stroke recovery
Physiotherapists play an essential role in the rehabilitation of stroke survivors, helping them return to their highest level of activity and function.14,15 Physiotherapists help to improve physical mobility of arms, hands, and legs to recover functional activities such as dressing, feeding, hygiene, transferring, and walking.14,15

Physiotherapists improve stroke survivor satisfaction by promoting social engagement and supporting self-management strategies resulting in improvements in quality of life.16

Physiotherapists are specifically trained to assess movement difficulties and/or sensory loss that may occur as a result of a stroke. Through movement re-education, the physiotherapist works to retrain mobility and functional activities such as walking, standing up from sitting and using the affected arm and leg.1 Several of the movement re-education aspects that physiotherapists concentrate on include:1

• Mobility and strengthening exercises for the affected arm and leg
• Trunk stability and strengthening
• Balance retraining to improve stability and movement coordination
• Improving exercise tolerance and endurance
• Functional activities to promote independence and participation in daily activities
• Gait retraining to promote safe and functional walking
• Sensory retraining to help compensate for altered or reduced sensations

When to see a physiotherapist
After receiving medical attention, a stroke survivor will ideally begin a rehabilitation treatment program with a physiotherapist as soon as possible while in hospital. If medically stable, physicians quite often refer stroke survivors to a physiotherapist for treatment within 48 hours of having a stroke. Some people recover from the affects of a stroke within days, but in most cases, improvement occurs gradually over the course of a rehabilitation period.14

While improvement is always possible, most recovery is based on persistence, practice, and patience. With guidance from a physiotherapist and other members of the healthcare team, most individuals continue to improve their performance of functional tasks and aerobic capacity for up to one year following a stroke. At this point, the rate of recovery usually slows down but may continue for an extended period of time thereafter. After discharge from the hospital, a rehabilitation program may continue through home care physiotherapy or an out-patient physiotherapy clinic.3

A stroke survivor may choose to receive physiotherapy at home or at a clinic even if they had initially received treatment in the hospital, but were not referred for further therapy after discharge. A stroke survivor does not need to be referred by a doctor in order to see a physiotherapist.

Physiotherapy in Canada
The Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA) represents physiotherapists, physiotherapist assistants and physiotherapy students across Canada. CPA members are rehabilitation professionals dedicated to the health, mobility, and fitness of Canadians.17

Canada has more than 20,000 registered physiotherapists who work in private clinics, general and rehabilitation hospitals, community health centres, residential care and assisted-living facilities, home visits agencies, workplaces, and schools.17,18

The CPA endorses the Physio Can Help website, which provides links to physiotherapists located in several provinces: http://physiocanhelp.ca/find-a-physiotherapist-2/. See the HELPFUL RESOURCES section to locate a physiotherapist in your region.

Occupational Therapy
Occupational therapy is defined by the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists as “the art and science of enabling engagement in everyday living.”17 “Occupation” refers to everything that people do during the course of everyday life.17

Occupational therapy enables people to perform and participate to their full potential in the daily occupations of life.18

For a stroke survivor, this may translate into difficulty moving (particularly one side of the body), severe stiffness (also known as spasticity) and abnormal movement patterns, difficulty speaking (also known as aphasia), difficulty understanding and processing information, difficulty seeing, difficulty understanding where the body is in space, or difficulty recognizing objects and altered sensation. These deficits may impact your stroke survivor’s daily activities, such as the ability to wash, dress and feed him or herself, walk or run, communicate, function at work, use a computer or cell phone, drive, participate in leisure activities, and to be intimate with their partner.

Occupational therapists (OTs) assess all of these areas of a person’s life and provide treatment, as well as strategies, assistive technologies and interventions that promote health and wellbeing and allow one to engage in all of their chosen activities of daily living, and to go back to leading productive and satisfying lives.
Physiatry

Physiatrists are physicians who specialize in physical medicine and rehabilitation, a medical specialty that deals with the evaluation and treatment of stroke survivors whose functional abilities have been impaired.10

The role of physiatry in stroke recovery

A physiatrist will help the stroke survivor to regain function after the stroke by leading a team of healthcare professionals that may include rehabilitation nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, therapeutic recreational specialists, and social workers. These rehabilitation specialists work together to improve the stroke survivor’s recovery with the goal of restoring as much of their independence as possible.11

When to see a physiatrist

Help is available for people who have had a stroke, even many years later. There are specially trained Stroke Rehabilitation Physicians who treat people dealing with the aftermath of stroke every day.

It is important to have your stroke survivor assess any physical challenges caused by their stroke so they can receive any necessary treatment. You can have your loved one answer the following assessment questions on a repeated basis to get a sense of how their post-stroke symptoms are progressing.7

1. Since your stroke or last assessment, do you have more difficulty walking or moving safely from bed to chair? □ YES □ NO
2. Since your stroke or last assessment, do you have more stiffness in your arms, hands, and/or legs? □ YES □ NO
3. Is this interfering with activities of daily living, sleep or causing pain? □ YES □ NO

If your stroke survivor answers “YES” to any of the questions above, he or she may benefit from seeing a Stroke Rehabilitation Physician. Ask your loved one’s doctor for a referral to a specialist. Most doctors will be more than willing to send a referral.8

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Physiotherapists promote exercise, education, and lifestyle modifications in stroke survivors following a stroke and encourage the adoption of healthy behaviours, which can reduce a stroke survivor’s risk of having a subsequent stroke or suffering other cardiovascular events. Furthermore, physiotherapists improve stroke survivor satisfaction by promoting social engagement and supporting self-management strategies resulting in improvements in quality of life.13

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A CAREGIVER’S GUIDE TO STROKE RECOVERY
The role of occupational therapy in stroke recovery

OTs are a vital part of the stroke team, and provide programs to promote overall physical and mental health to improve function and engage in the occupations of life. The process involves assessment, intervention, and evaluation related to occupational performance in self-care, work, study, and leisure.

In the early stages of stroke an OT will assess a stroke survivor’s ability to complete basic self-care activities of daily living, such as toileting, washing, dressing, eating, etc. For instance, if an individual has encountered physical effects such as spasticity or contractures (abnormal patterns of movement like a flexed elbow or fisted hand), an OT may work with the physician and physical therapist to provide splints, range of motion, and functional exercises to reduce the spasm. If a stroke survivor’s balance and coordination or ability to walk has been impaired, the OT may assess him or her for a mobility device, such as a walker, manual wheelchair, scooter, or power wheelchair. If memory or the ability to concentrate or do simple calculations has been affected, the OT will work with individuals to overcome or manage these issues. In the later stages of the OT may assess a stroke survivor’s home and work environments and prescribe safety devices such as grab bars, raised toilet seats and/or specialized door operators, work tools, or adaptive equipment. If a person can no longer access their computer or mobile phone, the OT will help to provide alternative access technologies, such as specialized switches, voice activation, eye gaze and other technologies. Furthermore, if an individual has difficulty driving or coping, the OT can provide strategies to increase independence and quality of life.

When to see an occupational therapist

As soon as possible, ideally within 48 hours after the occurrence of a stroke, an OT will assess a stroke survivor’s ability to perform the basic activities of daily living (ADLs), such as transferring out of bed, balance and walking, bathing, dressing, toileting, brushing teeth, and eating. Once the individual has gained some recovery, the OT will then assess their instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs), which include tasks that enable independent living such as managing medication, using the telephone or computer, shopping, cooking, keeping track of finances, driving, working and productivity, and leisure activities.

Many stroke survivors improve enough to go home and will only require help with one or two of their IADLs, in which case the healthcare team may refer the person to a home care or outpatient program. Some stroke survivors will require more rehabilitation and will often be referred to an inpatient rehabilitation program where they will see an OT as part of their recovery team. Once discharged, either from an acute hospital or rehabilitation setting, if a person continues to have difficulties completing daily tasks, if spasticity increases, or if any other concerning issue arises, then they can ask their doctor for a referral for outpatient occupational therapy in a hospital outpatient program or at a private clinic.

Occupational therapy in Canada

In October 2011, the CMHR (Canadian Institute for Health Information) reported over 13,000 registered occupational therapists in Canada.19 The Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) is the sole accrediting agency in Canada which has its own provincial association and regulating body. The CAOT website provides a helpful search tool for locating local occupational therapists by region: www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=562. See the HELPFUL RESOURCES section to locate an occupational therapist in your area.

Podiatry

Podiatrists are highly trained medical specialists who focus specifically on the foot and ankle. Their area of expertise includes diagnosis, treatment, and helping to keep feet in a healthy condition.20

Podiatrists play an important role in examining and treating the biomechanical complications that stroke victims have.22

The role of podiatry in stroke recovery

Stroke complications can affect the mechanics of the foot and may include muscle wasting, loss of nerve control and sensations, or altered sensations. These symptoms can lead to conditions such as foot drop and spastic paralysis.21

Spasticity is a form of paralysis that affects roughly 40% of stroke survivors and is characterized by stiff or tight muscles. The tight muscles constitute movement, making it difficult to lift things, walk or perform daily activities of living.22

Foot drop, also known as drop foot, is a general term that refers to difficulty lifting the front part of the foot. Someone with foot drop may drag the front of their foot and they walk slowly.23

Without early intervention, such as orthotic bracing, spasticity can develop quickly, leading to impaired mobility and significant disability.24 A podiatrist can offer footwear advice, orthotic therapy and custom ankle foot orthoses.25 For example, a podiatrist may provide a stroke survivor suffering from foot drop a brace for their ankle that will allow them to hold their foot in a normal position.25

When to see a podiatrist

A stroke survivor can see a podiatrist any time they experience severe or symptoms of spasticity in the foot. An individual does not need to be referred by a doctor in order to see a podiatrist, and you can contact a podiatrist’s office directly to make an appointment.

Podiatry in Canada

The Canadian Podiatric Medical Association (CPMA) is a non-profit professional organization consisting of more than 400 premier foot specialists.26 The CPMA website provides links to regional podiatrists listed by province: www.podiatrycanada.org/useful-links/ See the HELPFUL RESOURCES section to locate a podiatrist in your region.

The knowledge and skills of the social worker are directed toward helping the stroke survivor and caregivers in the adjustment process and to facilitate the individual’s return to the community at the highest possible level of emotional, social and economic functioning.26 A social worker can help answer questions about insurance and other financial issues and can arrange for a variety of support services. They may also provide or arrange for counseling to help cope with any emotional problems.27

Community reintegration

Once the medical intervention that accompanied the stroke recovery continues. Part of this includes being reintegrated into the community, and there are many resources to support both stroke survivors and their caregivers during the reintegration process. Many of the resources listed in the HELPFUL RESOURCES section of this guide offer information on community reintegration. The following section will also discuss reintegration in more detail.

When to see a social worker

Social work treatment begins during an initial interview with the stroke survivor and his or her family. At this time, a psychological evaluation is completed to understand the person’s history prior to the stroke, in any social, emotional, and economic problems created or intensified by the stroke. The social worker will inquire about the stroke survivor’s goals in life and advice on how they may be redirected. They will also learn about the meaningful people in the stroke survivor’s life and their relationships with those people, along with the individual’s personality traits and personal strengths.28

Social work in Canada

Social workers are found in a variety of settings, such as family services agencies, general and psychiatric hospitals, school boards and federal and provincial departments. An increasing number of social workers work in private practice. In Canada, the social work profession is provincially legislated and regulated. The Canadian Association of Social Workers website recommends visiting the individual province websites to locate a social worker in your region. Their website also provides links to government websites, volunteer organizations, education contacts, and other resources.

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Occupational therapy in Canada

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Although the CAOT is the national association, each province and territory has its own provincial association and regulating body. The CAOT website provides a helpful search tool for locating local occupational therapists by region: www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=5622. See the HELPFUL RESOURCES section to locate an occupational therapist in your area.

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Social work

Social work is a profession concerned with helping individuals, families, groups, and communities to enhance their individual and collective wellbeing. It aims to help people develop their skills and their ability to use their own resources and those of the community to resolve problems.30

The role of social work in stroke recovery

Social work treatment plays a significant role in stroke rehabilitation.31

A social worker helps the stroke survivor, his or her family, and the rehabilitation team to work together to reach realistic goals that are specific to each individual case.

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Stroke Recovery and Community Reintegration

The 7 steps to stroke recovery*

There is nothing quite as scary as the unknown, particularly when it involves a health crisis like a stroke.

As a caregiver, your most pressing questions will likely involve what to expect as your loved one recovers, and how to adapt at each stage. The seven steps to stroke recovery may provide you with some answers and insight to help you and your stroke survivor as you work to reintegrate into your home community and daily life activities.

1. Exercise and Mobility

Physical activity plays an important role in helping your stroke survivor regain function after stroke and in maintaining general health. Do your best to incorporate exercise into your stroke survivor’s daily routine. Set specific and achievable goals that are tailored to their current situation. Start small and be consistent. Getting your loved one to walk for 10 minutes six times per week can be more physically and mentally beneficial than running a 60-minute marathon. Encourage him or her to take an activity that they enjoy to help alleviate their stress, and remember that it takes time to develop good habits.

2. Communication and Language

Some stroke survivors develop aphasia, a speech and language impairment that can affect understanding, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Aphasia usually presents at its worst immediately after the stroke, and over time most stroke survivors will improve a little, while some will improve a lot. Communicative disorders present particular challenges for caregivers.

If you and your stroke survivor are struggling to communicate, you may find the following tips helpful:

- Try all kinds of means of communication and use anything that helps you communicate with the stroke survivor, such as props and non-verbal communications:
  - Write down key words
  - Draw pictures or diagrams
  - Point to objects
  - Refer to pictures, maps, or calendars
  - Use facial expressions or gestures

- Remember that understanding can be difficult and every person’s communication and language problems are different. So don’t rush. Be natural and patient. Don’t speak too quickly, and say one thing at a time. Do not yell and don’t pretend you understand. It can help to recap discussions and interactions to make sure that everyone is on the same page.

3. Social Interaction and Recreation

Family and friends are important to all of us. So are hobbies, interests, and recreational activities. These aspects of life give us a sense of purpose and belonging, and they are important parts of life before a stroke and continue to be just as important after a stroke. Stroke survivors and their caregivers may both have difficulties reclaiming their social lives, but it is possible and should become an intentional goal. Do not be afraid to ask for help, whether it be with transportation for your stroke survivor or caregiving relief. You might be surprised at how willing people are to lend a hand.

Support groups exist for both stroke survivors and caregivers. As a caregiver, becoming part of a support group may bring a lot of value and can help to strengthen your social life. Whatever you do, engaging with your friends, family, and community will benefit you tremendously.

4. Cognitive Challenges

Most stroke survivors experience some cognitive effects, either temporarily or permanently. They may find it hard to remember things, or pay attention, and they may have difficulty learning new things. Your stroke survivor’s perception, the way they make sense of the world, can also be affected.

The following tips may help you to manage and assist your loved one with some of these challenges:

- Simplify – Keep activities and information as simple as possible
- Repeat – Learning after stroke requires repetition and practice
- Structure – Weekly and daily schedules are helpful
- Consistency – Do things the same way every time
- Compensate – Change habits, routines, and methods to adapt to your stroke survivor’s new challenges

5. Caregiver’s Support

Although your loved one suffered the stroke and they require an incredible amount of support from all aspects, you as a caregiver also need support. This new role is demanding and, at times, can be very overwhelming. No caregiver should feel they need to endure this experience entirely by themselves. Joining a support group will greatly benefit you, as it can offer a circle of peers who understand what you are going through. A support group can help you solve problems and find answers to your questions, find useful information, boost your morale, and allow you to express your emotions in a supportive environment.

6. Healthy Lifestyle

Encouraging healthy eating habits for your stroke survivor will help him or her to achieve the best recovery possible. The healthier your stroke survivor is, the better equipped they will be to cope with their recovery and symptoms of stroke.

There are many recommendations that can be followed to maintain or improve your loved one’s lifestyle, such as:

- Reducing cholesterol
- Limiting caffeine and alcohol consumption
- Avoiding or quitting smoking and/or other tobacco products
- Reducing stress by talking about your problems, concerns, or worries that arise with a doctor, religious leader, friend, counsellor, or peer support group

7. System and Resource Navigation

Finding the right services and support is a critical step that will immensely enhance your stroke survivor’s recovery and wellbeing. Numerous resources, many of which are included in this guide, are available to help you and your loved one navigate and manage this new life circumstance.

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*A CAREGIVER'S GUIDE TO STROKE RECOVERY

No one can predict exactly how a stroke survivor’s recovery will progress. All you can do is make the most of each stage, and celebrate the milestones, both big and small, with your loved one.

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“I always say recovery never ends. I find there are things I can do now that I couldn’t do six months ago.”

Stroke recovery is a journey. The key to my recovery has been to understand the importance of medication maintenance, staying active with the help of my family, and doing all that I can to stay committed to my recovery.” - ANNA
Recovery and Community Reintegration

The 7 steps to stroke recovery

There is nothing quite as scary as the unknown, particularly when it involves a health crisis like a stroke.

As a caregiver, your most pressing questions will likely involve what to expect as your loved one recovers, and how to adapt at each stage. The seven steps to stroke recovery may provide you with some answers and insight to help you and your stroke survivor as you work to reintegrate into your home community and daily life activities.

1. Exercise and Mobility
   Physical activity plays an important role in helping your stroke survivor regain function after stroke and in maintaining general health. Do your best to incorporate exercise into your stroke survivor’s daily routine. Set specific and achievable goals that are tailored to their current situation. Start small and be consistent. Getting your loved one to walk for 10 minutes six times per week can be more physically and mentally beneficial than running a 60-minute marathon. Encourage him or her to take an activity that they enjoy to help alleviate their stress, and remember that it takes time to develop good habits.

2. Communication and Language
   Some stroke survivors develop aphasia, a speech and language impairment that can affect understanding, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Aphasia usually presents at its worst immediately after the stroke, and over time most stroke survivors will improve a little, while some will improve a lot. Communicative disorders present particular challenges for caregivers.
   If you and your stroke survivor are struggling to communicate, you may find the following tips helpful:
   • Try all kinds of means of communication and use anything that helps you communicate with the stroke survivor, such as props and non-verbal communications:
     - Write down key words
     - Draw pictures or diagrams
     - Point to objects
     - Refer to pictures, maps, or calendars
     - Use facial expressions or gestures
   • Remember that understanding can be difficult and every person’s communication and language problems are different. So don’t rush. Be natural and patient. Don’t speak too quickly, and say one thing at a time. Do not yell and don’t pretend you understand. It can help to recap discussions and interactions to make sure that everyone is on the same page.

3. Social Interaction and Recreation
   Family and friends are important to all of us. So are hobbies, interests, and recreational activities. These aspects of life give us a sense of purpose and belonging, and they are important parts of life before a stroke and continue to be just as important after a stroke. Stroke survivors and their caregivers may both have difficulties reclaiming their social lives, but it is possible and should become an intentional goal. Do not be afraid to ask for help, whether it be help with transportation for your stroke survivor or caregiving relief. You might be surprised at how willing people are to lend a hand.
   Support groups exist for both stroke survivors and caregivers. As a caregiver, becoming part of a support group may bring a lot of value and can help to strengthen your social life. Whatever you do, engaging with your friends, family, and community will benefit you tremendously.

4. Cognitive Challenges
   Most stroke survivors experience some cognitive effects, either temporarily or permanently. They may find it hard to remember things, or pay attention, and they may have difficulty learning new things. Your stroke survivor’s perception, the way they make sense of the world, can also be affected.
   The following tips may help you to manage and assist your loved one with some of these challenges:
   • Simplify – Keep activities and information as simple as possible
   • Repeat – Learning after stroke requires repetition and practice
   • Structure – Weekly and daily schedules are helpful
   • Consistency – Do things the same way every time
   • Compensate – Change habits, routines, and methods to adapt to your stroke survivor’s new challenges

5. Caregiver’s Support
   Although your loved one suffered the stroke and they require an incredible amount of support from all aspects, you as a caregiver also need support. This new role is demanding and, at times, can be very overwhelming. No caregiver should feel they need to endure this experience entirely by themselves. Joining a support group will greatly benefit you, as it can offer a circle of peers who understand what you are going through. A support group can help you solve problems and find answers to your questions, find useful information, boost your morale, and allow you to express your emotions in a supportive environment.

6. Healthy Lifestyle
   Encouraging healthy eating habits for your stroke survivor will help him or her to achieve the best recovery possible. The healthier your stroke survivor is, the better equipped they will be to cope with their recovery and symptoms of stroke.
   There are many recommendations that can be followed to maintain or improve your loved one’s lifestyle, such as:
   • Reducing cholesterol
   • Limiting caffeine and alcohol consumption
   • Avoiding or quitting smoking and/or other tobacco products
   • Reducing stress by talking about your problems, concerns, or worries that arise with a doctor, religious leader, friend, counselor, or peer support group

7. System and Resource Navigation
   Finding the right services and support is a critical step that will immensely enhance your stroke survivor’s recovery and wellbeing. Numerous resources, many of which are included in this guide, are available to help you and your loved one navigate and manage this new life circumstance.

“Always say recovery never ends. I find there are things I can do now that I couldn’t do six months ago.”

Stroke recovery is a journey. The key to my recovery has been to understand the importance of medication maintenance, staying active with the help of my family, and doing all that I can to stay committed to my recovery.” - Anna

No one can predict exactly how a stroke survivor’s recovery will progress. All you can do is make the most of each stage, and celebrate the milestones, both big and small, with your loved one.

A CAREGIVER’S GUIDE TO STROKE RECOVERY
Dealing with the Other Side of Grief

When we talk about grieving, it is usually in the context of death, wherein we grieve the loss of a friend or loved one. But there are other forms of loss we need to grieve. When someone survives a stroke, for instance, many things change for them and their caregivers. These changes can be interpreted as losses for both the stroke survivor and the caregiver. Stroke survivors may need to communicate differently or require mobility aids. Living spaces need to be modified and relationships between stroke survivors and caregivers may develop or change in unexpected ways. These changes may be temporary, as a part of rehabilitation and recovery, or they may be permanent.

All of these changes, such as the loss of independence, control, and function, represent losses for the caregiver, just as much as the survivor. Similar to when a person needs time to grieve the loss of a friend or family member, a caregiver also needs time to grieve the changes and losses that have suddenly come about.

As a caregiver, you may find you experience one or all of the five most common stages of grief:

- denial
- anger
- bargaining
- depression
- acceptance

You may experience some or all of these common stages, and you may not experience them in any particular order. Some caregivers will resist their new role and the changes that come with it. If you find this to be you, do not feel guilty and know that it is okay to feel this way. Your life has been drastically altered, and you need time and support to navigate this new reality.

Many caregivers respond by initially setting impossible goals for themselves. Some people have an ideal standard of care and want to provide it immediately and with absolute perfection. Then once reality sets in and things do not go according to plan, caregivers feel guilty for failing short. These feelings are also acceptable, and if this is you, just remember to set reasonable goals, and ask for help when you need it. You cannot do it all and neither can anyone else.

The most important thing to remember is that everyone reacts differently. There is no correct emotional response. Becoming a caregiver to someone you love is a difficult, and often sad process, and you have the right to grieve and experience the emotions of anger, guilt, and failure.

The good news is that with time, acceptance, and effort. Like many aspects of stroke recovery, communication requires adaptation and effort.

Building and Maintaining Healthy Relationships

Focus on communication

Communication is crucial to establishing and maintaining the health of any relationship. As a caregiver, you and your stroke survivor may need to find new ways of communicating and connecting. This is especially true if the stroke survivor develops aphasia or has difficulty expressing emotion. (See the STROKE RECOVERY AND REINTEGRATION section of this guide for tips on dealing with these outcomes.)

Like many aspects of stroke recovery, communication requires practice and effort.

If you and your stroke survivor are struggling with communication, you both may find the following exercise helpful:

- Sit with your partner in a comfortable and quiet space. Set a timer for 5 minutes.
- As the caregiver, you go first. For 3 uninterrupted minutes, simply talk about what is on your mind, such as the events of the day or something you have been keeping to yourself for some time.
- Once your 5 minutes are up, allow your stroke survivor up to 5 minutes to reflect and respond to what you talked about.
- Next it is your stroke survivor’s turn to speak, uninterrupted, for 3 minutes.
- You then have 5 minutes to reflect and respond to what your stroke survivor shared.
- After sharing for a few minutes, how did you feel? Did you spend the whole time complaining or asking questions? Did hidden feelings come to light? Did you both get a chance to respond to one another?

Alleviate stress

It can be difficult to maintain any relationship and keep it healthy if you are under a lot of stress. Caregiving, while recognized as a kind and loving act, can also be incredibly demanding and can easily lead to burnout that will negatively impact your relationship with your stroke survivor.

Remember to reach out to others by joining a peer support group or making a weekly coffee date with a close friend. Find solitary activities that you can do to help you relax, such as meditation, yoga, reading a book, listening to your favourite song, or watching funny videos on YouTube. Anything that takes your mind off your stressors can serve to give you a breather and some relief.

Most importantly, don’t forget to ask for help! Most people do not know what you need, but will be happy to assist if you ask them to. Having someone different assist with chores or daily activities can also provide you and your stroke survivor with a break from each other, which may be necessary and is completely acceptable.

Access your resources

By taking care of yourself, you will be able to support your stroke survivor and maintain a happy, healthy relationship at the same time.

“Just attending the meetings and hearing what other caregivers have to share assisted me in working through a situation. I don’t feel so isolated in my role as caregiver.”

- RITA LOEB, Caregiver

“See the HELPFUL RESOURCES section at the end of this guide for a list of websites that focus on assisting caregivers.”
Dealing with the Other Side of Grief

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The most important thing to remember is that everyone reacts differently. There is no correct emotional response. Becoming a caregiver to someone you love is a difficult, and often sad process, and you have the right to grieve and experience the emotions of anger, guilt, and failure.

The good news is that with time, acceptance, and resources, the grieving can end. You have the opportunity to reach a place where caregiving becomes part of a full, rewarding life for both you and your stroke survivor.

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After sharing for a few minutes, how did you feel? Did you spend the whole time complaining or asking questions? Did hidden feelings come to light? Did you both get a chance to respond to one another?

Although most of the time we feel we ‘listen’ to what the other person is saying, more often than not we are not ‘hearing’ what they are actually saying. Rather, we are thinking about what to make for dinner, what happened at work, or how to respond based on our automatic reactions. The fact is, everyone needs to clear the air sometimes and deserves the opportunity to be heard. In order to really communicate, you and your stroke survivor both need to hear what the other is saying.

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It can be difficult to maintain any relationship and keep it healthy if you are under a lot of stress. Caregiving, while recognized as a kind and loving act, can also be incredibly demanding and can easily lead to burnout that will negatively impact your relationship with your stroke survivor.

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A Closer Look at Aphasia & Communication Disabilities

The role of Speech-Language Pathologists in stroke recovery when aphasia and communication disabilities occur.

Aphasia and Communication Disabilities

When a stroke damages the area of the brain that controls language, it may cause aphasia. Although aphasia is usually the lasting result of a stroke or brain injury, it may also be caused by other neurological conditions. There are over 100,000 Canadians living with aphasia.

People living with aphasia are intelligent. They know what they want to say, have the desire to socialize, and are capable of participating in decisions that pertain to them, but they may have difficulty expressing themselves. They may also have difficulty understanding speech, reading, and/or writing. In some cases, aphasia may also affect one’s memory because we remember through using language.

People with aphasia often have other communication problems, such as dysarthria (weak speech muscles that make speech sound slushy), and apraxia (problems making the movements needed for speech such as starting the movement, planning the movement, and getting the movements in the right order).

The needs of people with communication disabilities are often less well understood than the needs of those living with other disabilities. People living with aphasia and other communication disabilities therefore often experience major barriers when communicating, such as not being provided with the tools needed for them to communicate effectively, being ignored and/or being talked about to a family member instead of being talked to directly, and not being given sufficient time to process and/or respond.

Increased education about aphasia and other communication disabilities, and the effective use of communication strategies, to both the person living with aphasia and his/her communication partners, can result in improved communication and quality of life.

Speech-Language Pathologists

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) have specialized knowledge, skills, and clinical training in assessment and management of communication and swallowing disorders.

The Role of Speech-Language Pathologists in Stroke Recovery

A Speech-Language Pathologist can assess and treat communication, cognitive/thinking skills (e.g., attention, memory, organization, reasoning, judgment), speech, and swallowing disorders (e.g., ensuring that an individual is on a safe diet and not at increased risk for choking).

Speech and Language Pathology therapy may include:

• Providing the stroke survivor with specific therapies and strategies to improve his/her communication and/or swallowing skills, including practice opportunities in a variety of settings and situations.
• Educating the stroke survivor’s family and other caregivers on the individual’s abilities and challenges and on how to use various alternative/augmentative communication strategies/devices to help compensate for difficulties.
• Recommending strategies or changes to enhance the stroke survivor’s ability to participate at home, at work and within the community at large.

Reasons to See a Speech-Language Pathologist

• Difficulties with reading, writing, word-finding, expressing needs/wants and feelings, answering questions, understanding instructions or following directions, as well as slurred or hesitant speech or stuttering.
• Avoidance of social interaction as a result of communication difficulties.
• Hoarse voice or persistent loss of voice.
• Coughing, choking, or throat clearing when eating or drinking, “gurgly”/wet sounding voice during or after eating or drinking, complaints of food getting stuck in the throat or going down the wrong way and repeated bouts of pneumonia.
Helpful Aphasia Resources

For more information on where to find aphasia support services. This list of helpful resources represents a sampling of resources, and is not exhaustive. Inclusion in the list is for informational purposes only. It does not constitute an official endorsement by March of Dimes Canada.

For aphasia support services by province:

**Nova Scotia**
- Nova Scotia Aphasia Association (NSAA) www.nsaphasia.homestead.com
- InteRACT: Intensive Residential Aphasia Communication Therapy, Dalhousie Aphasia Clinic, School of Human Communication Disorders (Halifax) www.dal.ca/diff/interACT.html

**Quebec**
- Quebec Association for People with Aphasia (Association québécoise des personnes aphasiennes www.aphasie.ca

**Ontario**
- Aphasia and Communication Disabilities Program (ACDP), March of Dimes Canada (Greater Toronto Area, Maple, Newmarket, Peterborough, Stouffville, Vaughan, Whitby) www.marchofdimes.ca/ACDP
- Aphasia Centre of Ottawa www.aphasiaottawa.org
- Aphasia Institute (Toronto) www.aphasia.ca
- Halton Aphasia Centre (Burlington, Oakville, Brampton, Milton, Mississauga) www.h-picap.com
- SAM (Seniors Activation Maintenance Program) Aphasia Program (Hamilton and Waterdown) www.samprograms.ca
- Waterloo Wellington Regional Aphasia Program, St. Joseph Health Centre (Guelph) www.sjhc.ca/community-outreach-services/aphasia-program

**Alberta**
- Calgary Aphasia Centre www.calgaryaphasia.com
- Westman Aphasia Inc. www.westmanaphasia.ca
- iTAWC - Intensive Treatment for Aphasia in Western Canada (Vancouver) www.itawc.com

**British Columbia**

B.C. Office of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology www.osla.on.ca
- Westman Aphasia Centre (Burlington, Oakville, Brampton, Milton, Mississauga) www.h-picap.com

**For more information on where to find a speech-language pathologist by province:**

**Nova Scotia**
- Speech and Hearing Association of Nova Scotia www.shans.ca
- Prince Edward Island Speech and Hearing Association www.peispeechhearing.ca
- Newfoundland and Labrador Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists www.nlbsl.ca
- Quebec
  - Association québécoise des orthophonistes et audiologistes www.aphasie.ca

**Ontario**
- Ontario Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists www.osla.on.ca
- Alberta
  - Alberta College of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists www.acslpa.ab.ca
- British Columbia
  - British Columbia Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists www.bcaslpa.ca
- Yukon
  - Yukon Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Association www.yslpaas.org

**New Brunswick**
- New Brunswick Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists www.nbaslpa.ca

**Newfoundland**
- Dynamic Physio & Wellness St. John’s, 709-758-3962 www.dynamcincl.ca

**National**
- Sage Rehabilitation & Management Consulting Inc. Dartmouth, 902-469-1325 www.sagel.ca
- The Physioclinic Halifax, 902-455-2627 www.physio.ca

**Quebec**
- Prince Edward Island Charlottetown Physiotherapy Charlottetown, 902-566-2700 www.charlottetownphysio.ca
- New Brunswick Advanced Health & Physiotherapy Moncton, 506-204-6822 www.advanced-health.ca

**Canadian Rehabilitation Companies**

Below is a list of a number of rehabilitation companies available throughout Canada.

In addition to providing information on recovery and therapy for your stroke survivor, many of these resources also offer information on community reintegration. This list of Canadian rehabilitation companies represents a sampling of resources, and is not exhaustive. Inclusion in the list is for informational purposes only. It does not constitute an official endorsement by March of Dimes Canada.

**National**
- Bayside Home Health Mississauga, 416-992-4280 www.bayside.ca
- CBI Health Group Toronto, 416-231-0078 www.cbi.ca
- Centric Health Corporation Toronto, 416-485-7781 www.centrichealth.ca
- PT Health Care Solutions Hamilton, 666-749-7461 www.pthealth.ca

**Newfoundland**
- Dynamic Physio & Wellness St. John’s, 709-758-3962 www.dynamcincl.ca

**Quebec**
- AMS Medical & Rehabilitation Centre Dorval, 514-700-2012 www.amsrhc.com
- Physicentrix Montreal, 514-737-7246 www.physicentrix.ca

**Ontario**
- Access Rehab Markham, 416-987-8092 www.accesserhab.ca
- Altum Health Toronto, 416-603-5185 www.altumhealth.com
- Arvan Rehab Group Inc. Toronto, 416-593-8464 www.arvangroup.com
- Brain Injury Community Re-entry (Niagara) Inc. St. Catharines, 905-687-6788 www.bicr.org
- Closing the Gap Healthcare Group Mississauga, 905-508-0202 www.closingthegap.ca
- CVE Inc. Ottawa, 613-257-7568 x237 www.cve.ca
- DMD Disability Management Vaughan, 613-635-8124 www.dddisability.com
- DMARehability London, 519-452-0046 www.dmarehability.com
- DriveAgain Toronto, 416-640-0292 www.driveagain.ca

**Inter-Action Rehabilitation Inc.**
- Toronto, 416-445-5125 www.interactionrehab.com
- Kawartha Therapy Services Peterborough, 705-874-1072 www.kawarthatherehab.com

**Liberty Mutual Vocational Rehabilitation**
- Mississauga, 1-866-666-6052 www.cascadedisability.ca
- Nova Rehabilitation St. Thomas, 519-637-0981 www.novarehab.ca
- Pathways Therapy Waterloo, 519-885-4211 www.pathwaystherapy.ca

**Quinn Rehab Services**
- Barrie, 705-726-2362 www.quinnrehab.com
- Rehab First Inc. London, 519-646-2949 www.rehabfirst.ca
- Rehabilitation Management Inc. Toronto, 416-365-0010 www.rehabilitation.ca
- Rejuvenate Health Services London, 519-652-0740 www.rejuvenate-ls.ca

**Theraputix - The Wellness Centre Inc.**
- North York 416-444-4411 www.theraputix.ca
- Voc Rehab Canada Oshawa, 905-443-0477 www.vrcan.ca

Canadian Rehabilitation Companies
Aphasia is a communication disorder that can result from stroke or brain injury. Aphasia can affect a person’s ability to speak, read, write, or understand the speech of others. People who live with aphasia may also have a physical disability as a result of their stroke.

March of Dimes Aphasia Camps offer a relaxing weekend in an aphasia-friendly and accessible communication environment. Campers are welcome to bring a friend, family member, or caregiver. Activities include yoga, canoeing, arts and crafts, nature walks, and other adapted recreational and therapeutic activities. These camps provide an opportunity for stroke survivors and their caregivers to enjoy nature while they connect with a network of people who understand what they are going through.

It also offers the chance to engage in fun rehabilitation with March of Dimes Canada staff and volunteers.

“Aphasia Camps for Community Support”

“A stroke survivor, I can tell you firsthand that recovery is a lifelong process. I truly credit March of Dimes Canada and their stroke recovery programs with giving me goals and a sense of motivation. I have learned to walk and talk again, and while I still have some weakness on my right side, I make strides every day. As happy as I am with my progress, I also know that nothing will truly be as it was before. The key to improvement is with continued therapy.”

- JEFF

“It will help me to take a more comprehensive person-centred approach as a clinician”

- VOLUNTEER

“A opportunity to meet other caregivers and for my spouse to do independent activities”

- CAREGIVER PIECE

“Seeing persons with aphasia interact and enjoy themselves, be independent, be included, and be heard”

- VOLUNTEER

“This experience has solidified my future career plans to work with people with aphasia”

- STUDENT VOLUNTEER

“I feel this experience has given me awareness, practical tools and strategies, and confidence in interacting with people with aphasia”

- VOLUNTEER

“I enjoyed being connected to others who have a love of breaking down communication barriers”

- VOLUNTEER

“Seeing my wife enjoy herself and interact with other people”

- CAREGIVER PIECE

“Opportunity to meet other caregivers and for my spouse to do independent activities”

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Aphasia Camps are offered in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, and Nova Scotia. For information on dates and locations, or for more details, please contact: Gemma Woticky gwoticky@marchofdimes.ca

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Stroke survivors may need to modify their environment to accommodate a new level of function.

This can be an enormous task, and one that often becomes the responsibility of the caregiver. If you are unsure of where to start, there are useful resources available to help guide you through the process.

One helpful resource is March of Dimes Canada’s DesignAbility program. DesignAbility pairs skilled volunteers with people who need assistive devices or modifications to function as independently as possible. With this program, you and your stroke survivor will work with the DesignAbility team to assess your needs and develop a device to meet both your requirements.

The types of devices required will depend entirely on your circumstances. For example, one DesignAbility customer needed help moving around her kitchen, so volunteers created a custom stool equipped with four legs and locking casters. A stick allowed her to lock the casters while seated, which created a stable support for standing. Another customer needed an “extra hand” while cooking, after a stroke compromised her right arm. DesignAbility volunteers designed a cutting board with an adjustable holding mechanism and a clamp so it could be attached to any table or countertop.

The DesignAbility program is based on specificity and addresses each customer according to their unique situation. This makes it an excellent option for stroke survivors, since they are all affected differently and to different degrees. It is also helpful for caregivers, since the program supports you through a needs assessment all the way to the manufacture of your customized solution. Small changes, or a simple adaptive device, can significantly improve everyone’s quality of life.

DesignAbility is available in Ontario, and is expanding across Canada. The design and construction of your devices are free, but consumers are asked, if possible, to pay for materials, or to make a small donation to the program.

For more information on the DesignAbility program:
- www.marchofdimes.ca/DesignAbility
- 1-800-263-3463 ext. 7211
- DesignAbility@marchofdimes.ca

Registered Disability Savings Plan
Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSPs) help Canadians with disabilities and their families save toward long-term financial security.

An RDSP is a special program that helps Canadians with disabilities and their families save for long-term financial needs such as future medical and living costs. Like a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP), the investment income is tax-deferred and you may be eligible for government assistance.

The benefits of a Registered Disability Savings Plan include:

Government assistance:
To help your savings grow faster, the government provides grants and bonds. (see CDSG section in next column).

Tax-deferred growth:
While contributions to the RDSP are not eligible for a tax deduction, income earned grows on a tax-deferred basis until the funds are withdrawn. Upon withdrawal, the amount is taxed as income.

No annual contribution limit:
Contributions can be up to a lifetime limit of $200,000. In addition, anyone can contribute with the written permission of the plan holder. Contributions can be made up until the end of the year when the beneficiary turns 59.

Ability to make withdrawals:
There are two ways a beneficiary of an RDSP can withdraw funds:

1. Annual withdrawals
   • Also known as Lifetime Disability Assistance Payments (LDAPs)
   • Begin by the end of the year in which the beneficiary turns 60
   • These annual payments will then continue for the life of the beneficiary

2. One-time withdrawal
   • Also known as a Disability Assistance Payment
   • Can be paid to the beneficiary any time after the RDSP is established

For more information on how to help your stroke survivor make the most of their health benefits please contact:
Daniella Stretenovic, Associate Director, Individual Giving
- 1-800-263-3463 ext. 7338
directenovic@marchofdimes.ca

Capitalizing on Health Benefits
Registered Disability Savings Plan
The Canada Disability Savings Grant (CDSG) is another way for the federal government to contribute money to an RDSP.

When a contribution is deposited into the RDSP, the federal government will also put in some money. The amount of the CDSG is based on the beneficiary’s family income.16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beneficiary’s family income: $89,401* or less</th>
<th>Contribution</th>
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Creating a New Environment

Stroke survivors may need to modify their environment to accommodate a new level of function.

This can be an enormous task, and one that often becomes the responsibility of the caregiver. If you are unsure of where to start, there are useful resources available to help guide you through the process.

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A CAREGIVER’S GUIDE TO STROKE RECOVERY

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Caregiver Support Services

Stroke can permanently alter the mind and body of a person and has the potential to impact family dynamics and change day-to-day life forever. Stroke requires that caregivers must somehow set aside their own shock and fear to support the survivor, whose needs may seem to outweigh their own. However, caregivers need to look after their own needs first. Otherwise, the quality of care that they are capable of giving, their relationship with the stroke survivor, and their own quality of life can suffer greatly.

Stroke Recovery Canada is a one-stop resource for:
• Emotional support and the opportunity to speak with other caregivers who are dealing with similar issues
• Practical help in enhancing caring and coping skills
• Increased awareness of available therapeutic and social service supports
• Education about the physical and psychological needs of stroke survivors
• Information about stroke rehabilitation options

“[I didn’t have a stroke, my entire family had a stroke.]”

Said Lloyd MacDonald, a Stroke Recovery Member from Regina, Saskatchewan, “This national program helps to connect everyone affected by a stroke with the support they need.”

Other Key Services Offered

Stroke survivors are not alone. Stroke Recovery Canada can link stroke survivors with peer support groups. These groups help survivors cope with what is often a long process of recovery and rehabilitation. A peer support group can be a tremendous source of strength, optimism, and support for its members.

Education and Information

Stroke Recovery Canada provides free and easy access to information on medical treatments, rehabilitation options and support resources. In addition to distributing information to members, Stroke Recovery Canada offers additional services on its website and through seminars, conferences, and its newsletter, The Phoenix.

Warmline: 1-888-540-6666

The Warmline is a confidential, toll-free peer support line for those affected by stroke. As a non-medical and non-crisis resource, the Warmline offers information and support to stroke survivors, family members, and caregivers. The volunteer at the other end of the line is typically a stroke survivor, a family member of a survivor, or another member of the community who is familiar with the stroke experience.

Caregiver Survival Checklist

Caregivers need
• Information about stroke and its impacts, prognosis, and the rehabilitation process
• Education about the physical and psychological needs of stroke survivors
• Practical assistance in enhancing caring and coping skills
• Increased awareness of available therapeutic and social service supports for themselves and their loved one
• The opportunity to share ideas, information, and coping methods with others dealing with similar issues

Use the Caregiver Survival Checklist as a tool to ensure you get all of the resources and support that you need:

☐ Take it one day at a time
☐ Accept your limitations
☐ Learn to ask for help and accept any help offered
☐ Have a daily routine and stick to it
☐ Don’t bottle up negative feelings – talk about them with someone you trust
☐ Take time for yourself every day
☐ Keep your sense of humour
☐ Look after your health – get plenty of rest, exercise daily, eat a nutritious diet, and see your doctor
☐ Take advantage of local support groups like those offered by Stroke Recovery Canada
☐ Remain socially active
☐ Find a caregiver respite program in your community
☐ Consider modifications to your home and assistive devices
☐ Consider nursing and housekeeping services
A CAREGIVER’S GUIDE TO STROKE RECOVERY

Stroke Recovery Canada

Caregiver Support Services

Caregivers must also care for themselves.

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Helpful Resources

You may find some of the resources below helpful to you and your stroke survivor.

This list of helpful resources represents a sampling of resources, and is not exhaustive. Inclusion in the list is for informational purposes only. It does not constitute an official endorsement by March of Dimes Canada.

For more information on stroke rehabilitation:
Beyond Stroke website
www.beyondstroke.ca

For more information on caregiving:
Alberta Caregivers Association
www.albertacaregiversassociation.org

Canadian Caregiver Coalition
www.ccwc-can.ca

Canadian Association of Social Workers
in your region:
www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=3622

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
by region:
www.ltcplanningnetwork.com

Family Caregivers Association of BC
www.caringbridge.ca

Caregiving
www.caregiversns.org

Caregivers Nova Scotia
www.caregiversns.org

Canadian Association of Physical Therapists
by region:
www.capr.ca/about-capr/what-is-capr/province

New Brunswick
www.nbphysio.org/find-a-physiotherapist

Saskatchewan
saskphysio.org

Alberta
www.physiotherapyaberta.ca

British Columbia
biophyso.org

Ontario
www.gov.on.ca/health/pharmacare

Quebec
www.qaslpa.ca

For information on drug coverage in your region:
Ontario
www.thehealthline.ca

Manitoba
www.gov.mb.ca/health/pharmacare

Quebec
www.gouv.qc.ca/pharmacare.php

This list of helpful resources represents a sampling of resources, and is not exhaustive. Inclusion in the list is for informational purposes only. It does not constitute an official endorsement by March of Dimes Canada.

For more information on where to find a podiatrist by region:
Canadian Association of Podiatry
www.podiatrycanada.org/useful-links

Canadian Rehabilitation Companies

Below is a list of a number of rehabilitation companies available throughout Canada.

In addition to providing information on recovery and therapy for your stroke survivor, many of these resources also offer information on community reintegation. This list of Canadian rehabilitation companies represents a sampling of resources, and is not exhaustive. Inclusion in the list is for informational purposes only. It does not constitute an official endorsement by March of Dimes Canada.

National

Bayshore Home Health Management
Mississauga, 416-992-4280
www.bayshore.ca

CBI Health Group
Toronto, 416-231-0078
www.cbi.ca

Centre Health Corporation
Toronto, 416-485-7798
www.centrehealth.ca

PT Health Care Solutions
Hamilton, 866-749-7461
www.pthealth.ca

Newfoundland

Dynamic Physio & Wellness
St. John’s, 709-758-3962
www.dynanicnl.ca

Nova Scotia

Advantage Rehabilitation Consultants Ltd.
Dartmouth, 902-454-4077
www.advantage rehab.com

Sage Rehabilitation & Management Consulting Inc.
Dartmouth, 902-469-1325
www.sagel.ca

The Physiclinic
Halifax, 902-455-2627

www.physio.ca

Prince Edward Island

Charlottetown Physiotherapy
Charlottetown, 902-566-2700
www.charlottetownphysio.ca

New Brunswick

Advanced Health & Physiotherapy
Moncton, 506-204-6622
www.advanced-health.ca

Quebec

AMJ Medical Rehabilitation Centre
Dorval, 514-700-2012
www.physicentrix.ca

Ontario

Access Rehab
Markham, 416-987-8092
www.access rehab.ca

Altum Health
Toronto, 416-603-5185
www.altumhealth.com

Arvan Rehab Group Inc.
Toronto, 416-593-8464
www.arvan group.com

Grouping the Gap Healthcare Group
Mississauga, 905-310-0112
www.closingthegap.ca

CVE Inc.
Ottawa, 613-257-7568 x257
www.cve.ca

DDM Disability Management
Vaughan, 416-635-8124
www.ddmdisability.com

DMLRehabilitation
London, 519-452-0146
www.dmlrehabilitation.com

DriveAccess
Toronto, 416-640-0292
www.driveaccess.ca

IME Plus Evaluations Ltd.
Mississauga, 905-214-8100
www.imeplus.ca

Independent Rehabilitation Management Inc.
Thunder Bay, 807-346-2713
www.independentrehab.com

Inter-Action Rehabilitation Inc.
Toronto, 416-445-5125
www.interaction rehab.com

Kawartha Therapy Services
Peterborough, 705-874-1072
www.kawartha therapy.com

Liberty Mutual Vocational Rehabilitation
Mississauga, 1-866-666-6052
www.lmvr.com

Medicare Canada
Vaughan, 416-277-1777
www.medicarecanada.com

Neuro Rehabilitation Services
Toronto, 416-697-0011
www.neurorehab.ca

Novus Rehabilitation
St. Thomas, 519-657-0981
www.novusrehab.ca

Pathways Therapy
Wetaskiwin, 780-455-4211
www.pathwaystherapy.ca

Quinn Rehabilitation Services
Barrie, 705-726-2352
www.quinnrehab.com

Rehab First Inc.
London, 519-646-2494
www.rehabfirst.ca

Rehabilitation Management Inc.
Toronto, 416-365-0010
www.rehabilitationcan.com

Rejuvence Health Services
London, 519-652-0740
www.rejuvence-hs.ca

Theraputix - The Wellness Centre Inc.
North York
416-444-4411
www.theraputix.ca

Voc Rehab Canada
Oshawa, 905-443-0477
www.vrcan.ca

A CAREGIVER’S GUIDE TO STROKE RECOVERY

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  Canadian Caregiver Coalition
  www.ca2-carecan.ca
  Canadian Virtual Hospice
  www.virtualhospice.ca
  Caregiver Connect
  www.caregiver-connect.ca
  Caregivers Nova Scotia
  www.caregivers.ns.ca
  Caring Bridge
  www.caringbridge.ca
  Family Caregivers Association of BC
  www.familycaregivers.bc.ca
  Family Caregivers Network Society
  www.virtualhospice.ca
  Long Term Care Planning Network
  www.ltcpplanningnetwork.com

For more information on where to find an occupational therapist:

- For more information on social work
  Canadian Association of Social Workers
  www.casw-acsw.ca/EN/need-social-work-services/looking-social-work-services

For more information on where to find a physiatrist by region:
- National
  Bayshore Home Health
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  www.bayshore.ca
  CBI Health Group
  Toronto, 416-231-0078
  www.cbi.ca
  Centric Health Corporation
  Toronto, 416-485-7798
  www.centrichealth.ca
  PT Health Care Solutions
  Hamilton, 866-749-7461
  www.pthealth.ca
  Nova Scotia
  Dynamic Physio & Wellness
  St. John’s, 709-758-3962
  www.dynaminc.com
  Advantage Rehabilitation Consultants Ltd.
  Dartmouth, 902-454-4077
  www.advantagehab.com
  Sage Rehabilitation & Management Consulting Inc.
  Dartmouth, 902-469-1325
  www.sageil.ca
  The PhysioClinic
  Halifax, 902-453-2627
  www.physio.ca

For more information on where to find a physiotherapist by province:
- Newfoundland
  www.physiotherapy.ca/Atlantic-Branches/Newfoundland
- Nova Scotia
  www.physiotherapysns.ca/index.php/site/find-a-physiotherapist
- Prince Edward Island
  www.physiotherapy.ca/Atlantic-Branches/Prince-Edward-Island
- New Brunswick
  www.physiotherapy.ca/Atlantic-Branches/New-Brunswick?lang=en-ca
- Quebec
  oppp.qc.ca/en/finding-a-professional
- Ontario
  publicregister.collegept.org/Public Services/Start.aspx
- Manitoba
  www.mibphyso.org/find-a-physiotherapist
- Saskatchewan
  www.saskphysio.org
- Alberta
  www.physiotherapyalberta.ca
- British Columbia
  biophysio.org
- Yukon
  www.community.gov.yk.ca/physiotherapists/index.html

For more information on where to find a podiatrist by region:

- British Columbia
  www.bicr.org
- Alberta
  www.hhs.gov.yk.ca/pharmacare.php
- Ontario
  www.ontariopharmacare.com
- Quebec
  www.medicare.ca
- Manitoba
  www.gov.mb.ca/health/pharmacare
- Saskatchewan
  www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health-drug-coverage/extended-benefits-and-drug-plan
- Nova Scotia
  www.novusrehab.ca
- New Brunswick
  www.pathwaystherapy.ca
- Yukon
  www.gov.yk.ca/pharmacare.php

For support services:
  Assistive Devices Program
  www.marchofdimes.ca/adc
  Home and Vehicle Modification Program
  www.marchofdimes.ca/hvm
  March of Dimes
  www.marchofdimes.ca/EN/Pages/default.aspx
  Stroke Recovery Canada
  www.marchofdimes.ca/src

For more information on where to find a pharmacist:
- National
  March of Dimes Canada
  www.marchofdimes.ca/src
- Provincial
  Nova Scotia
  www.novusrehab.ca
- New Brunswick
  www.pathwaysrehab.ca
- British Columbia
  www.interactionrehab.com
- Alberta
  www.interactionrehab.com

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Recovery for Stroke Survivors is Possible with the Help and Support of Caregivers, Stroke Recovery Canada and March of Dimes Canada!

“Of course, my recovery hasn’t been without many serious trials, but today I am an active, engaged contributor to my community and an advocate for others with disabilities. Through hard work and a positive attitude, I am living a full life and encouraging others to volunteer, get involved and support March of Dimes Canada.”

- LEN

“With the encouragement of March of Dimes Canada, I started the Hamilton Young Stroke Survivors Group (HYSS). I wanted other young survivors just like me to come to a place where they could learn how to make strides in their road to stroke recovery - as a place where they could feel at ease to be themselves, try new things, and not be afraid to make a mistake.”

- JEFF

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References

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33. Aphasia Institute (website) www.aphasia.ca/home-page/about-aphasia/what-is-aphasia/

34. March of Dimes Canada, ACDP website, Aphasia Programs www.marchofdimes.ca/Aphasia


37. The Ontario Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (OSLA), Speech-Language Pathologists’ Roles and Services, Rehabilitation (Brochure) www.osla.on.ca

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- LEN

"It’s been five years since my stroke, and I am so thrilled to be here today to tell you that I am living a full, active life! Thanks to Stroke Recovery Canada® I am blessed to be back as a hands-on parent to my two teenage girls, all the while attending classes, applying for admittance in a full-time college program, and volunteering with March of Dimes Canada’s Pears Fostering Hope Program, a local network of support."

- ANNA

"With the encouragement of March of Dimes Canada, I started the Hamilton Young Stroke Survivors Group (HYSS). I wanted other young survivors just like me to come to a place where they could learn how to make strides in their road to stroke recovery... as a place where they could feel at ease to be themselves, try new things, and not be afraid to make a mistake."

- JEFF

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**WRI Group**
Woodbridge, 905-851-9391
www.wrigroup.ca

**Manitoba**
Enabling Access Inc.
Winnipeg, 204-475-0433
www.enablingaccess.ca
Pathway Rehabilitation
Winnipeg, 204-272-9500
www.pathwayrehabilitation.com

**Saskatchewan**
Bridges Health
Saskatoon, 306-222-0999
www.bridgeshealth.com
SMRC
Saskatoon, 306-244-9944
www.smrcrehab.com

**Alberta**
Altius Rehabilitation Group Inc.
Calgary, 888-654-8727
www.altrehab.com
Khan Communication Services
Edmonton, 780-440-5251
www.khancommunicationservices.com
LIHMark Health
Calgary, 800-665-9947
www.lihmark.ca
Optional Rehabilitation Services Inc.
Calgary, 403-236-8802
www.optionsrehab.org
Peak Rehabilitation Consultants Inc.
Calgary, 403-730-8273
www.peakrehab.ca

**British Columbia**
Back in Motion Rehab Inc.
Surrey, 604-575-7745
www.backinmotion.com
JR Rehab Services
Vancouver, 604-254-0444
www.jrrehab.ca
Providance Health Care
Vancouver, 604-806-9090
www.providencehealthcare.org

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**Recovery for Stroke Survivors is Possible**

with the Help and Support of Caregivers, Stroke Recovery Canada and March of Dimes Canada!