

TORBAY AND SOUTHERN DEVON STROKE BOOK

INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE HAD STROKES
AND FOR FAMILIES, CARERS AND FRIENDS.



REGISTERED CHARITY 1186045

Working with



Torbay and South Devon
NHS Foundation Trust



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Torbay Stroke Support
Registered Charity No: 1186045
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INTRODUCTION

This is an updated and enlarged book that has been found to be useful to stroke survivors and carers in three editions over the past 10 years.

It should not be used as a basis for taking, or not taking, any specific course of action in relation to your care, and is not a replacement for information that is given to you at hospital or by health professionals.

This book has been produced voluntarily by Torbay Stroke Support, a registered charity run by local stroke survivors.



























The photos within are of stroke survivors and carers at Torbay Stroke Support groups. Many of these people had massive strokes. They have, sometimes over many years, pushed against the effects of disability, and extended their contribution to the world. It is to their courage and persistence, as great examples to all stroke survivors, that this effort is dedicated.

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The information is correct at date of publication.



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AT TORBAY MEN'S STROKE GROUP

WHAT IS A STROKE?

A stroke is a brain attack. It is caused by a blood clot or a bleed in the brain which blocks the blood supply and causes brain cells to become damaged or die.

HOW DOES A STROKE HAPPEN?

This can occur in two main ways:

1. Around 80% of strokes are caused by a blockage. Blood to the brain is transported through arteries from the heart. A clot, which can form in an artery or in another part of the body, blocks the artery, stopping the blood from reaching the brain. This is called an ischaemic stroke.
2. Up to 20% of strokes are caused when a blood vessel bursts, causing bleeding directly into the brain. This is called a haemorrhagic stroke.

TIA

You may have had what is called a TIA.

A TIA (*Transient Ischaemic Attack*) is a 'mini stroke' where symptoms last up to 24 hours.

It must be treated as a medical emergency, as a TIA often leads to a stroke.

The brain controls everything we do. A stroke causes damage to the brain, which affects how the body works and how you are able to make sense of the world around you.

EVERYONES STROKE IS DIFFERENT

Every stroke is different and people who have a stroke are affected in different ways. For some, the symptoms are mild and last only a short time. For others, stroke may cause severe and lasting damage. This depends on how and where in the brain the damage occurs.

Effects of stroke can include:

Vision

You may have double vision or a variety of problems, such as loss of awareness of half or part of the space around you.

Weakness or paralysis

This is one of the most common effects of stroke. It usually happens on one side of the body. Your balance can also be affected.

Speech or language

Many stroke survivors experience difficulty speaking or understanding, and reading and writing.

Emotions

Having a stroke can affect your moods. Depression, anxiety, apathy and mood swings can happen as a result of stroke. Your pattern of behaviour may change and you may react differently than you used to. It is normal to be upset, and to struggle initially. However this usually passes.

Swallowing

Around half of stroke survivors have difficulty swallowing after a stroke. It can be dangerous if food or liquid gets into the windpipe or lungs. Excess saliva can be a problem.

Bladder and bowels

Difficulty controlling bladder and bowels is not uncommon. With an appropriate assessment and treatment, most people improve. Support services are available for those with ongoing problems.

Cognitive

You may experience problems with your memory, attention, concentration and coordination. You may also have difficulty recognising familiar objects or knowing how to use them.

Fatigue

Most people experience extreme tiredness after a stroke. You may also have trouble sleeping, which makes you more tired.

**MORE ON
EMOTIONAL
SUPPORT ON
PAGE 16**

**MORE ON
FATIGUE
PAGE 14**

HOT AND
COLD
PINS AND
NEEDLES

Sensation

Disturbances in sensation, such as decrease or increase in sensation, unpleasant feelings of hot or cold, and tingling like pins and needles, can result from a stroke. A physiotherapist might be able to assist to ease some of these feelings.

Sexual Function

Strokes, by themselves, are rarely a direct cause of sexual problems. But the stress brought on by a stroke is as difficult as any a couple can ever face. Sexual dynamics may be changed, at least temporarily, by problems such as inability to speak or paralysis of one side of the body. Difficulty in getting, or maintaining, an erection may occur. It is important to deal with the nuances of a new sex life after a stroke. Your GP may be able to offer you some help, or refer you to specialist support. Relate is an organisation that offers assistance for couples dealing with sexual or relationship issues.

“RELATE”
CONTACT
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Behaviour

Behaviours can be changed in terms of your control over your emotions, and in how you react to others. Stroke often affects the ability to control emotions - this is called being ‘emotionally labile’. You might experience excessive crying or laughter, sometimes unrelated to what is going on around you. Emotional outbursts and having a short fuse can result from stroke damage, or as a reaction to the stroke, and be as distressing to you as they are to other people. It is helpful for people not to over-react and to acknowledge that they understand this reaction is part of your stroke. Speak to your therapist or GP about how to deal with it.

EMOTIONAL
SUPPORT
PAGE 16

Pain

As with many aspects of stroke, pain may persist for some time, but physiotherapy and other treatments are successful in many instances, and there are coping techniques that can be learned to help you manage long-term pain. See your GP.

Stroke Association Factsheet “Pain after stroke” has information about pain management. See page 39

Most recovery happens in the first few months after a stroke, but you can continue to recover for several years.

Some things that increase your risk can't be lessened, including:

- If someone else in your family has had a stroke
- Older people's arteries harden so they are more at risk
- Men under 75 have more strokes than women
- Asian, African or African-Caribbean people are more at risk
- People with heart disease or diabetes are at higher risk

The following can help to reduce your risk, in order of priority:

REDUCE
YOUR RISK
OF STROKE
OR ANOTHER
STROKE

Smoking

Smoking doubles your risk of stroke. It causes artery damage and increases your chance of a blood clot.

Stopping can cut your risk in half, no matter how long you have smoked.

Help is available

- **Torbay Stop Smoking Service:** To access personal support contact your Torbay pharmacy from the list on this website and ask to make an appointment with a stop smoking adviser: torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/healthy-lifestyles/stop-smoking, or phone 01803 219700
- **Devon NHS Stop Smoking Service:** 0800 2982654
- **Smokefree National Helpline** on 0300 123 1044 to speak to a trained adviser, or access 28 days free NHS quitting advice and tips straight to your inbox to increase your chance of success on quitnow.smokefree.nhs.uk

GET HELP
TO STOP
SMOKING

Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is a measure of the force with which the blood presses on the walls of your arteries as it is pumped around your body. High blood pressure is the biggest risk factor for stroke.

Blood pressure varies throughout the day.

Ideally your blood pressure should be lower than 140/85, or 130/80 if you have diabetes.

You may be prescribed medication to reduce your blood pressure.

BLOOD
PRESSURE

Atrial Fibrillation

If you have an irregular heartbeat or palpitations see your GP.

REDUCING YOUR RISK

Diet

A healthy diet can reduce your risk of stroke, or can reduce risk of having a further event. It can also reduce risk of heart disease, diabetes and cancer. Your GP may prescribe medicines to control your risk; a healthy diet may improve how the medication works, and also blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

Suggestions on how to change your diet to reduce risk of stroke:

- Fruit and vegetables – at least a third of your diet, or 5 portions a day, eg an apple or banana, two plums, handful of berries.
- For vegetables about 3 heaped tablespoons for one portion.
- Have fruit as snacks.
- Swap white flour foods and white rice, pasta etc. for whole grain foods. Whole grain products contain more B vitamins and fibre, which can be beneficial in reducing risk.
- Protein: eat 2 portions per day of low-fat proteins in the form of lean meat, fish, eggs and vegetarian alternatives. Beans and pulses are high in protein, fibre and vitamins and minerals.
- 1-2 portions of fish per week (one oily) reduces the risk of the main cause of stroke – a blockage to the blood supply to the brain.

**EAT
FIVE-A-DAY**

**DRINK
PLENTY OF
FLUID**

Fluid: drink at least 6-8 glasses water and other fluids

Cholesterol

High cholesterol increases your risk of stroke. Your doctor can give you an individual plan to help keep it down.

Reduce fat to control weight, and in particular “bad fats” such as saturated fats found in meat, dairy products, palm oil, ghee and coconut oil, and trans fats found in processed foods such as margarine, cakes, biscuits, pastries. These can lead to fatty deposits in arteries, and eventually blood clots, which increase the risk of strokes occurring.

General tips for reducing cholesterol:

- Too much saturated and trans fats can increase the dangerous type of cholesterol in your blood. Healthier choices include olive oil and rapeseed oil for cooking, and use spreads based on these oils.
- Regular exercise will improve the balance of cholesterol in your blood, and will also help reduce blood pressure.
- Increase foods that contain fibre - oats, beans, peas, pulses, nuts, fruit and vegetables.
- Eat 1-2 portions of oily fish per week – eg salmon, mackerel, sardines, trout, herring, pilchards.

- Eggs, liver, prawns have little effect on your cholesterol levels.

Salt

Salt may increase blood pressure, the biggest risk factor for stroke. Salt intake is difficult to measure because most in our diet comes from processed and ready-made everyday food. Tips:

- Don't add salt to food – try herbs, spices, garlic, lemon/lime juice and zest or chilli.
- Reduce intake of salty snacks, ready meals and pre-prepared soups, and processed meats like bacon, sausages, meat pies, smoked fish.
- Choose lower salt versions where possible in foods like bread, breakfast cereal, sauces, ketchup.
- Use no more than 6g salt per day: this is the equivalent of 2.5g sodium. To work out total salt, multiply the sodium content on food labels by 2.5.

SALT MAY INCREASE BLOOD PRESSURE, THE BIGGEST RISK FACTOR

Drinking

Drinking alcohol raises your blood pressure.

A unit of alcohol is a small glass of wine, or a half pint of weak beer. Men who drink more than 3 or 4 units a day, or women who drink more than 2 or 3 units a day, are at risk of stroke. Binge drinking is especially dangerous - drinking more than 6 small glasses of wine, or 3 pints of weak beer in 6 hours is binge drinking.

Drinkline (National Helpline) 0300 123 1110.

Alcoholics Anonymous: Support for those whose lives are affected by alcohol. 0800 9177650, email: help@aamail.org.

Drug and Alcohol Services NHS: advice, treatment, information and support for alcohol and drug users, their families, and friends. Includes prescribing, counselling, and onward referral to other agencies or rehabilitation centres.

Torbay 01803 604330.

Devon: Together Drug and Alcohol Service 0800 2335444.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL SUPPORT

Regular check-ups

It is recommended that you see your GP for a health check within 6 weeks of hospital discharge, for a checkup and medication check, then after 6 months, and then at least annually.

SEE YOUR GP WITHIN SIX WEEKS AFTER GOING HOME FROM HOSPITAL

On discharge from hospital, a decision concerning further rehabilitation at home may have been discussed with you. You may be given a follow-up appointment before you leave hospital. If you haven't been contacted or you have specific concerns, don't hesitate to contact the hospital, or contact the appropriate therapists yourself.

CONTACT THE COMMUNITY TEAM YOURSELF IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS

Community Neurological Rehabilitation Team

A community team of therapists working with people after a stroke or acquired brain injury.

What to expect from the service:

During your appointment we will discuss with you and your family how you are managing following your stroke/brain injury. We also plan some goals you would like to work towards, before we come to visit.

At our initial visit, we will discuss which members of the team would be most appropriate to help you and how often you will be seeing them. Some therapies will be offered in a group setting. Therapists will encourage you to work towards your agreed short and long term goals, which will be reviewed regularly. Your therapy input will be provided according to your needs.

The team includes:

Occupational Therapists who provide assessment, education and treatment; including cognitive and functional activities of daily living and returning to work.

Physiotherapists who provide assessment, education and treatment including gait retraining and functional mobility, upper limb retraining, management of fatigue and management of motor impairment including weakness and/or spasticity.

Speech and Language Therapists who provide assessment, education and treatment of communication difficulties (dysphasia), including reading & writing, and the assessment, education and treatment of swallowing difficulties (dysphagia).

Assistant Practitioners/Rehab Support Workers may work with you to continue the treatment programme agreed with the therapists. The assistants are experienced in working with all the therapies and so can help you to work on several goals at the same time.

Clinical Neuropsychologist: The Community Team have links with the Clinical Neuro-Psychology Team.

THERAPIST ROLES

You may also benefit from:

- Taking a rest break (up to one hour) at a similar time each day, in a quiet room. This can reduce fatigue and increase your concentration.
- Eating nutritious food at regular intervals and drinking water or squash. Reducing your intake of caffeine and alcohol.
- Build structure and routine into your day. This includes using a diary or calendar to assist your routine and aid recall.
- Physio video's: www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/physiotherapy/support-videos/stroke/

Torbay Community Neuro Rehab Team

Paignton Health and Wellbeing Centre

Tel: 01803 547157

Teignbridge Community Neuro Rehab Team

Newton Abbot Community Hospital

Tel: 01626 324510

To access either Torbay or Teignbridge team:

torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/community-neurological-rehabilitation-team

CONTACT

DETAILS FOR NHS TEAMS

George Earle Stroke Unit (Torquay)

01803 655569

Teign Ward Stoke Unit

(Newton Abbot)

01626 324553

SOCIAL SERVICES

Social Care Team Torbay

01803 219700

0300 456 4876 (out of hours)

Social Care Team Devon

0845 155 1007 (My Devon)

0345 6000 388 (out of hours)

ARE YOU HAVING FALLS?

Falls

If you are experiencing falls, it is advisable to ask for an assessment. Torbay - 01803

219700

Devon - Care Direct on 0345 155 1007.



**STROKE SURVIVORS VISITING
STROKE WARDS
AT CHRISTMAS TIME**

CONCERNS ABOUT NHS SERVICES

Concerns about NHS services

If you are concerned about the care you have received, it is important to let the service know. You could raise your concerns with the service manager, the hospital ward manager or matron, or the practice manager of your surgery if your concern is about your GP.

If you would like to talk with someone outside of the service concerned, you can contact PALS, or contact an independent advocate to support you in making your case.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS is a service for anyone using the local NHS. After listening to your concern, they will discuss the options available with you and offer further assistance if required. If the problem is such that they cannot resolve the situation personally, they will put you in touch with the most appropriate person to help. 01803 655838

Email: tsdft.feedback@nhs.net

Advocacy support

These organisations who can support you to provide feedback to NHS if required:

Support Empower Advocate Promote (SEAP) 0330 440 9000

Email: info@seap.org.uk

Devon Advocacy Consortium 0845 231 1900

Email: devonadvocacy@livingoptions.org

Healthwatch Devon and Torbay

Healthwatch Devon is the independent consumer champion for people using local health and social care services in Devon.

They listen to what people like about services and what could be improved and share those views with those with the power to make change happen.

www.healthwatchdevon.co.uk

0800 5200640



Stroke Association

The Stroke Association operates within the Torbay and South Devon area. Torbay and South Devon Stroke Recovery Service provides practical advice, emotional support and high-quality information following a stroke. Whether you are a stroke survivor, carer or family member, we will work with you to identify and address your physical needs through a personalised plan, and support you to rebuild your life after stroke. This service offers:

- Coordinated support throughout your stroke journey
- Home visits and/or regular telephone calls
- Leaflets, factsheets and information about Life After Stroke Grants and benefits
- Help with returning to work, if required
- Assistance with accessing local leisure, social activities and self-management tools
- Support for carers
- Signposting to other organisations that could help.

This service is for stroke survivors (including TIAs/mini-strokes), and families and carers of people affected by stroke, living in Torbay and South Devon.

For more information, contact your local Stroke Support

Coordinator: 07717 275848; National Helpline: 0303 3033 100

email: helpline@stroke.org.uk Web: www.stroke.org.uk



Torbay Stroke Support

Stroke survivor led registered charity that provides free peer support to survivors of stroke, their carers and those at risk of stroke.

Support includes support from other stroke survivors and carers, mainly through peer support groups.

See page 20 for details and contact information.

Younger Stroke Survivors

See Different Strokes on page 42

Aphasia Support

Suddenly losing your ability to communicate can be challenging for families and friends. Making sense of aphasia and adjusting to the ongoing recovery takes time. Living With Aphasia is a charity that supports people in Devon affected by aphasia. They bring people with aphasia together to share experiences, make friends, and rebuild confidence in communication.

Living With Aphasia Devon 07912 320 372

livingwithaphasia.org

Communication Difficulties

See Stroke Association “A Complete Guide to Communication Problems after Stroke” Information Leaflet – details on page 39

Outsiders

A club where people with physical and social disabilities can make new friends and, if they wish, find partners.

www.outsiders.org.uk

Emotional recovery

A stroke is an unexpected and frightening event for anyone to go through and, although everyone copes differently, it is 'normal' to struggle or feel overwhelmed at times.

A stroke can affect any area of your life and it is hard to predict how you will be affected immediately after or in the longer term. Many people feel worried, angry or uncertain about the future and you might find yourself feeling a range of difficult emotions as you adapt to changes in your life. We often experience big shifts in how we feel (sometimes labelled as 'mood swings'), and this is part of how people adjust to such a major life event.

Many people are critical of themselves and feel that they should be 'doing better' but it is usually more helpful if you can find ways to be kind and patient with yourself.

Sometimes it is hard to feel motivated throughout the process of recovery. Changes in motivation happen to most people, but family, friends and healthcare professionals can help you keep focused and energised so that you can achieve your goals. Some people might seem apathetic and may find it hard to identify emotions, or be disconnected from how they feel. Some of us are not used to being cared for in this way. If you were more independent before the stroke, it might be hard to accept support. Remember, you are important and you do deserve support.

Why do I feel so low?

After a stroke, people can feel anxious, unhappy, angry or upset. These feelings come and go, and fears about the future (even returning home) can be difficult to bear. You and your family are likely to be affected but might have different feelings. This can be difficult and often you may feel like nobody understands.

Meeting other stroke survivors can help you feel understood and connected to others. The same applies to carers, so meeting other people in the same situation can be very helpful. All of these reactions are a normal part of the emotional adjustment that people make when they experience a traumatic or shocking event, and sharing our experiences is usually helpful. This can be in a group or with just one other person.

Some people do become depressed or very anxious after a Stroke and this can have a negative impact on their recovery. These changes can pass with time but there is help available as well. It is a good idea to tell your GP or health professional, who will be able to help you monitor your wellbeing and access further support, which

**MOOD
SWINGS ARE
NORMAL
IN SUCH A
MAJOR LIFE
EVENT**

might include medication and/or talking to a Neuro-rehabilitation specialist or psychological therapist..

Why do I feel so tired?

Almost everyone who has a stroke complains of fatigue. Your brain has had some damage as a result of your stroke and is having to work much harder to do some of the things you used to do automatically. This tiredness can be especially frustrating when you are trying to put effort into your rehabilitation. It can sometimes be difficult for others to understand your tiredness.

**FATIGUE
AFFECTS
ALMOST
EVERYONE
WHO HAS A
STROKE**

Some helpful tips for dealing with tiredness include:

- Be sensible about the amount you can do at one time. It will not always be realistic to expect yourself to be as efficient as you were before your stroke.
- Rest when you need to and avoid becoming completely exhausted. Remember to keep some charge in your battery. It's always easier to charge if it's not gone flat.
- Set small goals, and celebrate achieving them. It can be very frustrating if we set unrealistic targets for ourselves and then fail to meet them.

Managing Cognitive Problems

After a stroke, it is common to have problems with concentration, memory and language. Some people also have visual disturbances such as not seeing items on the left- or right-hand side.

**MANAGING
COGNITIVE
PROBLEMS**

Therapists in the Community Neuro-rehabilitation teams will be able to help with these problems but there are things that you can do too. People notice that it can be harder to take in information because the speed of thinking slows down. You may suffer what we call sensory overload in which there seems to be too much going on – too much noise, too many people, too much information. Often this is apparent in busy environments like supermarkets. If you find that this is a problem, start off by making sure you do not have too many things happening at once, for example, do not try and take in what someone is saying at the same time as watching the TV or trying to focus on a task. Do one thing at a time.

When you start your recovery do not go to places that are noisy or busy. If you have to go to the shops go at a quieter time. If there are children at home, agree a “quiet place” like your bedroom where you can go if you need a break.

TIPS FOR MANAGING COGNITIVE PROBLEMS

If it is hard to concentrate you will find it more difficult to remember or learn things. As above, concentrate on one thing at a time. Make sure you give yourself extra time to do tasks. If you find that you are distractible use the “Stop – Think” technique. Rehearse what you are going to do by saying to yourself “I am going to the kitchen to make a drink” for example. When you get to the kitchen repeat again, “I’m coming here to make a drink”. If you find that your attention has wandered, - Stop – then ask yourself “What am I doing?” “Am I doing what I came in here to do?”; “What do I need to do now?”

MEMORY

Forgetting is a normal part of memory but after any injury to your brain this can get worse. Focus your mental energy only on the things you really need to remember. Is there something that particularly irritates you that you forget? If so concentrate on this. There are a number of ways to support your memory:

Change how you use your memory.

You can use techniques to help you learn information more efficiently and retrieve it better. You can use imagery, for example if you keep your keys on a hook by the front door you can close your eyes when you put the key there and bring up a picture of the key on the hook. You can look for distinguishing features on people’s faces and link this with their name – adding a rhyme makes it even better; for example, “Clare has curly hair.”

Change your environment so that it is more memory friendly.

For example, you can label cupboards with their contents. You can put things that you have to take out in front of the front door so that you have to step over them in order to leave.

Change your behaviour.

Keeping to routines is very important for your memory, for example, make sure items are always put back in the same place; always take your medication at the same time each day.

Use memory aids.

Memory aids include items such as mobile phones, diaries, calendars and noticeboards.

One thing that is not helpful is leaving someone to guess information. Sometimes people around the person who have had a stroke think that this will force them to think harder, but our brains do not work like this. If you cannot remember something after a few seconds, tell the other person and ask them to give you the correct information. Do not be left guessing. If they tell you the correct information you are much more likely to remember it in future. This is called errorless learning.

Many cognitive problems do improve over time but it is hard to predict what will happen because everyone's stroke and recovery is different. Try and view these problems as things to be managed. Just as you might have had to learn to walk again, so you can learn to manage difficulties with concentration and memory.

What support is available?

A 'stepped approach' is provided to offer emotional support to stroke survivors.

1. Peer support, starting on the hospital wards, and in the community via local stroke groups. This is where stroke survivors communicates with and gets support from someone who has "been there". See Stroke Groups on page 20
2. Psychological therapies offered by the Mental Health Services or Neuropsychology.

The Neuro Rehabilitation Team (see page 9) can offer advice on how to cope, as well as whom to contact, and your GP will be able to advise you on the range of treatments available.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

People who have had strokes say that it is most important that you know that help is available. If you feel stuck please do make sure you contact your GP or the Neuro Rehabilitation Team.

Below is a summary of some of the different sources of support available locally and nationally

Help for Emotional and Mental Health

GP

If you are not under a mental health team please contact your GP for a referral.

Self referral

For mild anxiety and depression you can self refer by calling TALKWORKS. "We can help you if you are feeling low in mood, stressed or depressed as well helping you if you live with panic attacks, social anxiety/shyness, phobias, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)...and health anxiety".

0300 555 3344

Essential contacts

Torbay Emergency Duty Team: 0300 456 4876 | SMS number:

07810 54 8004

Devon Emergency Duty Team: 0345 6000 388

Mental Health Teams: 01803 546470 (Torbay)

Samaritans: 116 123

HELP FOR DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

HOPE

An NHS programme to help people struggling with long-term health conditions; build confidence and learn how to manage their conditions, including mental health issues such as anxiety, stress and depression. HOPE aims to help you to:

- Feel more able to support and share your experiences with others to help you feel less isolated.
- Feel reassured and able to recognise your own potential and enhance your happiness and quality of life.
- Feel more confident in dealing with emotional issues such as: anxiety, anger, depression and uncertainty.
- Increase your ability to handle stressful situations.
- Discover how to use relaxation techniques to refresh your mind and body.
- Learn how to make plans and achieve goals that can help you make changes for the better.

Free, 6-week course. Various times and locations throughout Torbay and South Devon.

01803 210493

COUNSELLING

Counselling

See Torbay and Southern Devon Family and Emotional Support Services Information Sheet for up to date information on what is available– details on page 41

Healthy Lifestyles

An NHS team of Health Coaches provide friendly, approachable, holistic support for individuals who are motivated to improve their health and wellbeing. Health Coaches empower you to make and maintain positive changes to your lifestyle through coaching, goal setting and follow up support. Help with improving mood, losing weight, drinking and smoking reduction and exercise options.

www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/healthy-lifestyles

0300 456 1006

Samaritans

Confidential and emotional support available to everyone 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Samaritans National Telephone 116 123

jo@samaritans.org

SEXUAL AND RELATIONSHIP ISSUES

Sexual or Relationship Issues

Relate is a charity providing relationship support. Services include counselling for couples, families, young people and individuals,

sex therapy. Online services include webcam counselling and a therapeutic based LiveChat service.

Torbay 01803 299001

Exeter and district 0300 772 9681

relate.org.uk

BEREAVEMENT

Cruse Bereavement

Support, advice and information to children, young people and adults when someone dies.

Cruse: 0808 808 1677

helpline@cruse.org.uk

Befriending

Age UK Torbay - Befriending and Careline

01803 555181

carol@ageuktorbay.org.uk

www.ageuk.org.uk/torbay Befriending

Volunteers visit people for about 1 hour each week in their own home for a chat and a cup of tea, offering friendship and companionship to over 50's living in the community.

Careline: volunteers telephone housebound people for a regular chat and to see if all is well.

Brixham Does Care

01803 857727

brixhamdoescare@yahoo.co.uk

www.brixhamdoescare.co.uk

This befriending charity aims to combat loneliness, isolation and despair. It offers support to people of all ages living in Brixham and surrounding areas, including a home visiting service and a range of weekly groups.

STROKE GROUPS

No-one understands a stroke as well as someone who has had one. Groups provide an opportunity to meet others, gain encouragement, and share strategies for rehabilitation. They help to rebuild confidence. They are often great fun and a good way to meet friends.



Torbay Stroke Support Groups

To make contact: 07946 298 914

torbay-stroke-support.co.uk

Torbay Stroke HUB at Paignton Library.

A weekly peer support and information drop-in for stroke survivors, carers and those at risk. This group is, for many attendees, a first stop after stroke. It aims to help build confidence, share knowledge and understanding in a group session. Guest speakers help educate and inform as well as signpost opportunities that help recovery and communication. Free. Open to all.

Coffee/ tea is available at the library cafe for those who want to stay.

Run by stroke survivors. Paignton Library, Room 13. Opp bus station. TQ3 5AG.

Full access for disabilities.

Every Monday 11am for 1 hour.



AT TORBAY WOMEN'S STROKE GROUP

**GROUPS
PROVIDE
INVALUABLE
SUPPORT
FROM
OTHER
STROKE
SURVIVORS
AND CARERS**

Torbay Peer Support Group For Women

This group is for women of working age who have had a stroke, who meet to chat and socialise, share experiences and stories in a relaxed, informal, mutually supportive setting. Free. Refreshments, if required, are charged for by the hotel.

Stroke survivors supporting each other. Nice hotel in Paignton. Excellent access.

Every Tuesday for 2 hours between 10.30 -12.30.

Torbay Peer Support Group For Men

A weekly group for men who meet to chat and socialise. This group is focussed on men of working age who have had a stroke, who meet to share experiences and stories in a relaxed, informal, mutually

supportive setting. Free. Refreshments, if required, are charged for by the hotel.

Nice hotel in Torquay. Excellent access

Every Wednesday for 2 hours between 11-1



Torbay Stroke Computer Group

A weekly group where the focus is on offering computer based support. Attendees can receive help with accessing the internet, locating forms, sending e mails etc. Skills that may have been lost post stroke can be relearned.

Paignton Library (IT Suite- Full access for disabilities)

Every Thursday between 1-3pm

Torbay Stroke Survivors and Carers Group

A weekly small group who meet to discuss stroke matters. This group is focussed on supporting those for whom bigger groups would be off-putting. Peer led by those who have had a stroke.

Free. Refreshments are charged for by the hotel.

Nice hotel in Torquay. Excellent access

Every Tuesday 11am – 12 noon

Stroke City Torbay - Stroke Walking Football

A slower version of football for fun and exercise.

See details in next section

OTHER LOCAL STROKE GROUPS

Babbacombe Communication Group (for over 60's)

Peer support: stroke survivors over 60 supporting each other.

Coffee and communication in a nice hotel in Torquay. Tuesdays at 10.30am. Please phone 07717 275848 to find out more.

Totnes Exercise and Support Group (Different Strokes)

Socialising and support, and some exercise, aimed at working age stroke survivors.

Meets on the first Thursday of every month at 11:00am – 12.30pm.

Rushbrook, Station Road, Totnes, TQ9 5HW.

Email: Totnes@differentstrokes.co.uk

Phone Sue: 01803 459 866

Kingsteignton Stroke Group - Strokes Ahead

Rydon Hall, Rydon Road, Kingsteignton.

Mondays 2.00-4.00pm, every two weeks.

Keith & Susan 01803 316845

EXERCISE OPTIONS FOR STROKE SURVIVORS

EXERCISE

If you have reduced movement since your stroke, the physiotherapist may have given you some specific exercises. It is important to keep working with these to help your recovery.

General regular exercise also helps to reduce blood pressure and control weight. If able, you should aim to exercise for at least 30 minutes, 3 times a week.

When exercising you should aim to be slightly out of breath but still able to hold a conversation.

If you are not able to exercise to this level, any activity at all will still be beneficial.

Your Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapist are good people to talk to about exercise programmes.

It is always advisable to speak with a health professional before starting an exercise programme.

KEEP DOING ANY PHYSIO EXERCISES YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN. THEY REALLY HELP.

The Fitness in Torbay Exercise referral Scheme (Fitbay)

A 10 week exercise programme supervised by fully qualified professionals and is open to anyone registered with a GP in the Bay. The cost is £40. There are various venues across Torbay offering gym sessions, walking programmes and Toning Tables.

For more information about the Fitness in Torbay scheme speak to your doctor or contact the Community Fitness Team.

0300 456 1006

torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/healthy-lifestyles

Water Mobility - Stroke Rehabilitation

Plainmoor Swimming Pool (Swim Torquay Ltd.), Marnham Road, Torquay

Swimming sessions for those recovering from strokes and other neurological problems. The 30-minute sessions aid rehabilitation by helping participants to regain flexibility and mobility, as well as enhancing general fitness levels. All sessions are tailored to individuals with one-to-one tuition when required.

Times: Tuesdays, 10.30 am - 12.00 and Thursdays, 10.30 am - 12.00.

Cost: £6.00 per session.

For further details and to register 01803 323400

www.swimtorquay.com

Email: swimtorquay@outlook.com

Strength and balance exercise classes

The Healthy Lifestyles service provides strength and balance exercise classes for residents of Torbay and South Devon.

The strength and balance class is a 12 week exercise programme designed to help boost confidence, improve flexibility, mobility, strength and stamina. During each session, exercises are carried out in standing with the use of a chair for support. It may be necessary to begin the programme seated before progressing to standing. The ultimate aim is to ensure that participants are able to maintain a good quality of life and remain as independent as possible.

Classes are held in Bovey Tracey, Brixham, Dawlish, Newton Abbot, Paignton, Teignmouth, Torquay, and Totnes.

To sign up, speak to your GP for more information or call 0300 456 1006 to refer yourself.

Teignbridge Walk This Way

Active Devon and Teignbridge District Council are continuing to develop Walking For Health, so that more people in Devon can enjoy being part of a local health walk group. During your walk you will meet walkers with different fitness levels making walking ideal for returning to exercise after illness or getting into activity for the first time.

01626 215611

walkthisway@teignbridge.gov.uk

Torbay Health Walks

These walks are affiliated to the Walking for Health scheme and are recommended for beginners, those recovering from illness or surgery, or for those with mobility limitations. We have walks to suit all levels from short walks which last no more than 30 minutes. The terrain on most of our walks is flat and on pavements, but our timetable indicates any steps, slopes or stiles which you may find on a small number of our walks. It's fun and sociable to walk with others, and in the process you will discover interesting and beautiful parts of the Bay, enjoy the view... and feel healthier!

01803 207976

Sports@torbay.gov.uk

**WALKING
GROUPS TO
GET GOING
AGAIN**

Stroke City Torbay - Stroke Walking Football

Physical and social activity to help movement and well-being. This is a slower version of football for fun and exercise. The group is open to all. Herald Express nominees team of the year. “We want to challenge isolation, promote well-being and encourage conversation. Don’t hesitate to become a part of what we do”.

Paignton Community School, by Paignton Zoo. Disabled access is available

Every Friday 4.45-6pm

Email: strokecitytorbay@gmail.com

Facebook: Stroke City Torbay

Phone: 07946298914



“STROKE CITY” WALKING FOOTBALL

EXCELLENT
TORBAY
DISABILITY
LEAFLET
“GENTLE
EXERCISE”
DETAILS ON
PAGE 41

Devon Exercise Referral Scheme

Exercise Referral Schemes are specially designed for healthcare professionals to recommend their patients to an exercise programme in order to support their health and wellbeing and quality of life. The services are provided by a number of leisure centres in Devon and operate through qualified instructors who design and work through a personalised programme of exercise with the patient. A programme will normally include an initial one-to-one consultation, followed by a 12 - 16 week programme. The services are paid for by the patient, although many leisure providers offer the services as

part of a membership scheme or offer concessionary rates.
To be referred on to these services speak to your GP, Nurse,
Physiotherapist or Healthcare Assistant.

01392 386 396

Email : publichealth@devon.gov.uk

Adult and Community Learning (ACL) Torbay

ACL offers a range of gentle exercise and keep fit classes around
Torbay

Brixham: 01803 540770 or aclbrixham@southdevon.ac.uk

Paignton: 01803 540770 or aclpaignton@southdevon.ac.uk

Torquay: 01803 540865 or acltorquay@southdevon.ac.uk

Website: www.southdevon.ac.uk

CYCLING AT THE VELOPARK

Torbay Velopark

Provides specially adapted bikes for use by people with disabilities.

Bikes include specially made trikes.

Torbay Velopark, Penwill Way, Paignton TQ4 5JR

01803 659711

www.torbay.gov.uk/leisure-sports-and-community/velopark

torbay.velopark@lexleisure.org.uk

More exercise options

See Torbay and Southern Devon Sport and Outdoor Activities (P34)
Information Sheet – details on page 41

GETTING ABOUT

YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO DRIVE FOR AT LEAST ONE MONTH AFTER A STROKE OR TIA.

Driving after a stroke or a TIA

You are not allowed to drive a car or motorcycle for at least one month after a stroke or TIA. You may resume driving after this period if you have made a satisfactory recovery, and you should talk to your GP to confirm this. You do not need to inform DVLA if you are cleared as safe to drive after one month. If you are unable to drive at this stage you do need to inform DVLA.

If you drive a large goods vehicle (LGV) or a passenger carrying vehicle (PCV) you are not allowed to drive under this licence for one year and you need to inform the DVLA.

If you have any doubts as to your right to drive, discuss the matter with your stroke professional or doctor.

Do I need to notify the DVLA?

During the first month after your stroke or a single TIA, although you are not allowed to drive, you are not required to notify the DVLA.

You must notify the DVLA if any of the following apply:

- You have had several TIAs.
- You had a subarachnoid haemorrhage (brain bleed).
- Your condition worsens at any time.
- You have experienced seizures.
- Treatment for your stroke included brain surgery.
- You have experienced more than one stroke in three months.
- Your doctor or stroke professional expresses concern about your fitness to drive.
- You hold a lorry or bus licence licence.

SEE STROKE ASSOCIATION DRIVING AFTER STROKE LEAFLET DETAILS ON PAGE 39

DVLA

Swansea, SA99 1TU.

0300 790 6806

www.dvla.gov.uk

DVLA ADDRESS

Vehicle Adaptations and Driving Assessment

Devon Drivers Centre (Plymouth and Exeter) works with Cornwall Mobility to offer:

- Driving tuition and advice on return to driving.
- Car adaptation assessments.
- Specialist car seats and restraints, including fitting wheelchair accessible vehicles.
- Getting passengers and equipment in and out of a car safely.

01872 254920

www.cornwallmobility.co.uk

info@cornwallmobility.co.uk

DRIVING ASSESSMENT



**CARER AND STROKE SURVIVOR AT TORBAY STROKE
COMPUTER GROUP**

Concessionary Bus Travel Scheme

The National Bus Pass in England entitles the pass-holder to free off-peak travel on local buses anywhere in England. Available to older people or those with certain disabilities. Application forms can be got from:

Torbay Council (Torbay residents only)

01803 207766

email buspass@torbay.gov.uk

Devon County Council

Telephone: 01392 383688.

www.devon.gov.uk/nationalbuspass

email nationalbuspass@devon.gov.uk

Transport Information Torbay

Torbay Disability Information Service information sheet P20 details wheelchair-accessible taxi firms, ambulance services and local and voluntary services.

0300 4568373

Blue Badge Scheme

The Blue Badge Scheme allows you to park close to your destination. Apply online:

www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge

Devon: Care Direct 0345 1551 007.

Torbay: 01803 207653

BLUE BADGE

GETTING ABOUT

Parking Permit

Disabled Persons Parking Permits allowing you to park in many Council car parks are available. There is an annual fee. For more information contact

Torbay Parking Team

01803 207653

www.torbay.gov.uk/parkingpermits

email: parking@torbay.gov.uk

Devon Parking Permits

www.devonpermits.org

My Devon Customer Service Centre 0345 155 1073

Ring and Ride and Voluntary Transport

Ring & Ride Schemes aim to provide transport for people who find it difficult to use public transport, or who live remotely.

Dawlish 01626 888777

Kingsbridge (Library) 01548852315

Ivybridge 01752 690444

Newton Abbot 01626 335775

Totnes & Dartmouth 01803 865684

Torbay (Fare Car) 01803 207683 - for application form for reduced fare taxi scheme, if eligible, or online at

www.torbay.gov.uk/roads/travel/community-transport/fare-car

OPTIONS FOR GETTING ABOUT

Motability Car, Scooter, Battery Wheelchair

The Motability Scheme helps you get mobile by exchanging your higher rate mobility allowance to lease a new affordable car, Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle, scooter or powered wheelchair.

0300 456 4566

www.motability.co.uk

Shopmobility

Scooter or wheelchair hire for shopping etc.

Paignton: 01803 521771

Torquay: 01803 380982

Brixham: 01803 858304

Newton Abbot: 01626 335775

Teignmouth: 01626 777775

Dawlish: 01626 888085

Holidays

Torbay Disability Information Service produces an up-to-date Fact Sheet on holiday and travel information for people who have disabilities. 0300 4568373 and ask for Factsheet P09. Details page 42.

Holiday Insurance: The Stroke Association Information leaflet Holidays and Stroke has further holiday information about going on holiday, insurance companies and specialist tour companies (see page 39)

Housing**HOUSING
SUPPORT**

Torbay: Can provide temporary accommodation for those assessed as in priority need - those with children or pregnant, vulnerable because of age (60+), disability or at risk from violence. Also offers general housing advice and information to private and council tenants, and homeless people.

Housing Helpline: 01803 208723

Devon: If you are disabled you may be considering whether you can adapt your home to better meet your needs, or thinking about moving to another more suitable property. Further information about housing options for the disabled can be found here.

Additionally, you can find information about adapting your home. Contact Care Direct on 0345 155 1007

All social housing available in Devon (including Torbay) is advertised through Devon Home Choice. Properties are not allocated but tenants bid on any they are interested in renting.

Torbay: 01803 208723

Teignbridge: 01626 215 200

devonhomechoice.com

Personal Alarm: Community Alarm Service**PERSONAL
ALARM**

Puts you in touch with an emergency alarm centre in seconds. A small pendant radio trigger is clipped to the clothing or worn around the neck. It can be rented at a reasonable cost.

Torbay NRS Tele Care (working with NHS Torbay)

0300 100 0255

Telecare Devon, Care Direct 0345 1551 007 (working with NHS Devon)

There are other private providers of alarms.

TOILET KEYS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Toilet Keys

RADAR administers the National Key Scheme (NKS) which offers use of locked public toilets around the country.

Maps of toilet locations are also available.

Keys can be purchased from Disability Rights UK

020 3687 0790

email: enquiries@disabilityrightsuk.org

www.disabilityrightsuk.org/shop, or from

Torbay Visitor Information 01803 211 211

Disability Support Torbay 01803 215871

or at Shopmobility Offices.

Meal Delivery

See Torbay and Southern Devon Meal Delivery Services (P14) Information Sheet – details on page 42

The Independent Living Centre

In Newton Abbot, which provides advice, assessment and the opportunity to try out a range of community service equipment.

Independent Living Centre: 01392 380181

Email: ilc-exeter@devon.gov.uk

Web: www.devon.cc.ilc

Equipment Loan and Hire

British Red Cross loan and sell equipment to aid mobility.

They have a delivery service across Torbay (a fee applies)

Newton Abbot 01626 369731

Exeter 0300 456 1914

If either closed leave a message on 0300 456 1914

WHEELCHAIRS AND EQUIPMENT

Equipment

See Torbay and Southern Devon Equipment Hire and Loan Services (including wheelchair hire) (Po8) Information Sheet – details on page 41

Property Adaptions: Disabled Facilities Grant

Torbay: If you have a disability you may need to make changes to your home to make parts of it more accessible, and generally make life easier and more comfortable. Contact the Care Trust to request an Occupational Therapy assessment. They will assess your needs and identify the best way to meet your needs. Please note, this will not always result in a Disabled Facilities Grant, if equipment or smaller adaptations will meet the need. Depending on your income

and the amount of any savings you have, you may be able to get a disabled facilities grant to help you make changes to your home.

01803 219700

www.torbay.gov.uk//adapting-your-home

Devon: Care Direct 0345 155 1007

If you are registered as disabled, you will be exempt from paying VAT on works done to adapt your home or equipment purchased specifically to meet your disability needs. More information is available at GOV.UK.

Stairlifts

See Torbay and Southern Devon Stairlifts and Vertical Lifts (P19) Information Sheet – details on page 41

Honest Tradespeople: Home Maintenance Register

This AgeUK scheme aims to provide access to competent, trustworthy and reliable traders who are prepared to carry out domestic works and general home and garden maintenance. These companies are all businesses and will have their own individual charge rates.

Instead of falling prey to unscrupulous traders, older people (50+) in Torbay can contact us and ask for the name of a suitable trader from the traders list.

01803 555 181

email.reception@ageuktorbay.org.uk

Home Safety Visits

A home safety visit is a free service offered to residents of Devon and Somerset by the Fire Service.

They visit you in your home, at a convenient time, to see what you can do together to make you safer.

0800 0502 999

FINDING
TRUSTY
TRADES
PEOPLE



**UK-WIDE TECHNOLOGY-
4GOOD AWARD WON BY
TORBAY STROKE COMPUTER
GROUP**

Caring

Looking after yourself and making time to relax is very important if you are a carer. If you try to continue day after day without a break, you can risk illness, stress and depression.

This section aims just to provide brief information about a selection of the services available, and explains some of your rights as a carer. You can obtain more detailed information from the services below, or from your GP surgery.

Carer's Assessment

All carers are entitled to a Carers Assessment to see what support is best for them. This is not an assessment of how good you are at caring, but is about the support that may be available to help you in your role as a carer.

Torbay:

- Signpost for Carers Information Line (01803) 666620
signposts@nhs.net
- Carer Support Workers are based in all GP surgeries in the Bay - contact them at your surgery.
- Crossroads Care (see below)

Devon:

To ask for an assessment phone Devon Carers on 0345 643 4435. Carer Health and Wellbeing Checks are available from Devon Carers, some GP practices and some pharmacies. If you can't leave the person you look after, it may be possible to arrange care for them while you have the check.

Signposts for Carers / Torbay Carers Service

Signposts for Carers is a specialist information and advice service for unpaid carers in Torbay. The service is part of Torbay and Southern Devon Health and Care NHS Trust. It develops, co-ordinates and organises the services for unpaid carers who care for someone living in Torbay. It doesn't matter what relation you are to the person you care for or whether you live in the same house, there is a wide range of services for carers.

The first step is to join Torbay Carers Register to access basic advice information and support. Contact Signposts for Carers for a register pack.

01803 666620.

signposts@nhs.net

ALL CARERS
CAN GET AN
ASSESSMENT
TO SEE WHAT
CAN BE DONE
TO HELP
THEM

NHS CARER
SUPPORT

Carers Aid Torbay

A registered, independent charity providing a free, supportive service to unpaid Carers in Torbay. Their aim is to help Carers get a bit of balance and time in their lives, reducing any stress or worries they might have. They offer:

- advocacy support - attending formal meetings, tribunals, helping with any paperwork or forms, writing letters on behalf of the carer themselves
- free IT training for all carers
- benefits and entitlements service - form filling, financial reviews to check you are accessing all you are entitled to.

01803 323510

steph@carersaidtorbay.co.uk

TORBAY HOSPITAL CARER SUPPORT

Torbay Hospital Carer Support

The Torbay Hospital Support Worker for Carers can offer help for those faced with caring responsibilities, or those struggling to manage. Support is given to ensure a carer's own needs are taken into account during discharge planning and in the immediate period beyond. A Carers Assessment can be completed and a variety of services accessed.

01803 654747

sally.smith5@nhs.net

Devon Carers

Information and support services for carers in Devon.

Helpline 03456 434 435

www.devoncarers.org.uk

Benefits to carers include:

- Contact with someone to give you advice and support
- Peer support from other carers
- Access to a Carers Assessment
- A Carer Alert Card to ensure the person you care for gets help if something unexpected happens to you.
- A regular magazine with information about events in your area.

GP SURGERY CARER SUPPORT

Torbay GP Surgeries Carer Support Workers

GP Surgeries in Torbay have Carer Support Workers whose aim is to support carers, and link carers to other support services and agencies. Ask at your surgery.

CARERS EMERGENCY CARD

Carers Emergency Response Card

Registering as a carer can provide an emergency card with a back-up plan for the person you care for, and which doubles as a discount card and Carers Passport. This can link you to support in hospitals (such as free hospital parking when visiting or supporting the person you care for), GPs, pharmacies and employment.

Signposts for Carers: 01803 666620.

Devon Carers: 03456 434 435

Carers Education & Training

Regular training courses for carers. Support for the cared-for person can be put in place to allow carers to attend. Most courses are free.

Torbay: Signposts for Carers 01803 666620

Devon Carers: 03456 434 435.

CARERS BREAKS

Breaks from caring

Both Devon and Torbay provide a range of breaks for carers, designed to replace the care that you would normally be giving the person you care for. It may be needed so you can look after your own health and wellbeing, and to take a break from caring.

Signposts for Carers 01803 666620

Devon Carers on 03456 434 435

YOUNGER CARERS

Younger Carers

Emotional and practical support for younger carers.

Torbay Youth Trust 01803 895299.

Devon Younger Carers 03456 434 435.

Housework and Home Help

Torbay Disability Information Sheet P11 'Housework, Domestic and Laundry Services' gives contact details of local agencies that provide housework, shopping, domestic and laundry services, meal preparation and letter-writing.

01803 546474

torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/dis-info

Devon

Some people may be eligible for social care support with personal care and equipment. If you need help for the person you are supporting to live well at home:

Care Direct on 0345 155 1007 or

email csc.caredirect@devon.gov.uk, or

Devon Carers on 0345 643 4435.

Torbay Carers Telephone Line

A confidential telephone line run by voluntary carers to provide support. More information from Val Shute on 07596 103291.

Personal Care (domiciliary) Agencies

Torbay Disability Information Service Information Sheet P05 'Domiciliary Agencies' gives contact details of agencies that provide personal care, help with washing, dressing and toileting. 0300 456 8373. Web address on page 41.

Care Homes

For some people there comes a time when they realise that despite how hard they try, and how many outside services might be available, remaining at home is no longer an option. When faced with this, you will be assessed by a professional health worker and advice will be given on the type of care home that should be chosen. Age UK's Fact Sheet FS20, 'NHS Continuing Healthcare and NHS funded Nursing Care' is available

ageuk.org.uk/publications

Torbay Disability Information Service has information sheets with details of care homes in Torbay. 0300 456 8373

Devon

If you think you, a relative or someone you care for might need residential care home support we can arrange for a social care needs assessment to identify your needs and the support required. Contact

Care Direct on 0345 155 1007

email csc.caredirect@devon.gov.uk

CARE HOME RATINGS

Care Home Ratings

Care Quality Commission can provide independent information on Care Home and Domiciliary Care organisation ratings.

Call 03000 616 161.

You can also look up the ratings of individual Care Homes online at www.cqc.org.uk

BENEFITS, FINANCIAL, and LEGAL

There are many benefits which you or your carer may be entitled to.

GET IMPARTIAL ADVICE ON BENEFITS

Benefits are very complex.

It is important to get impartial advice.

If you want to contact the benefits service yourself:

Disability Living Allowance helpline

0800 1214 600

Attendance Allowance helpline

0800 7310 122

Personal Independence Payment helpline

0800 1214 433

Employment Support Allowance Helpline

0800 169 0350

Universal Credit Helpline

0800 328 5644

All numbers and more on: gov.uk/disability-benefits-helpline

Agencies that can help you with benefits include:

Citizens Advice Bureau

Free, impartial and confidential advice on:

- Entitlement to benefits
- Employment rights
- Consumer issues
- Legal issues
- Housing problems
- Tax

To find your nearest office, contact the

National Helpline: 03444 111 444

Torbay Disability Information Service

0300 456 8373

Age UK Torbay

01803 555181.

Age UK Devon

0333 241 2340

Age UK National Information and Advice Helpline

0800 678 1602

Carers Benefits Checks:

Signposts for Carers Information Line 01803 666620

Crossroads Care 01803 323510

Care Direct Devon can offer information and advice regarding benefits and other entitlements: 0345 1551007.

Disability Support Torbay:

You can get help to fill in benefit forms and plan appeals. Advice with housing and debt issues from

Disability Support 01803 21587

info@dstorbay.org.uk

Benefits

See Stroke Association “Benefits and Financial Assistance” Information Leaflet – details on page 39.

WORK

Work

With the right care, support and advice many people do return to work after a stroke. This depends on the effects of your stroke, the type of support you need, the work you were doing before your stroke. Every stroke is different, and every recovery is different. Someone who had a small stroke could return to work within weeks, while others may return after months or years. There is no set pattern. Talk to your doctors, nurses, and therapists about what you can expect. The most important thing is to take things as they come and follow any treatment or rehabilitation therapy you may have been given.

See Stroke Association “A complete guide to Work and Stroke” Information Leaflet – details on page39

Financial Difficulties

See Torbay and Southern Devon “Finding Funding for Extra Needs” (P12) Information Sheet – details on page 41.

**GET
IMPARTIAL
ADVICE ON
DEBT**

Debt Issues: StepChange

Information and help to manage debts, deal with creditors and advice on how to look after your money.

0800 138 1111

www.stepchange.org

Direct payments

Once the services that you can receive have been agreed, you can choose if you prefer to arrange the services yourself, and receive a Direct Payment.

The use of a Direct Payment can facilitate the employment of a personal assistant or to pay a care agency to provide the support that is required. Direct payments can also be used to pay for short breaks or respite care when assessed as being needed by the local authorities.

Torbay and Southern Devon Health and Care NHS Trust

01803 219700

Devon Direct Payment Finance Team

0345 155 1007

Not-for-profit charities that can help manage direct payments and provide a payroll service include:

Disability Focus 01803 867968

info@disabilityfocus.org

Disability Support 01803 21587

info@dstorbay.org.uk

Making Decisions

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 sets out what should happen when someone lacks capacity to make decisions, and allows people to appoint someone to make their health, welfare and/or financial decisions if in the future they lack capacity to make these decisions. This person is appointed via a formal document called a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA). There are two different types of LPA:

- A personal welfare LPA is for decisions about health and personal welfare.
- A property and affairs LPA is for decisions about finances.

For further information,

Signposts for Carers Torbay 01803 666620.

Carers Trust Devon 03456 434 435

Court of Protection

The Court of Protection is a court that makes decisions for people who are unable to do so for themselves. It can also appoint someone (called a deputy) to act for people who are unable to make their own decisions.

Court of Protection 0300 456 4600

Access to Bank Account or Disability Benefits

If you need to have access to another person's bank account, you can contact the bank to arrange a "third party mandate".

If you need to help someone collect their pension or benefits, contact your local Department for Work and Pensions office about becoming an agent or appointee. An agent collects someone's benefits. An appointee deals with all aspects of benefits for someone who cannot act for themselves.

Work and Pensions 0800 7310 469



STROKE ASSOCIATION LEAFLETS

These helpful and comprehensive leaflets are highly recommended.

They are available free to download from:

stroke.org.uk/our-publications, where you can also order copies.

Or call Helpline: 0303 3033 100

- A complete guide to stroke for employers
- Benefits and financial assistance
- Diabetes and stroke
- Equipment for independent living and mobility
- Leisure activities after stroke
- Seizures and epilepsy after stroke
- Women and stroke
- Driving after stroke
- Atrial fibrillation (AF) and stroke
- Childhood stroke guide
- Bleeding in the brain: haemorrhagic stroke
- Ischaemic stroke guide
- Blood-thinning medication after stroke
- Carotid artery disease
- High blood pressure and stroke
- Accommodation after stroke
- How to reduce your risk of a stroke
- Next steps after a stroke
- When you have a stroke
- Supporting a stroke survivor
- We are the Stroke Association
- A complete guide to work and stroke
- Holidays and stroke
- Exercise and stroke
- A complete guide to emotional changes after stroke
- Depression and other emotional changes
- A complete guide to cognitive problems after stroke
- Problems with memory and thinking guide
- Vascular dementia
- Dealing with swallowing problems
- A complete guide to communication problems after stroke
- A complete guide to swallowing problems after stroke
- A complete guide to vascular dementia
- Alcohol and stroke

- All about stroke: information for children
- Changes to your behaviour
- Reducing your risk of stroke: information for African and Caribbean people
- Reducing your risk of stroke: information for South Asian people
- Smoking and the risk of stroke
- Physiotherapy after stroke
- Helping someone with communication problems
- Private treatment
- Occupational therapy after stroke
- Continence problems after stroke
- Healthy eating and stroke
- Migraine and stroke
- Physical effects of stroke guide
- Sex after stroke
- Balance problems after stroke
- Fatigue after stroke
- Pain after stroke
- Visual problems after stroke
- Stroke: a carer's guide
- Bereavement and stroke
- Rare effects of stroke
- Transient ischaemic attack (TIA)
- Communication Licence
- Atrial fibrillation: What you need to know



AgeUK Information Guides

Age UK produce a range of very helpful Information Guides, including information on

- Bereavement
- Benefits
- Health and Wellbeing
- Staying Safe at Home

These can be obtained from:

ageuk.org.uk/guides-and-factsheets

0800 678 1602.



Torbay and Southern Devon Health and Care NHS Trust Disability Information Service Information Factsheets

These free and very helpful information sheets are available from:
Torbay Disability Information Service,
0300 456 8373
torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/dis-information-sheets

- Adult Abuse: how to raise your concerns (P35)
- Bathing and Showering (P02)
- Computers (P27)
- Contenance Management (P24)
- Domiciliary Care Agencies (P05)
- Emergency Care for Pets (P06)
- Equipment Centres (P07)
- Equipment Hire and Loan Services (including wheelchair hire) (P08)
- Family and Emotional Support Services (P03)
- Finding Funding for Extra Needs (P12)
- Gentle Exercise (P22)
- Holiday Services (national contacts) (P09)
- Home Maintenance Services and Building Adaptations (P10)
- Home Visiting Services (P23)
- Housework, Domestic Help and Laundry Services (P11)
- Housing Options for Older People (P25)
- Information Advice and Advocacy Services (P01)
- Keeping Safe and Warm at Home (P13)
- Leisure and Day Opportunities (P28)
- Meal Delivery Services (P14)
- Motoring (P17)
- Parking and Public Conveniences (P15)
- Shop Delivery Services (P16)
- Sitting Services (P18)
- Sport and Outdoor Activities (P34)
- Stairlifts and Vertical Lifts (P19)
- Support for People with Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism (P33)
 - Support Groups (P21)

- Telecare (includes community alarm systems) (P04)
- Transport Services (P20)
- Caring for Someone with an Alcohol or Drug Problem (P31)
- Care Homes: Day Care, Torbay (C09)
- Care Homes: Dementia (residential and nursing), Torbay (C06)
- Care Homes: Learning Disabilities, Torbay (C05)
- Care Homes: Mental Health, Torbay (C08)
- Care Homes: Nursing, Torbay (C03)
- Care Homes: Paignton and Brixham (C01)
- Care Homes: Torquay (C02)

Information Packs for Younger Stroke Survivors

These free packs are available from Different Strokes, which provides a service to younger stroke survivors. They are run by stroke survivors for stroke survivors, for active self-help and mutual support.

Different Strokes,

0345 130 7172

info@differentstrokes.co.uk



Different Strokes information packs can be downloaded online: differentstrokes.co.uk

- Life after stroke (stroke information & prevention)
- Preventing another stroke
- Services for stroke survivors (services & organisations that may be able to help)
- Benefits (entitlements)
- How to get help from social services (entitlements & procedures)
- Directory of Charities that may be able to help
- The invisible side of stroke (dealing with counselling & the emotional aspects of stroke)
- Sex and relationships after stroke
- Drop foot and FES (Functional Electrical Stimulation)
- Learning to drive post-stroke
- Work After Stroke
- Work After Stroke – Information for family and friends
- Work After Stroke – Employer’s guide
- Work After Stroke – Information for health & social care professionals
- Care after a stroke in childhood
- Caring for somebody after a stroke

WORD MEANINGS

Agnosia	The inability to recognise an object by touch alone with both hands.
Agraphia	Difficulty writing or drawing.
Alexia	Difficulty reading.
Aneurysm	A balloon-like bulge in the wall of an artery that may burst and cause a haemorrhage (bleeding).
Angioplasty	A technique whereby the doctor inserts a catheter into the narrowed portion of the artery and stretches the artery by inflating a little balloon on the end of the catheter.
Anticoagulant	A drug that is used to 'thin' the blood and thus reduce the risk of clots forming within the circulation. Anticoagulants include Warfarin, Dabigatran, Rivaroxaban and Apixaban.
Aorta	The main artery taking blood from the heart to the rest of the body. All other arteries branch off it.
Aphasia	Inability to use language. It can either be a problem understanding language (receptive) or speaking it (expressive). People are often affected by both sorts.
Apraxia	The inability to do complex tasks when requested and there is no paralysis of the muscles.
Assessment	Looking at someone's situation and deciding what sort of help they need.
Ataxia	Loss of the control of muscle function, leading to a staggering walk and difficulty performing delicate tasks with the hands.
Atrial Fibrillation	Heart condition in which the upper left side of the heart beats out of rhythm with the other three chambers. It increases the risk of a blood clot forming inside the heart, which can break off, travel to the brain and cause a TIA or stroke.
Carers Assessment	Looks at what support or assistance a carer needs in order to continue in their caring role.
Cardio Embolic Stroke	Stroke due to a clot that formed in the heart and travelled to the brain.
Care Quality Commission (CQC)	The Care Quality Commission registers, inspects and reports on health and social care services in England. Its aim is to improve services and eliminate bad practice.

Care Plan	A map or plan of someone's needs and how they are being met.
Carotid artery	There are two carotid arteries, one on each side of the neck, which carry blood from the heart to the head, notably the face and front of the brain. Disease of a carotid artery is a common cause of stroke.
Community Nurse	Community nurses are registered nurses who work in the community: in people's homes, in schools and in local surgeries and health centres.
Continence/ Incontinence	Whether someone is able to control movements of their bowel or bladder.
Court of Protection	Specialist Court for issues relating to people who lack capacity to make decisions. The Court can make decisions or appoint Deputies (see Deputy) in the best interests of those people who lack capacity.
CVA or CVE	Abbreviations for 'cerebro-vascular accident', and 'cerebro-vascular event'. The terms are widely used but are not good ones: many strokes do not affect the cerebrum and none of them is an accident. 'Stroke' is a better term.
Day Care Centre	A place where groups of stroke survivors can go during the day, where care is provided for social activity and (sometimes) training. This is sometimes provided to give your carer a break.
Daily Living	How someone manages their day-to-day life (e.g. shopping, laundry, cleaning, cooking)
Deep vein thrombosis (DVT)	A clot of blood in the veins, usually of the leg.
District Nurse	A nurse who provides nursing care for people by visiting them in their own homes.
Dysarthria	Speech disorder in which the pronunciation is unclear, although the meaning of what is said is normal.
Dysgraphia	Difficulty in writing.
Dyslexia	Difficulty reading.
Dysphagia	Difficulty in swallowing.

WORD MEANINGS

Dysphasia	Difficulty in using language. It can either be a problem understanding language (receptive) or speaking it (expressive). People are often affected by both sorts.
Dyspraxia	Difficulty doing complex tasks.
Embolism	When a piece of solid material, usually a blood clot, travels to elsewhere in the body and blocks an artery, causing damage to the organs involved.
Emotional lability	Emotions (crying or laughter) that are not in context with what is happening. Common after stroke.
Endarterectomy	Surgical operation to remove obstructions (usually fatty tissue or blood clot) from inside an artery.
Financial Assessment	Looking at information about your finances (income and expenditure) from which it is worked out how much you have to pay towards services.
Home Care Provider	An agency who provides a home care service.
Hospital Discharge	The planning of arrangements to enable someone to leave hospital and return home or into an alternative care setting.
Hypertension	High blood pressure.
Hypotension	Low blood pressure.
Infarction	An area of cell death (e.g. part of the brain) as a result of being deprived of its blood supply.
Intermediate Care Teams	Teams and workers who provide short-term support for people to increase their independence, often after a period of illness or after being in hospital.
Ischaemia	Cells that have an inadequate blood supply (see also transient ischaemic attack).
Lability (Emotional)	A condition of emotional instability, which can be caused by stroke, in which the mood can swing from joy to sorrow, affection to anger, and so on. Sometimes an expression of emotion is inappropriate or extreme.
Lacunar infarct	A small stroke less than one centimetre in diameter.

Middle cerebral	The artery that most frequently becomes blocked. It is the most common site of a stroke.
Multi-Disciplinary Team	Describes the joint working of people with different roles or functions within the same organisation or across sectors e.g. Doctors, social workers and therapists.
Myocardial infarction	The medical term for a heart attack.
Nursing Home	A residential home which has trained nursing staff that can look after people who need regular nursing care.
Occupational Therapist	A worker who helps to improve someone's independence through assessment and provision of specialist equipment or activities.
Personalisation	Is the all-encompassing term for the Government's agenda to give people more choice about, and control in the care they receive. The system intends to place the service-user at the centre of the process and allows them to choose the support they use and the manner in which they receive support.
Residential Care	Care provided to a group of people in a home set up for that purpose.
Respite break	When someone goes to a day centre or to a care home for a short period of time to allow their carer to have a break from looking after them.
Risk Assessment	Looking at and weighing up of any dangers that may occur in someone's home.
Personal Care	How someone looks after themselves (e.g. washing, dressing, bathing, going to the toilet)
Physiotherapy	Physiotherapy is treatment to restore, maintain, and make the most of a patient's mobility, function, and well-being. Physiotherapy helps through physical rehabilitation, injury prevention, and health and fitness. Physiotherapists get you involved in your own recovery.

WORD MEANINGS

Platelets	Small blood cells that stick together to form a clot.
Pulmonary embolism	A blood clot in the lungs, which can very rapidly lead to sudden death.
Safeguarding	The process of responding to concerns that a vulnerable person (or people) is being, or are at risk of being abused, neglected or exploited.
Sitting Service	A paid carer who stays with someone to allow their carer to have a break or go out.
Speech and Language Therapist (SALT)	A therapist who specialises in the rehabilitation of people with speech and language difficulties, helping them to improve their speech and language and/or to find alternative ways of communicating. Also expert in problems with swallowing.
Stenosis	A narrowing.
Thrombosis	The formation of a blood clot.
Thrombolysis	“Clot buster”. Some people with ischaemic stroke are able to receive a clot-busting drug. The drug aims to disperse the clot and return the blood supply to your brain. The medicine itself is called alteplase.
Thrombectomy	Treatment that physically removes a clot from the brain. Like thrombolysis, it has to be carried out within hours of a stroke starting. Only a small proportion of stroke cases are eligible for thrombectomy but it can have a big impact on those people by reducing disability.
Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA)	A stroke-like event that fully recovers within 24 hours of the start of symptoms.
Vertebral arteries	The two arteries that travel up the back of the neck to the brain which, with the two carotid arteries, supply all the blood to the brain.
Warfarin	The most frequently used oral anticoagulant (for thinning the blood and preventing clots forming inside the circulation).

LEARN THE SIGNS OF STROKE

Face is it drooping?

Arms can you raise both?

Speech slurred or jumbled?

Time to call **999** if any of these

Act **FAST** because the quicker you act, the less the person loses.