

# The Caregiver Handbook



Grey Bruce District Stroke Centre

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Ontario  
**Stroke**  
System



The Grey Bruce Health Network/Grey Bruce District Stroke Centre would like to acknowledge:

Gary Buffett, *Access Centre for Hastings & Prince Edward Counties* and the *Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Supportive Care Network CCOR*, for allowing us to adapt their Caregiver Handbook to meet the needs of caregivers of stroke survivors.

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## NOW YOU ARE A CAREGIVER – YOU ARE NOT ALONE

This booklet has been written to provide some ideas about caregiving. We hope that you will refer to it often.

Your role as a caregiver is important to the well being of your loved one. As a caregiver, you may find the experience very rewarding and satisfying. It can also be challenging and frustrating. The health care professionals in our area can help you in the management of your loved one's care.

It is important to recognize the value of the role of the caregiver and the impact this will have on a loved one's care and comfort. You may take on new responsibilities when the person you care about becomes ill and relies on you for support.

As a new caregiver, you must be made aware of the number one rule of caregiving: You need to look after yourself. Those who make a point of attending to their own needs in addition to the needs of others will be healthier and happier. You will also be a more effective caregiver.

## Your Health Care: Be Involved

As a stroke survivor or caregiver you need to participate in your healthcare. The following is a brochure and form from the Ontario Hospital Association on how to be involved in your healthcare. For more information: [www.oha.com](http://www.oha.com)



### **1. Be involved in your health care. Speak up if you have questions or concerns about your care.**

One of the keys to getting the best health care is to be an active member of your health care team. This means taking part and being involved in every decision about your care. This also means asking a member of your health care team if you have questions so that you can make informed choices. It means coming prepared for your medical treatment and knowing what to do when you go home. And it means getting support from friends and family if you need it.

### **Getting support from family, friends, and others**

It is often helpful to bring a family member or friend with you when you talk to your health care team. If you need an interpreter, ask in advance if there will be one there, or bring someone who can interpret for you.

### **What you should know**

You should understand as much as you can about any:

- medical problem you have (your diagnosis)
- treatment or procedure that you will have
- medicine you should take and how to take it

### **Asking questions**

Before you see your health care team, plan the questions you want to ask and write them down if you can. When you ask the questions, you may not understand the answers you get the first time. It is fine to ask again. You can say, “I’m not sure I understand what you said. Can you explain that to me again?” Also, ask where you can go for more information.

*Here are some good ways to ask questions:*

*Deciding about having a test or a treatment:*

- “Can you tell me more about my medical problem?”
- “What does this test or treatment involve?”
- “Could you explain it in a different way?” (such as drawing a picture)
- “What is the purpose of this test or treatment?”
- “Are there any other options?”
- “What should I do to get ready?”

*Planning for going home:*

- “What should I do when I go home?”
- “What should I tell my family about my care?”
- “Can I eat the same foods that I used to?”
- When can I drive?
- “When can I go back to work?”

*When you get a prescription for medicine:*

- “What is this medicine?”
- “What does the medicine do?”
- “What are the side effects? When do they appear?”
- “How many pills do I take and how often?”



**2. Tell a member of your health care team about your past illnesses and your current health condition.**

You are the one who knows the most about your health. Tell the members of your health care team everything you can, even if you think they already know, and even if you think it is not important.

*Tell them if:*

- you are not feeling well right now or have been sick lately
- you are taking any medicine
- you have had surgery or recent visits to the hospital
- you have seen another doctor or gone somewhere else for health care
- you have an ongoing illness like diabetes or heart disease
- there is an illness that runs in your family, such as high blood pressure, asthma, or cancer
- you have an addiction such as smoking, drugs, or alcohol



**3. Bring all of your medicines with you when you go to the hospital or to a medical appointment.**

Some medicines combine with each other in your body and produce bad reactions. To protect you, your health care team must know about everything you take. This includes the drugs you take with a doctor’s prescription. It also includes other medicines you buy, such as:

- vitamins
- herbs and herbal remedies
- food supplements

- ‘over the counter’ or non-prescription medicine you buy at the drugstore

When you are going to the hospital or to the medical appointment, put all of your medicines in a bag and take them with you. Always keep your medicine in the bottle it came in.

If you cannot bring the medicines with you, another good thing to do is to keep a list of everything you take. Keep this list up to date and bring this list with you when you go to the hospital or to a medical appointment. Your doctor and pharmacist can help you make this list.

Be sure to tell a member of your health care team if you get prescriptions from more than one doctor. Work with your team to keep your medicines up to date, so that you stop taking anything you no longer need.



**4. Tell a member of your health care team if you have ever had an allergic or bad reaction to any medicine or food.**

If you get sick, your health care team may have to act fast. Before they give you any medicine, they need to know if you could have a bad reaction to it. That’s why you should tell them in advance about any allergy or reaction you have ever had to any medicine or food.

Reactions can include rashes, headaches, breathing trouble, and feeling sick. Because some medicines have food in them (such as the eggs used in the flu shot), be sure to talk about your food allergies too. Tell a member of your team right away if a new medicine makes you feel unwell. If you do not know if you have allergies, you can get tested.

Some people have reactions to anesthetics - the drugs used to put them to sleep or stop pain during surgery. If you have ever had a reaction, tell your family and your health care team in case you need surgery again.

Don’t wait until you get sick to tell people about your allergies. Some people wear an ID bracelet such as MedicAlert™. This tells the health care team about your allergies when you can’t tell them yourself.



## **5. Make sure you know what to do when you go home from the hospital or from your medical appointment.**

When you are getting ready to go home from the hospital or after a medical treatment ask as many questions as you can to make sure you understand:

- what treatment you received
- whether you will have to pick up a prescription before you go home
- what kind of transportation you will need to get home
- the type of care you will need at home and if you will need someone to stay with you
- what symptoms to watch for and who to call if something does not feel right
- whether someone will be making a plan with you for home care
- what medicine you must take, how to take it, and any side effects
- what foods you should eat and not eat
- when you can go back to normal activities, such as work, school, exercise, and driving
- what follow-up appointments you will need and who will make them

You can write this information down or it may be helpful to have a family member or friend with you. They can help you to write down everything you should know about your care. Included in this brochure is a summary form that you can use to write down important information about your care at home.

Your health care team includes:

Doctors

Nurses

Pharmacists

Physiotherapists

Occupational Therapists

Dieticians

Respiratory Therapists

Social Workers

Speech Language Pathologists

Audiologists

Denturists

Dental Hygienists

Medical Radiation Technologists

Medical Laboratory Technologists

Psychologists

Midwives

Dentists

Optometrists

Opticians

Chiropodists

Massage Therapists

Chiropractors

Dental Technologists

Funding for this project was provided by  
the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

## ACCESS COMMUNITY SERVICES WITH SUCCESS

The South West Community Care Access Centre is the gateway to community based health care services. One call links to information and referral services, a range of home care services, and long term care placement services. Services are provided in schools for children with complex health needs. Local and regional hospitals refer many people to the Community Care Access Centre when they need help at home while convalescing.

Each person who receives home care or placement services has his/her needs assessed by an experienced professional. Service plans are developed with each individual and the involvement of family members and other significant caregivers. The plan is reviewed on a regular basis and adjusted as needed.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care sets out the guidelines used by the Community Care Access Centre to determine who is eligible for service.

The case manager coordinates in-home services. You will help to the case manager plan the services that you need. A service plan may include:

- Nursing
- Physiotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- Nutritional Services
- Social Work
- Homemaking / Personal Support
- Support Services

The Access Centre has offices in Owen Sound and Walkerton. Staff is available from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm from Monday to Friday and on-call 4:30 pm – 7:00pm and from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm on weekends and holidays. To request an assessment or discuss your plan please call:

**Owen Sound**  
255 18th St. West  
Owen Sound, Ontario  
N4K 6Y1

**Walkerton**  
220 Trillium Court  
Walkerton, Ontario

Phone: 519-371-2112  
Fax: 519-371-5612

**Toll free: 1-888-371-2112**

E-mail: [general@gb.ccac-ont.ca](mailto:general@gb.ccac-ont.ca)

Phone: 519-881-1181  
Fax: 519-881-1425

## **Information and referral**

Calls for information are welcomed, and when appropriate, the public will be referred to other community resources.

## **Eligibility**

The Community Care Access Centre assesses the person requesting service to ensure they meet criteria established by the Ministry of Health. The criteria for home care services are:

- A valid Ontario Health Number
- Needs cannot be met through outpatient facilities
- Services are available in the area where the person lives
- Services are necessary to help the person remain in his/her home, or, services are necessary to make it possible for the person to return home.

The criteria for placement services are:

- A valid Ontario Health Number
- Over the age of 18 years
- Needs can be met in a long term care facility
- The care needed is more than can be provided by community based programs
- Understanding and consent to move to a long term care facility

# HOW TO EDUCATE YOURSELF ABOUT CAREGIVING

One of the most effective ways to prepare yourself is to know your responsibilities:

- How the stroke survivor is progressing?
- What are survivor's needs when they return home?
- What services are available to help you both?
- Who can you turn to with questions and concerns in the future?
- What other resources will help you?

Ask questions of the professional care providers:

- Do you have enough information about the survivor's stroke?
- Do you know what the lasting effects of stroke will be?
- Do you know what change may occur due to the illness/condition?

Caregivers need to understand stroke issues fully. Ask to sit in on meetings with care providers about the care plan. This can be an excellent way to gain information on their progress and the treatment plans of the professionals involved.

- Be patient you will have to repeat your story

Read "Let's Talk about Stroke Book", other books, check websites or watch videos about caregiving, which may be recommended to you. A list of suggested books and videos has been included at the end of this booklet.

Use support groups to get information and support from other caregivers. Contact your local Heart and Stroke office or March of Dimes.

For the caregivers at home, get all the help you need from your family, friends and professionals. Most people want to help but don't know what to do therefore ask for specific help with chores, errands or providing care to your loved one. Take the contact information from people who offer to help and contact them in the future if you need help.

Become an expert on your situation. Educate yourself: find out what's available in your community. Become active: Advocate for you and your loved one's rights. Speak with other caregivers. Do not wait to seek support as a last resort. Help is available to prevent Caregiver Burnout.

## **THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PERSON RECEIVING CARE**

Like you, the stroke survivor is experiencing a wide range of emotions due to the changes and losses he/she is experiencing.

As a normal adjustment to new health concerns, the person you are caring for may experience:

- A sense of losing control over their life because of their condition. In an attempt to try to maintain control, the survivor may resist your attempts to care for them. This is a common reaction to the loss of independence
- Sadness from a changed self image
- Fear of becoming dependent and a burden to the family
- Fear that old friends will distance themselves
- Anger and frustration towards their condition (which can at times be misdirected)
- Denial of the condition or its lasting effects
- Fear of becoming isolated from the world, since the survivor may no longer be able to get around as easily as he/she once did.

With time and support, most will adjust to their new situation. Encourage them to get involved in something outside the home such as a Day Program, support group, or leisure activity. This can provide an outlet for she/he emotions, and can help them feel less alone and helpless.

## **AVOID BURNOUT – TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF**

Burnout is a sense of being completely overwhelmed and unrewarded (Carter, 1995). It is a common feeling among caregivers that can have various negative consequences if it is not addressed quickly.

### **Check out The Stroke Caregiver p.49 in Let's Talk about Stroke**

At first, most caregivers accept this new role with a sense of idealism, hope and eagerness to do well. But as time goes on, fatigue, disappointments and frustrations can and do occur. You may start to feel symptoms of what is commonly known as burnout.

This can be dangerous to both you and the person you are caring for. Feeling stressed over long periods of time will affect your health, motivation, attitude, and mood as well as your ability to cope with your daily responsibilities. However it can be avoided and it is not permanent.

### **Common emotional symptoms of burnout:**

- Become easily irritated and frustrated
- Feel anger or resentment
- Feel sadness and feelings of loneliness
- Feel overwhelmed or overloaded
- Have decreased self-esteem
- Have depression
- Feel emotionally drained
- Have difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- May feel like running away

These are considered warning signs of burnout. It is difficult to imagine how your health and quality of life might be negatively affected if immediate action is not taken.

### **How to avoid burnout:**

**First step** - acknowledge your new role and responsibilities

**Second step** - be able to recognize the symptoms of burnout

**Third step** - pay more attention to yourself

## **Common physical symptoms of burnout:**

- Inability to sleep well
- Headaches and backaches
- Fatigue most of the time – physically drained
- Changes in weight
- Lingered colds

## **Who is at risk of burnout?**

### **Those caregivers who:**

- Have high expectations of themselves and others
- Have a strong and unrealistic dedication to making things ideal for the person they are caring for
- Have difficulty saying “no”
- Have difficulty asking for or accepting help
- Consistently sacrifice themselves and their needs for the benefit of others
- Feel as though they are the only person capable of providing care

**Remember:** Although family members want to do what is best for their loved one, they must not forget about themselves. If you feel like you are being used, say so. If you are uncomfortable with decisions that the ill person has made, be honest about your feelings and arrange for someone else to help.

If not addressed quickly your health will deteriorate and your ability to take care of your loved one may suffer. Eat nutritious foods, get regular sleep, and find a form of exercise or activity you enjoy. Participate in a task that will help you relieve stress such as listening to music or reading a good book.

Finally, visit your doctor when you do not feel well. You are entitled to receiving care and attention too.

## **What can you do to prevent yourself from venting your feelings of stress on your loved one?**

The best way to avoid unintentionally venting your stress on your loved one, is to prevent the day-to-day responsibilities or stresses from building up to the point that they are overwhelming you. This requires that you be honest with yourself about what you are realistically able to manage, that you inform yourself about community resources and services that can support you, and that you take care of yourself.

## **WHEN YOU ARE A LONG – DISTANCE CAREGIVER .....**

Family members may live some distance apart, so long distance care is sometimes done.

### **Long distance caregivers must also deal with:**

- Travel costs and long distance phone bills
- Difficulty exchanging information
- Feelings of guilt or anxiety about not being able to be with your loved one more often
- Difficulty travelling frequently due to one's own family responsibilities or job demands

### **What you can do to cope:**

1. Get information and support from your care team (if you have one) to help you coordinate care. Attention to detail is critical to successful long-distance caregiving.
2. Plan for emergencies to reduce your anxiety. Leave a key to your loved one's home with a friend or neighbour for quick and easy access in the case of an emergency.
3. Consider an "emergency response system" so your family member can contact emergency attention at the touch of a button. For further information contact your case manager/ hospital team.
4. Consult with your case manager regularly to discuss concerns and assist with relaying information to the other professionals involved. She can also help you learn about community and private services.
5. Attend care provider meetings whenever possible to meet the care providers, to discuss their roles and to be brought up to date on your loved one's progress.
6. Use a "Communication Book" where all care providers can note concerns or questions for you. You can use this as a way to update yourself on the week's events and communicate back to the care providers.
7. Prioritize tasks that you want to accomplish with each visit. Keep a list of people to talk to and things to do. This will help you stay focused and avoid confusion.
8. Make sure all care providers know how and where to reach you. Leave your name and phone number with people who may not be directly involved, i.e. bank manager.

9. In some cases, the condition of your loved one may lead you to move in with them or to move close to them to provide care. This may be a temporary or permanent arrangement. In other cases some people decide that their loved one needs to move in with the caregiver. What ever the arrangement there will be significant transitional issues for all concerned.

For example:

- Loss of privacy
- Loss of control
- Change in routines

The following are some steps you can take to protect your loved one from falling victim to mistreatment:

- Stay informed about the care your loved is receiving, who he or she is receiving it from and when they are receiving it
- Stay involved – communicate often with your loved one, visit regularly
- Know the indicators of abuse
- Suggest that your loved one not keep valuable jewellery or large amounts of money in the house
- Warn your loved one not to sign any documents he or she do not fully understand
- Arrange for automatic deposit of pension cheques and withdrawal for payment of monthly bills
- Instruct your loved one to never give personal information to someone they do not know

## HELPING WITH MEDICATION

### See Medication pg. 19 in Living with Stroke

#### Medication Records

The prescriptions may change from time to time. The following record allows you to keep track of drugs, what dose should be taken, at what time, with what conditions (e.g. take one hour before a meal, only with milk), and how well the drugs are working. The prescription date and the doctor's name are useful in emergency situations when the regular doctor may not be available to help you.

Make up your own chart on some separate pages. The following is a sample of how it may look. Change it to meet your own needs.

Date	Drug	Dose	Taken	Doctor	Results/Side Effects
Aug 1	Tylenol 3	10 mg	4 times/day	Kildair	Pain relieved after 5 hours but returned three weeks later
Aug 23	Tylenol 3	20 mg	4 times/day	Kildair	Pain relieved after 5 hours

With various drugs, a Medication Table is useful to help you remember when they should be taken and with what special instructions (e.g. with milk, during a meal). Use a pencil to fill in the drugs since they may change over time and you do not want to rewrite a whole list each time.

Time	Drug (s)	Special Instructions
8:00 pm	Give drug names, dose and colour	e.g. take yellow pills with milk
4:00 pm	Give drug names, dose and colour	e.g. do not drive after blue pill
8:00 pm	Give drug names, dose and colour	e.g. take drug "x" with snack

Make up a schedule using the following general suggestions. Under the time column, list all the different times of the day when the drugs need to be taken. Some drugs will only need to take once a day while another one might be every 4, 8, or 12 hours.

Local pharmacists often sell "dosettes". These boxes have many small compartments and they can be used to prepare medication for a day or a few days at a time. They are very helpful in reminding people what to take at what time of day.

## **COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

There are many community services that you may access to assist you with various aspects of your life. Here is a list of the types of services/resources that may be available in your community. Knowing what kinds of services are available can ease the confusion and frustration many people experience.

For specific information about any particular service, speak with a case manager, physician or support group.

Support groups are a valuable resource offered within the community. They function to act as an information provider and to assist you in interacting with people experiencing similar problems.

*The contact person may change for some resources so information provided may only be a guide.*

## RESOURCES

### **INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES**

#### **South West Community Care Access Centre Information and Referral Line**

Owen Sound 519-371-2112/ 1-888-371-2112  
Walkerton 519-881-1181

#### **The Healthline**

<http://www.thehealthline.ca/>

#### **Grey Bruce Public Health Unit**

1-376-9420 1-800-263-3456

#### **Infoline**

1-800-665-9092 Ontario government information and referral service

#### **Telehealth**

1-866-797-0000

### **TRANSPORTATION**

#### **Volunteer Drivers**

#### **Home and Community Support Services of Grey Bruce**

Suite 104, 340 10<sup>th</sup> St. E.  
Owen Sound On N4K 6P7  
372-2091 or 1-800-267-3798  
[www.bmts.com/~hcss.gb](http://www.bmts.com/~hcss.gb)

#### **Disability Transit**

#### **Rotary Handivan**

Meaford  
519-538-5577

#### **Grey Bruce & Huron Disability Transportation Corporation**

Walkerton  
519-881-2504

#### **City of Owen Sound Mobility Bus**

519-376-7500

(Please note application for eligibility for specialized transit may be necessary.)

## **EMOTIONAL SUPPORT/GROUPS**

### **Grey Bruce Stroke Recovery Group**

519-376-2121 Ext. 2920

### **Brain Injury Association of Grey Bruce**

519-373-8555

## **GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS**

**Employment Insurance** 1-613-969-3350

**Ontario Works** 1-613-962-9562

**Ontario Disability Support Program**

1-613-962-9562

**Canada Disability Pension**-1-800-277-9914

**Revenue Canada**- for Medical Expense - Income Tax Deduction Information 1-800-959-8281

**Ontario Ministry of Health Info Line**

1-800-268-1154

for information regarding

Assistive Devices, Home Oxygen,

Ontario Health Insurance Plan, Ontario Drug Benefit

Program and Trillium Drug Program

## **COUNSELLING**

Brief Counselling Services (Quick access, short term)

519-376-2121

## **STROKE RESOURCES**

### **Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario – Grey Bruce Office**

795 1st Avenue E  
Owen Sound, ON N4K 2C6  
Telephone (519) 371-0083  
Fax (519) 371-8164

### **Grey Bruce District Stroke Centre**

Grey Bruce Health Services  
519-376-2121 Ext. 2920

### **Stroke Prevention Clinic**

Grey Bruce Health Services  
519-376-2121 Ext.2831

### **Prevent Stroke**

[www.preventstroke.ca](http://www.preventstroke.ca)

## **EQUIPMENT, PROSTHESES AND SUPPLIES**

### **Assistive Devices and Home Oxygen**

1-800-268-6021

### **Canadian Red Cross Loan Cupboard**

519-376-7579 (Physiotherapy/ Occupational Therapy referral needed for equipment)

### **Ontario March of Dimes**

#### **West Central Regional Office**

#### **Ontario March of Dimes**

100 - 2227 South Millway

Mississauga, ON

L5L 3R6

Tel: 905-607-3463

Toll-free: 1-877-427-6990

Fax: 905-607-9856

E-mail: [westcentralregion@dimes.on.ca](mailto:westcentralregion@dimes.on.ca)

For specific vendors, look in the Yellow pages under Hospital Equipment and Supplies

## **HOME AND CAREGIVER SUPPORT**

### **South West Community Care Access Centre Information and Referral Line**

Owen Sound 519-371-2112/ 1-888-371-2112  
Walkerton 519-881-1181

### **CarePartners**

519-364-0222 1-800-486-3488

### **Para-Med**

519-371-5044 1-800-267-5966

### **Canadian Red Cross Homemaker Service**

519-376-5373 1-800-265-3710

### **Victorian Order of Nurses**

519-376-5895 1-800-265-3138

### **Community Care Solutions**

519-376-7369 1-800-463-0454

### **Veterans Affairs**

1-866-522-2122

### **Home and Community Support Services of Grey Bruce Meals on Wheels and other home support programs**

519-372-2091 1-800-267-3798

## **PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLING SERVICES**

### **Canadian Mental Health Association Grey Bruce Branch**

519-371-3642

### **Distress Line of Grey Bruce**

519-371-8485 1-888-371-8485

### **Crisis Intervention Team**

1-888-525-0552

## **DEVELOPING A BACK-UP PLAN**

A back-up plan takes effect if for some reason you are unable to care for your loved one. Your back-up plan will help you think about what you can do when unexpected situations arise. A well thought out plan will help to decrease your stress and anxiety during a crisis and identify whom your supports are and how they can be reached. It will also allow you to consider details you may not have time to think of later.

A back up plan may be needed if:

- You become ill or injured
- Other responsibilities demand your attention
- You need a break from your caregiving obligations
- There is a personal emergency
- You are having difficulty managing needs
- You are unable to get to the care receiver due to unforeseen circumstances such as bad weather or car trouble.

You may only need a back-up plan for short periods of time but one may be required for longer periods of time.

Develop your plan with your loved one and discuss it with your emergency contacts and supports.

Write your plan on paper and include:

- Name of family doctor
- Name of Access Centre Case Manager
- Names and phone numbers of people who will be your emergency contacts
- Important facts that your emergency supports need to know – such as medications, allergies, special needs etc.
- A future date to review this plan with your emergency support team members

Putting this plan together can give you peace of mind.

**MY BACK-UP PLAN**

Name of family doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of case manager: \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency contacts and supports:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

**Important facts that my key supports need to know:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Date to review and update plan with key supports:** \_\_\_\_\_

# **SPIRITUALITY**

Spirituality is your belief in life system.

There are many reasons why, at this time, you may wish to review your spiritual resources. There are varying levels of emotional intensity from the of the initial stroke. As you progress through the different levels you may wish to reflect on your identity, connection to others and to the larger community. The following is a list of questions you may ask of yourself.

1. Is God important to me?
2. Have I ever considered myself a religious person?
3. Is it important to me to develop my spirituality?

The following is a list of resources you may wish to contact.

1. Your local clergy/church of choice or faith healer.
2. If in hospital, the hospital chaplain.
3. Grey Bruce Health Care Chaplaincy Council  
1-519-376-2121 Ext. 2889 [www.greybrucechaplaincy.ca](http://www.greybrucechaplaincy.ca)

Our spiritual and philosophical system of beliefs and thought provide the basis in our search for meaning and purpose.

Check your local yellow pages for a listing of the churches in your area.

# **SEXUALITY**

## **Check Sexual Intimacy pg. 52 of Let's Talk about Stroke**

Here are other resources:

Sex after Stroke - The Stroke Association [www.stroke.org.uk](http://www.stroke.org.uk) Go to search and input 'sex'.

Sexuality following Stroke [www.stroke.org.au/facts5.html](http://www.stroke.org.au/facts5.html)

Sex after Stroke American Heart Association [www.justmove.org](http://www.justmove.org) Go to search and Input 'sex'

Sexuality and Cerebrovascular Accident – Healthy Communities, Calgary Health Region

[www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/hecomm/sexual/disability.htm](http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/hecomm/sexual/disability.htm)

If you do not have access to the internet, visit your local Library or the Health Science Library at Grey Bruce Health Services to assist you in accessing this information.

Can't get to the library – Phone the Grey Bruce District Stroke Centre 519-376-2121 Ext. 2920 and they will access the information and send it to you.

## Driving After Stroke

### Check Driving p. 55 of Let's Talk about Stroke

Driving is a skill we often take for granted. It is a daily activity and a means of independence. Stroke and its effects often affect the ability to drive. Driving is not recommended for a month after the stroke occurs. During this time a physician should be monitoring the driver's conditions. If the stroke has caused a major change in medical condition then the doctor is obliged to notify the Ministry of Transport to suspend the license. Licensing can be reinstated by further medical testing for some individuals and by being assessed by an occupational therapist trained in driver rehabilitation.

There are usually two portions to the driver assessment:

- An indoor clinical test – Assesses physical function, perception and cognitive abilities; review of driving history; look at the type of vehicle you drive and may suggest modifications
- On-road test – physical ability to drive; reactions, decisions, judgments, perceptions and vision; driving behaviour and response to traffic.

Information from the assessment will be shared with your physician who will contact the Ministry of Transport.

### Drive Assessment Centres near Grey Bruce

Skill Builders Rehabilitation Centre	Barrie	705-727-0319
Custom Rehabilitative and Assessment Services	Barrie	888-464-3584
Driving Assessment Program, St. Joseph Hospital, Guelph		519-824-2620 Ext 4355
Drive Able in London Parkwood Hospital		519-685-4028
Forest City Occupational Therapy	, London	519-434-9094
Rehability Occupational Therapy, London		519-452-0046
Parkwood Hospital, London		519-685-4070
Custom Rehabilitative and Assessment Services Toronto		416-484-1526

DriveAble, St. Elizabeth Health Care Centre  
Toronto

416-398-1035

Kitchener-Waterloo Occupational Therapy Associates  
Driver Rehabilitation Services

519-575-0302

### **Driver's License and Disabled Parking Permit**

If you are applying for a disabled permit visit the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) Drivers & Vehicles License Issuing Office.

For the office closest to you call: 1-800-387-3445

### **Alternatives to Driving**

- Public transit
- Mobility Buses
- Volunteer Drivers
- Taxis

Check the resources section for transport information.

## **FINANCIAL CHALLENGES**

As a result of the health issues, there may have been a loss of income. You may also have needed to reduce your hours at work to be a caregiver. In addition, health situations can result in increased medical costs. Managing your resources at this time can become more critical.

Managing your finances may be a new experience for you. There are a few things you should consider as you take on this task. Ask yourself:

- What are my current sources of income?
- Is my loved one eligible for the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), Disability Pension and Family Benefits?
- Am I familiar with the full coverage of extended work benefits, group benefits plan, or private insurance?
- Am I aware of all the banking information that I will need such as account numbers, investment information, safety deposit boxes, mortgage/loan insurance and what the monthly payments are?
- Is there a Power of Attorney for Personal Care, Power of Attorney for Finances?
- Where is the will located?

As a means to assist families, there are sources of funding you may be eligible to receive for items such as special equipment, medical supplies, and home modifications. Talk to your care team.

The following pages are a list of possible resources you might need.

# HELPFUL CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS

## 1. Credit Counselling

- If you are struggling with finances Grey Bruce Non-Profit Credit Counselling can help.

Family Services Perth-Huron 1-800-268-0903

## 2. Credit Cards

- Call to review account status:

### **GAS CARDS**

ESSO	1-800-268-6287
Petro Canada	1-800-668-0220
Shell	1-800-661-1600

### **MISCELLANEOUS CARDS**

Sears	1-800-265-3675
The Bay	1-800-263-2599
Zellers	1-800-387-4540
Canadian Tire	1-800-263-0471
Zehrs	1-519-658-5131 ext.2298

### **MASTER CARDS**

Canada Trust	1-800-265-9710
Bank of Montreal	1-800-263-2263

### **VISA and Other**

Scotia Bank	1-800-387-6510
CIBC	1-800-465-4653
Royal Bank	1-800-563-8226
TD Canada Trust	1-800-268-9460
American Express	1-800-387-9700
Platinum Card	1-800-263-1616

### 3. Driver's License and Disabled Parking Permit

- ❑ If you are applying for a disabled permit visit the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) Drivers & Vehicles License Issuing Office.

For the office closest to you call: 1-800-387-3445

### 4. Income Security Programs (Federal)

**Forms/publications/applications listed below may be available at your local Government Information Centre, by calling Income Security Programs at 1-800-277-9914 or by visiting the Canada Customs & Revenue Agency website at <http://www.rc.gc.ca>**

- Marriage certificate;
- Death certificate;
- Proof of funeral expenses;
- Proof of earnings, past year's Income Tax or current pay slip of the deceased.

### 5. Insurance Policies

Investigate all policies. You may have benefits that you are not aware of or access to funds you might need.

- ❑ Notify the **life insurance** companies and ask to have a representative to see you or mail forms to you to be filled out.
- ❑ Check into your Mortgage and loan insurance.

### 6. Power of Attorney

- ❑ **The Power of Attorney Kit is available at your local Government Information Centre, legal stationery stores, your care team**

**OR**

Public Guardian and Trustee  
Family Social Justice Services Division  
MINISTRY OF ATTORNEY GENERAL  
595 Bay Street, 8th Floor  
Toronto, ON M5G 2M6  
Tel: (416) 314-2800, Fax: (416) 314-2716  
Toll-free in Ontario: 1-800-366-0335

- ❑ It is also advisable to consult a lawyer if there are any questions.

- ❑ It may be necessary to update your Power of Attorney (POA). The Power of Attorney Kit is often referred to as a “Living Will”.
- ❑ What is a power of attorney?

Power of attorney is a written legal document whereby one person (of sound mind) empowers another to carry out specified financial or personal care affairs on his or her behalf. It is often used if a person is physically incapacitated, out of the country, or facing mental incapacitation. A power of attorney terminates when the grantor dies.

### **Registering a Power of Attorney:**

- ❑ This is done in the general registration book at the nearest Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations Land Registry Office, see [LAND TITLES AND LAND REGISTRY OFFICES/PERSONAL PROPERTY SECURITY REGISTRATION](#) on the following pages.

### **Revoking a Power of Attorney:**

- ❑ The grantor has the right to cancel a power of attorney at any time, as long as he/she is capable. One must write the revocation down on paper, sign and date it, and have it witnessed. The lawyer, financial institution and any others aware of the power of attorney should then be informed.

## **7. Real Estate and Property Title Deeds**

### **Land Titles and Land Registry Offices/Personal Property Security Registration**

- ❑ Land Titles and Land Registry Offices are responsible for registering ownership of real property (e.g. deeds, mortgages).
- ❑ To register a specific property, a legal description is required - for it, contact the local property tax assessment office, see ONTARIO PROPERTY ASSESSMENT CORPORATION REGIONAL OFFICES
- ❑ The property tax assessment office will direct you to the applicable Land Registry or Land Titles office.
- ❑ To locate a land registry/land title/personal property security registration office, you may search the following web site: [www.cbs.gov.on.ca](http://www.cbs.gov.on.ca) or check with one of the offices listed below.

**Land Registry Office of Grey**  
**LRO #: 16**  
**Division Name: Grey**  
1555-16th Street East  
Owen Sound, ON N4K 5N3  
Telephone: 519-376-1637 \* Fax: 519-376-1639

**Land Registry Office of Bruce**  
**LRO #: 3**  
**Division Name: Bruce**  
203 Cayley St., Box 1690  
Walkerton, N0G 2V0  
Telephone: 519-881-2259 \* Fax: 519-881-2322

## **8. Social Insurance Number**

- The Social Insurance Number (SIN) is usually required for any of the Income Security Programs.

**Owen Sound Service Canada Centre**  
1450 1st Avenue West, Owen Sound, Ontario, N4K 6X7  
Parkway Plaza, Suite 1  
(519) 376-4280  
[ontario.inquiry@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:ontario.inquiry@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca)  
Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm  
Bruce and Grey Counties, Owen Sound.

## **9. Workplace Safety and Insurance Benefits (formerly WCB)**

- If the person qualifies for benefits from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board please notify them by calling 1-800-387-0750. Have the social insurance number available when the call is placed.

**The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board**  
Telephone: (416) 344-1000  
Toll free: 1-800-387-5540  
Ontario Toll free: 1-800-387-0750  
TTY: 1-800-387-0050  
Web site: [www.wsib.on.ca](http://www.wsib.on.ca)

## Books and Websites

See resources listed on pg. 70 of Let's Talk about Stroke

Heart and Stroke Foundation [www.heartandstroke.on.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.on.ca)

- Information on stroke causes, stroke treatment, blood pressure, nutrition, activity, smoking, diabetes, stroke statistics and research

Prevent Stroke [www.preventstroke.ca](http://www.preventstroke.ca)

- Information on how to prevent a stroke. Locator of services in your area e.g. smoking cessation programs, stroke prevention clinics

Grey Bruce Health Unit [www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca](http://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca)

- Information and links for changing your stroke risk factors: smoking, alcohol, nutrition and inactivity.

Stroke Recovery Network [www.dimes.on.ca](http://www.dimes.on.ca)

- Information on stroke recovery. Locator of support programs near you.

The Healthline [www.thehealthline.ca](http://www.thehealthline.ca)

- Health services information in Southwestern Ontario

### Books:

1. Stroke. A Comprehensive Guide to “Brain Attacks” by Dr. Vladimir Hachinski and Larissa Hachinski, Canadian Medical Association; 2003 ISBN1-55263-125-7  
GBL
2. Stroke and Family: A New Guide, 1<sup>st</sup> edition by Dr. Joel Stein, Harvard University Press; 2004 ISBN: 10:067401667X GBL
3. Stroke For Dummies, 1<sup>st</sup> edition by Dr. John Marler, Wiley Publishing; 2005 ISBN-10: 0764572016 GBL
4. Brain Attack. The Journey Back. An Unique Collection of Creative Writing about Stroke Recovery by Liz Pearl, KOPE Associates; 2005 ISBN 0-9738040-1-7
5. The Stroke Book: A Guide to Life after Stroke for Survivors and Those who Care for Them by June Bierman. 2005

6. What You Really Need to Know about Caring for Someone After a Stroke by Rob Buchman. 2000
7. The Canadian Family Guide to Stroke: Prevention, Treatment and recovery. Heart and Stroke Foundation. 1996
8. The Cardiovascular Cure: How to Strengthen your Self-Defence against Heart Attack and Stroke by John P. Cooks. 2002
9. Living with Stroke: A Guide for Families by Richard C. Senelick. 1999

GBL – This symbol means these books are available in every public library in Grey and Bruce Counties. For other books inquire about interlibrary loans.