

Advocate for Stroke Services



**Irish Heart
Foundation**

Why do we need political action on Stroke Services?

If you have a stroke in Ireland today, you have a greater chance of survival than ever before. But the dearth of rehabilitation service means you face being effectively abandoned to look after yourself after discharge from hospital.

With more than 60,000 stroke survivors in Ireland, we are calling for up-front investment by the State in rehabilitation and community services that will save lives, improve the quality of life of stroke survivors and cut health costs.

Modest additional investment in hospital and community services would have a life changing impact on many people.

Lobbying politicians

Your local politician represents your needs and those of the community in the Dáil. He/she will want to know about the issues which concern you and the challenges in your area.

Telling your politician your personal story of stroke survival and providing them with some key facts about stroke in Ireland (see overleaf) and specifically the challenges facing stroke survivors in your locality, is essential to raising the issue in the Oireachtas. Your local politician has the power to introduce legislation, discuss government policy or ask questions to the Minister of Health and An Taoiseach.

Facts about stroke in Ireland

Each year around 1,800 people die from stroke. One in five people will have a stroke in their lifetime.

One in four people who have a stroke are under 65; an increase of 26% between 2008 and 2016. Services have not adapted to meet this younger demographic resulting in unmet needs and inappropriate services.

Three out of four rehabilitation hospitals are unable to provide stroke patients with the recommended level of therapy they need.

Half of all stroke survivors could benefit from a potentially better outcome with a rehabilitation programme called Early Supported Discharge. This could also free up 24,000 bed days a year to relieve overcrowding in acute hospitals.

ESRI research shows the State spends up to €414 million on nursing home care for stroke survivors and less than €7 million on the community rehabilitation that can keep them living in their homes.

It is estimated that stroke rates will increase by 59% by 2030.

Acting FAST saves lives – call 999 if you suspect someone is affected by stroke.