



**HOPE
HEALTHCARE**

media release

*For immediate use
Basis for article:*

Helping local residents deal with a stroke Braeside Hospital initiative

Every year in Australia over 40,000 people have a stroke and at any one time it is estimated that there are between 200,000 and 250,000 people living with disabilities due to stroke.

The team from Braeside Hospital's rehabilitation unit have fostered the establishment of a local support group to provide support, information, health education and assistance not only to people dealing with the after-effects of a stroke but also their families.

Fairfield Stroke By Stroke (SBS) Recovery Group held their inaugural monthly meeting in February 2002. Fairfield RSL is generously providing the venue and able-bodied transport with the local community transport organisation Wheelabout providing transport for the disabled.

A total of 23 attended the last meeting in April. Amongst those participating is 72-year old local resident Valma Dowd who had a right-side stroke in November 2000 and spent some three and a half months in Braeside Hospital undergoing rehabilitation before returning home to cope with the day-to-day difficulties of living with a stroke. Val has found the Fairfield Stroke by Stroke Recovery Group a great help ranging; "from talking to others with a stroke, to the information we get."

While the risk of stroke is significantly increased with age, 25 percent of people who have a stroke are under the age of 65. Around one third of people who have a stroke will recover and change their lifestyle to reduce the risk of a further stroke. Around one third must learn to live with a range of disabilities.

For more information about the Fairfield SBS Group, please contact Audrey Charlton, Social Worker at Braeside Hospital on 9616 8610.

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