



CLUB NEWS

Summer 2022

**STROKE RECOVERY
ASSOCIATION NSW**

FROM MICHELLE'S DESK

Hi all,

This time last year we began in a very hopeful frame of mind thinking we had seen the last of the dreaded COVID-19. Little did we know that just when we thought we were out of the woods, the Omicron variant would rear its ugly head. There are so many ups and downs with this pandemic, it becomes quite difficult for us to plan with the expectation that we will be able to go ahead. However, we are ever hopeful that we will return to some kind of normalcy at the Association this year.

2022 is the Association's 45th birthday year, and we WILL celebrate, as it is a great achievement for all those involved with the Association, past and present. For our 45th year, we are looking for a slogan to promote the Association's events in our anniversary year. I have pitched the slogan "Fit and firing after 45 years", however, my colleagues were not keen. So the staff at the Association have decided to open it up for members to suggest their best slogan for the Association celebrating 45 years of operation. I know we have some very clever members who are better at developing an advertising slogan than myself. There will be a small prize for the winner and acknowledgement of your brilliance at all our events. See the back page of the newsletter for the competition details.

Staff have started advertising the Association's events to be held throughout the year. I want to encourage all of our Clubs/groups/choirs to organise something in your local area for your members to attend as well. In previous years, Clubs/groups/choirs have been successful in organising morning teas during Stroke Awareness Week, where they invite the local rehab team and potential future members to meet the Club/group/choir.

On a very good news front, we welcome Maria Nguyen to the team. Maria will be taking up the role of the Stroke Project Officer, and will be visiting all the Clubs/groups/choirs to provide a training program which aims to connect members with online services. You can learn more about Maria on page 4 of this newsletter.

In addition to this, we have been notified that our tender to the NSW government for an extension of the Disability Advocacy Funding has been successful. I am thrilled to announce they have almost doubled our previous funding and we will now receive \$150,000 a year from this funding program until 30th June 2024. This will allow the Association to employ a further staff member to develop the Clubs/groups/choirs around NSW. This is the most significant increase in the Association's funding base since the introduction of the funding from NSW Health in 2001, providing us with more money and staff certainty until June 2024.

Kind regards,

Michelle Sharkey
Chief Executive Officer



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The Stroke Recovery Association welcomes contributions to *Club News*, especially for our 'Around the Clubs' section. Submissions should be addressed to:

**PO Box 3401
PUTNEY NSW 2112**

Or emailed to
officemanager@strokensw.org.au

Please note that contributions may be edited, either to reduce size, to assist with readability, or for legal/liability reasons. Original photos sent through the post will be returned ASAP.

To include something in our next Club News, please send it into our office before **20 April 2022**.

NDIS SCAM ALERT

Most of us have experienced a drastic rise in spam phone calls and text messages over the past year, designed to feed on our anxieties about missing a package delivery or getting in trouble with the ATO. Sadly, we've also all become familiar with hearing about fraudulent or abusive NDIS providers.

The team at Physical Disability Council NSW (PDCN) have recently noticed another concerning trend – more and more Facebook ads (otherwise known as sponsored posts), that at first glance seem to be by NDIS providers, turn out to be extremely dodgy or outright fraudulent on closer inspection. Getting involved with these shady operators poses a serious risk to people with disability and their families, and we all need to know what to look for in order to protect ourselves. So, we thought it would be helpful to provide a simple checklist of things to watch out for before you contact or engage in any way with someone on Facebook who appears to be an NDIS provider. If you notice any combination of the following warning signs, please use caution.



We'll break this list into things to look for on Facebook itself, and then what to look for if you end up on a provider's website.

If you're on Facebook, bear these points in mind:

- NDIS providers are not allowed to use the word 'NDIS' in their business name. If you see an ad from a provider doing this it is an instant signal to steer clear. (Note that providers *are* allowed to use the 'I/we heart NDIS' and 'I/we support NDIS' logos on their website.)
- The way Facebook page owners respond to questions is also important. If you notice that people ask questions which are ignored, or the people running the page request a lot of personal information or a direct message in order to answer simple questions (such as 'What services do you provide?') then this is a warning sign. At best, their customer service is lacking, and at worst, they are trying to pull you in.
- The vast majority of legitimate NDIS providers will have a proper website with information about their services, as well as a Facebook page. If they only have a Facebook page, or you can't find a link to a real website, consider moving on.
- Be wary if you notice that the same people are liking and responding to all the posts on a provider's Facebook page. It may be a sign that they're trying to pump up their apparent social media engagement rates and appear more popular than they really are.

If you find yourself looking at a provider's website to find out more, bear these points in mind:

- As noted above, NDIS providers are not allowed to use the word 'NDIS' in their business name, and neither are they allowed to use it in their website domain name. If you see an ad from a provider doing this, it is an instant signal to close the webpage.
- If information seems to be missing from website pages, be careful. This can be a trick to get you to contact them for more information, giving them an opportunity to reel you in. It might also just be due to carelessness on their part – we've noticed websites which feature a lot of placeholder text, such as the *lorem ipsum* text, which is commonly used by website developers.
- Sometimes the text on a website is very vague, uses an unnecessary amount of jargon or 'inspirational' quotes in an attempt to sound convincing. Be careful if you notice this.
- All NDIS providers should have their policies and procedures readily available to view on their website.
- Check for an ABN on the website. You can also check whether they say they are a registered NDIS provider; they don't *have* to state whether they're a registered provider or not, but it's a useful guide.

NDIS SCAM ALERT

- If the website contact page forces you to disclose an unnecessary amount of information to receive answers to simple questions, or if your questions remain unanswered, do not engage with them further.

If you want to act on what you suspect may be an ad by a fraudulent operator, reporting the ad to Facebook may not be the most effective way to get the issue resolved. Similarly, don't accuse people running a Facebook page of anything untoward, as it risks landing you in hot water and is unlikely to help. We recommend that you use the regulatory bodies within Australia to report your suspicions.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission run a Scamwatch service where you can report these issues. Find it at www.scamwatch.gov.au/report-a-scam.

You can also report suspicious behaviour directly to the NDIS Fraud Reporting and Scams Helpline by calling 1800 650 717 or emailing fraudreporting@ndis.gov.au. Find out more here www.ndis.gov.au/contact/report-suspicious-behaviour.

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission also provides an avenue to complain about NDIS providers; you can find out more about making a complaint at their website www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about/complaints.



This article was reproduced with permission from the Physical Disability Council of NSW (PDCN) (<https://www.pdcnsw.org.au/article/watch-out-for-ndis-scam-ads-on-facebook/>).

Membership Reminder

Club Membership renewals are now overdue at the Association. If you have not paid your membership in the latter part of 2021, or in 2022, you are not a current financial member of the Association. Club members are reminded that it is a requirement that you must be a financial member of the Association to attend the Stroke Recovery Clubs/groups/choirs and be covered by the Association's insurances.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, the Board of the Association has continued the reduced membership fees again for the 2022 period.

Membership fees for 2022 are as follows:

Club Membership:

Single	\$10.00
Family	\$12.50

The Board has requested that with this notification we stress that the work of the Association is ongoing. Over the past 12 months, we have focused on increasing our online groups, managing the COVID-19 situation and the reopening of Clubs/groups/choirs since the lifting of restrictions, as well as applying for funding from various government bodies. Although we have reduced the fees for the 2022 period, our administrative costs remain unchanged. We would ask that any member who is able to pay the normal amount for membership, or add a small donation to the form, considers doing so.

If you are unsure if your membership is up to date, please contact the Association on 1300 650 594 or you can ask your Club/group/choir Secretary for more information.

You can send your membership fees to the Association by mail (PO Box 3401, Putney NSW 2112), via email (admin@strokensw.org.au) or call 1300 650 594.

Stroke Project Officer

Hi everyone,

My name is Maria Nguyen, and I am very excited to join the team here at Stroke Recovery Association NSW as the Stroke Project Officer. As part of my role, I will be travelling to Stroke Recovery Clubs/groups/choirs around the state to deliver the Stroke Connectivity Program, which aims to improve online connectivity for our members. I look forward to being out and about to meet everyone in person, hearing your input as to how we can better connect and build stronger communities.

My career and passion has always focused on community development and working with local communities to increase capacity. I started out in the education sector for young people, before moving more towards child protection and human rights.

I have a Bachelor of Humanitarian and Community Development, with focus on human rights and peace. I hope to be able to use my skills to support you and the Stroke community through collaborations and capacity building.

As you can tell from my last name, I am Vietnamese. I was born in Ho Chi Minh City, but was raised and have always lived in Sydney.

I am excited to travel and explore all the beauty that greater NSW has to offer. I am a true believer that travel and experiences change us and promote growth from within. I love travel and hope to do more in the future, both overseas and interstate.

Looking forward to meeting you all at your local Club/group/choir soon!



Maria Nguyen
Stroke Project Officer

Reopening of Stroke Recovery Clubs/groups/choirs

We are very excited for our Stroke Recovery Clubs/groups/choirs to recommence meeting face to face this year! To keep all of our members best protected against COVID-19 at our Clubs/groups/choirs, please remember to follow the COVID-19 safety measures that have been put in place by the Board of the Association and NSW Health.

When attending a Stroke Recovery Club/group/choir, please remember:

- Do not attend if you are feeling unwell in any way, including fever (37.5 degrees Celsius or higher), cough, sore throat, shortness of breath (difficulty breathing), runny nose, loss of taste, or loss of smell.
- To wear a mask in indoor settings (except for when eating or drinking).
- Frequently wash or sanitise your hands.
- Maintain social distancing between other members where possible.
- You are required to have a current financial membership with the Association, so that you are protected by our insurances and we can contact you if there are any issues with the Club/group/choir.
- You must be either vaccinated against COVID-19 by an ATAGI approved vaccination according to the Public Health Order (No. 3) 2021 issued by NSW Health, or provide a negative PCR test in the 48 hours prior to attending a meeting.

If you have any questions about the above guidelines, please contact the Association on 1300 650 594.

For the latest and most reliable information relating to COVID-19, visit NSW Health at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19>.

Around the Clubs

Tamworth Stroke Recovery Club

Our Tamworth Stroke Recovery Club has been keeping busy during the holiday period!

In November, the Club hosted a mystery bus trip for their members! With 17 members in attendance, they had a wonderful day at Boggabri, enjoying some morning tea, shopping and lunch.

In December, the Club had a great stall at their local Bunnings community Christmas markets. Also in December, the Club got together for their Christmas party, which included a wonderful luncheon, followed by some Christmas trivia questions.

The Tamworth Stroke Recovery Club meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from 10am - 12pm.

For more information about the Tamworth Stroke Recovery Club, contact the Association on **1300 650 594**.



Blacktown Stroke Recovery Club

The Blacktown Stroke Recovery Club were all smiles when they were able to start meeting face to face again! Members were treated to a lovely lunch at their meeting location, and had a great time catching up with each other after such a long time without being able to meet. One of the members, Janny, was very excited to tell the Club that she is now a great grandmother, with 13 grandchildren! The Club also wished one of their members, and Life Member of the Association, Mrs Pauline Hodge, a Happy 99th Birthday!

The Club meet at the Blacktown Workers Club every Monday between 9.30am - 12pm, and have regular outings to different spots in their local community.

For more information about the Blacktown Stroke Recovery Club, contact the Stroke Recovery Association on **1300 650 594**.



Around the Clubs

Albury-Wodonga Stroke Recovery Club

The Albury-Wodonga Stroke Recovery Club held their Christmas party on 25th November 2021. They held their Annual General Meeting at the beginning of the day, which then led into their Christmas activities.

There were lots of laughs whilst the members played a number of different games, but the favourite of the day was the challenge with the toilet rolls. Being able to go home with a pile of folded toilet paper also got many smiles. Linda was a great competitor winning two of the games. Trivia was a success at making people think about different aspects of Christmas, with two tables winning. The members enjoyed a delicious roast meal, followed by plum pudding.

The Club President, Margaret, gave everyone a Christmas gift, a laminated poem about smiles and a Red Cross Tin to help us all should a first aid situation arise.

It was great for members to be able to finally meet again in person after all the COVID lockdowns and five of our meetings being cancelled. Everyone was able to have a fun and enjoyable time while also being COVID safe.

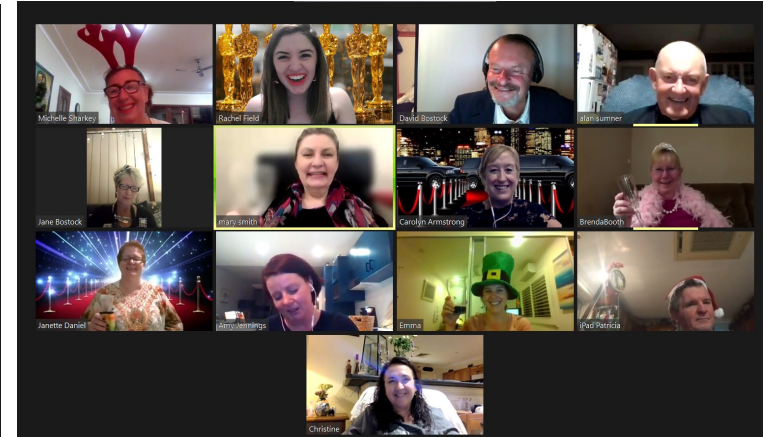


Online Stroke Support Groups

Our Online Stroke Support groups are back up and running for 2022! With a range of activities suitable for every member, now is a great time to jump into the new year by making some new friends and memories online. We love these photos of our Online groups that were taken at the end of 2021.

Access to the online groups is included in your Association membership fee and there are over 20 online group sessions run each month including, but not limited to: a gardening group, movie club, sip and nibbles nights, carers' group, online choir, trivia groups, Aphasia-focused groups, and guest speakers.

For more information about our online Stroke support groups, or to join a session, contact the Association on 1300 650 594 or email admin@strokensw.org.au.



Around the Clubs

Woy Woy Stroke Recovery Club

The staff of the Association would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge long time volunteers Noel Higgs and Helen Anderson from the Woy Woy Stroke Recovery Club who have recently resigned. Both Helen and Noel have provided exceptional leadership to the Woy Woy Club for many, many years and their services will be sorely missed by us here at the Association and the Woy Woy members as well.

Their dedication and commitment to the Club has meant that for years they have led and guided one of the largest Stroke Recovery Clubs that operates under our Association. Their dedication and friendship to members has meant that many people who have been impacted by Stroke have received enormous support to find their way forward in the Stroke journey, in a supportive community of friends, leading to a much better quality of life. The Woy Woy outings have been great fun and their Christmas parties are legendary.

Thank you, Noel and Helen, for all the work that you have done and your support of the Association over the years.

In Memoriam

Walter 'Wally' Harrison - *Woy Woy Stroke Recovery Club*



It is with a great deal of sadness that we announce that a much loved and respected member of the Woy Woy Stroke Recovery Club, Walter 'Wally' Harrison, has passed away. Walter passed away on 25th November 2021 at BlueWave Living, Woy Woy, where he had only just been admitted into care. After experiencing a Stroke in 2007, and prostate cancer in later years, his health had deteriorated.

Walter and his lovely wife, Norma, joined the Woy Woy Stroke Recovery Club in May 2008, and in that time, they both became totally involved in every activity at the Club. Walter always turned up in his colourful Hawaiian shirts. Walter was apprehensive at first, but soon opened up to become a very much admired and valued member. He looked forward to the bus trips, hydrotherapy, Sunday luncheons and meetings. He was a fountain of information about places we visited on our monthly bus trips. He knew so much about the history of the Central Coast, and on the bus trips, his three favourite places to visit were Catherine Hill Bay, Wangi Wangi and Dora

Creek. He always made sure these were put on the list to visit each year! Even if he had to have a snooze on the way home as always - he had a three schooner limit! The late Colin Field was an obliging drinking mate! He always would tell Helen (or as he would call her 'boss lady') that he always had another trip to Burren Junction NSW to go on.

You would always find Wally in his blue overalls, tinkering with his mowers! Walter loved camping, and travelling all over Australia with Norma and their dogs.

Walter's funeral was held on Monday 6th December at Castlebrook Memorial Gardens, Rouse Hill in the family tradition. Walter's family organised a celebration of his life, to include the Club, which was held at Ettalong Bowling Club on the same day. Members of the Woy Woy Stroke Recovery Club were able to pay their respects to Walter, and of course to Norma.



Elsie Hanchard - Ulladulla Stroke Recovery Club



The Ulladulla Stroke Recovery Club was saddened to hear of the passing of one of their long term members and volunteers, Elsie Hanchard.

Elsie was a very special lady, whose contribution to the Ulladulla Stroke Recovery Club was very much appreciated over the years. The members of the Club always enjoyed her baked goods, and acknowledged her hard work organising raffle prizes for the Club each month for many, many years.

Elsie passed away on 30th December 2021. She will be greatly missed by all of the members at the Ulladulla Stroke

Recovery Club. All of the members thoughts and prayers go out to Keith and family.

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Memorial Gifts & Bequests

A bequest is a gift in your will. If you would like to consider how you can include the Stroke Recovery Association as a beneficiary in your will, please contact the office on (02) 9807 6422 or 1300 650 594, or email info@strokensw.org.au.

We can also supply 'In Memoriam' donation brochures with pre-paid addressed envelopes for use at memorial services.

Connect with us Online!



www.strokensw.org.au



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