

## Manitoba Stroke Strategy

### “Supporting Prevention and Extending Access to Care”

More than 300,000 Canadians are living with disabilities or impairments because of stroke. In Manitoba, approximately seven people a day will suffer a stroke. Stroke has a significant and lasting impact on individuals, their families and the health care system.

Stroke is the leading cause of disability and the third leading cause of death. Most strokes are preventable through the early identification of risk factors and lifestyle changes. Knowing the warning signs and symptoms of stroke and accessing care when stroke symptoms are recognized has significant impact on your health outcome. The Manitoba Health Stroke Strategy website provides information and resources on how you can reduce your risk for stroke, how you can identify the warning signs and symptoms of stroke, and what Manitoba is doing to improve stroke care for all Manitobans.

Go to our website and see the [Frequently Asked Questions and Answers on Stroke](#).

#### **What is the Manitoba Stroke Strategy?**

The Manitoba Stroke Strategy five-year plan builds on a framework of health system pillars: primary health care, health system innovation and access to care. The goals of the strategy are to improve health outcomes and support appropriate and effective stroke health services by:

- improving public awareness of the warning signs of stroke
- strengthening the identification and management of risk factors for stroke through family physicians and primary health care clinics
- developing innovative health systems for distance delivery of health care services
- providing access to specialized services such as neurology and rehabilitation

The Manitoba Stroke Strategy provides a roadmap for arranging existing and future stroke prevention and care services to meet *The Canadian Best Practice Recommendations for Stroke Care*. Manitoba Health provides leadership, education and funding resources to the regional health authorities and planning and development for innovative distance health care strategies such as telestroke, telemedicine and emergency land and air ambulances to improve patient access to stroke expertise and care.

#### **What are the priorities for the Manitoba Stroke Strategy?**

The first year (2011/12) will focus on raising public and provider awareness of stroke risk factors and the warning signs of stroke, implementing province-wide emergency medical service guidelines, educating health care providers in the acute inpatient and rehabilitative

environments on best practices in stroke care. Also determining the requirements for improved and enhanced infrastructure and resourcing will be necessary to implement the remainder of the five-year plan. Subsequent years will focus on implementation of infrastructure and resourcing improvements, development of associated technology such as telestroke, development and implementation of innovative models of stroke care, and building capacity for the provision of specialized stroke expertise to northern Manitoba.

**What are the Canadian Best Practice Recommendations for Stroke?**

*The Canadian Best Practice Recommendations for Stroke Care* was funded by the Canadian Stroke Network and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada and was first issued in 2006. These recommendations updated in 2010, presents high-quality, evidence-based stroke care recommendations developed by a team of researchers, specialists and clinicians to support health care professionals in all disciplines such as nurses, physicians and rehabilitation therapists. Implementation of these recommendations is expected to contribute to improved patient outcomes for overall recovery of strokes.

*The Canadian Best Practice Recommendations for Stroke Care (2010)* are organized into seven sections that reflect a logical flow from public awareness and prevention of first and recurrent stroke to immediate recognition and management, ongoing acute management, rehabilitation, community reintegration and collaboration across care transitions. The best practices recommendations address the need to help people move smoothly through the stroke continuum, from symptom onset to diagnosis, treatment, management and recovery.



**Going Forward**

Manitoba Health and the regional health authorities are working together to plan and develop acute stroke care sites to extend access to specialized stroke care throughout the province. The five-year Manitoba Stroke Strategy requires a staged approach as distance infrastructures are developed and the associated technology and human resources are addressed to implement an innovative model of stroke care for the province.