

Providing survivors of stroke with guidance about sex and intimacy after stroke

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Survivors of stroke have told researchers that they want information about resuming intimate relationships as part of their recovery, but rarely receive it, while only a quarter of stroke clinicians say they feel well

equipped to give the right guidance.

The research was conducted by Auckland City Hospital occupational therapist Sian McGee and asked 41 patients between the ages of 36 and 90 about their preference for receiving information about sex and intimacy.

Ms McGee's findings are being shared in Christchurch this week at the [31st Annual Scientific Meeting of the Stroke Society of Australasia 2022](#), which is being attended by international stroke experts.

The study is the first of its kind in New Zealand.

It found that clinicians need support in broaching the subject with patients, and that most of the patients surveyed expected to their doctors to speak to them about the subject of sex.

Ms. McGee says the study highlights how an important part of stroke recovery may be missed due to the discomfort around the subject of sex.

"Patients of all ages want this information but are almost never given it," she said.

"We need to remember that [stroke recovery](#) is not just about [physical therapy](#). Recovery needs to be considered holistically—[survivors](#) are intent on resuming their normal lives as quickly and as best they can, we need to ensure they are given opportunities throughout their journey to receive all of the advice and support to do that."

Stroke is a leading cause of disability in both New Zealand and Australia, impacting almost 40,000 people each year. It is the leading cause of adult disability in both countries.

Provided by Stroke Foundation

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