1 September 2017

Think FAST and act fast this Stroke Week

Residents are urged to know the signs and think FAST this Stroke Week (4-10 September 2017).

Just by knowing the signs of stroke makes you part of the F.A.S.T. Response Team:

- **Face** - Check their face. Has their mouth drooped?
- **Arms** - Can they lift both arms?
- **Speech** - Is their speech slurred? Do they understand you?
- **Time** - Time is critical. If you see any of these symptoms Act FAST and call 000

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service Senior Medical Officer Dr Rohan Grimley said stroke was one of Australia’s biggest killers and a leading cause of disability.

“This National Stroke Week you are encouraged to take the challenge to be aware, live healthy and get checked,” he said.

Dr Grimley said one in six people would have a stroke in their lifetime.

“That’s someone’s mother, father, partner, sibling, child, relative or friend,” Dr Grimley said.

“Stroke is called a silent killer because it attacks suddenly and unexpectedly. People often don’t recognise the signs of stroke, and don’t seek help quickly enough. But the good news is that many of these strokes can be prevented, and very effective treatments are now available for some if you seek help urgently,” he said.

Dr Grimley said it was important that everyone was aware of the warning signs of stroke as time was vital in the treatment of strokes.

“Once you have had a stroke, you can still be cured if we can open the blocked artery rapidly. In the past, this could only be done with thrombolysis (clot busting treatment) with the drug rtPA. A new technology - endovascular clot retrieval - is now available where skilled interventional neuroradiologists pull the clot directly out of the artery in the brain. This has recently been proven to be highly effective when the stroke is caused by blockage of an artery in the base of the brain.” Dr Grimley said. For it to work, though, we have to do the scans, and then send you to Brisbane so the procedure can commence within within six hours of onset. This is why it is so important to get to the hospital urgently,” he said.

These are exciting times for stroke with new, much more effective treatments.

For more information visit [www.strokefoundation.org.au](http://www.strokefoundation.org.au)
ENDS

Media contact: Naomi Ford | 5202 0085

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