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28/04/25

Milly Southworth

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**From:** Kirsty Jones <kirsty.jones@stroke.org.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 April 2025 11:42  
**To:** Undisclosed recipients:  
**Subject:** Stroke Association | Cornwall Services Update  
**Attachments:** Stroke Association Cornwall Services.April 2025 Update.pdf; Stroke Association Cornwall Services.Truro College Stroke Awareness raising session reflections.pdf

Hello

We are pleased to attach the latest **Stroke Association Cornwall Services update**. This update includes news from the **Cornwall Emotional Support Service** and the **Cornwall Key Worker Service**. It is full of information about the services and the support that are available from the Stroke Association for stroke survivors and their carers, living in Cornwall.

We have also attached an update about a **stroke awareness raising session** which the Cornwall Services team and health and community partners delivered for Truro College students undertaking a Health and Social Care qualification in February. The reflections have been collated by **Jo Garbett, Engagement Officer (South West)**.

If you would rather not receive these quarterly updates please do let us know and we will remove your details from our circulation list.

Please feel free to circulate our update within your own teams and networks.

With best wishes

**The Stroke Association Cornwall Services teams**



Click the image above for more information.

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## April 2025 Update – Cornwall Services

It is officially Spring and we hope that you have been able to enjoy some time in the sunshine!

## News from the Cornwall Emotional Support Service

### European Life After Stroke Forum

The success of the Cornwall Emotional Support Service in achieving a significant improvement in depression and anxiety levels for stroke survivors supported, was showcased at a major stroke event in Prague in March. The **European Life After Stroke Forum** brings together and shares research, best practice and the experience of stroke survivors from across Europe.

Fern McClusky, the Cornwall Emotional Support Service Manager created a poster outlining why the service was so needed by stroke survivors in Cornwall and how they had been helped since the service launched in April 2022. Cornwall has the highest prevalence of stroke in the country, in part due to its rural nature and lack of resources. Many stroke survivors find themselves unable to leave their homes after a stroke. **Home visits are prioritised** by the service and in 2023/24, **505 home visits** were made to those who would not otherwise have been able to access the service because of the life-altering effects of stroke.



Fern's poster was "**highly commended**" and here she is with the poster displaying its purple rosette.

It's great to see the amazing work of the Cornwall Emotional Support Service team being recognised at international level and it was a brilliant way to celebrate the service's **third birthday**!

### What difference has the Cornwall Emotional Support Service made?

April 1st marks the **third birthday** for the Cornwall Emotional Support Service. Since the service began in 2022, **738 referrals for counselling support** for local stroke survivors and their family members or carers have been made.



In 2024/25 the referral rate has increased by 12% with 300 referrals made. The majority of the referrals have been made by NHS colleagues working in the **Integrated Community Stroke Service (ICSS)**. The **key emotional support needs** identified at the point of referral have included: **emotionalism, communication, social interaction, fatigue and independence**.

It is clear that as the Cornwall Emotional Support Service moves into its fourth year of delivery that counselling it is a much needed support service for local stroke survivors, their families and their carers.

### **Feedback received from those accessing the Cornwall Emotional Support Service between January and March 2025**

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"The counselling has really helped me to explore feelings that I wasn't allowing myself to feel before. It's allowing me space to process. I am now allowing myself to let go of certain things and to begin the process of accepting the change in my life"

**Feedback from a stroke survivor**

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"I always feel a bit more me when I've seen you."

**Feedback from a stroke survivor**

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"It has been good talking today, thank you. I wasn't sure what to expect from this, but it has felt helpful saying this all out loud and my head feels clearer now."

**Feedback from a stroke survivor**

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"I have found the counselling sessions really helpful and as a result of them I have found ways to make changes in my life that have allowed me to feel more positive."

**Feedback from a stroke survivor**

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### **Announcement - goodbye to Simon and Kirsty**

The launch of our Cornwall Emotional Support Service in 2022 marked a significant step towards enhancing mental health support in our community. This initiative was originally designed as a five-year program, with three years of dedicated counselling services and five years of community engagement work.

In 2023, we were able to extend the counselling services into a fourth year, allowing us to continue supporting individuals until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026. However, as we entered this year, we faced the need to restructure our service to ensure that we can sustain funding for a potential fifth year of counselling.

To achieve this, we have had to make the difficult choice to reduce our project engagement hours. As a result, at the end of April our valued Project Engagement Officers Simon and Kirsty will be leaving us. We deeply appreciate their

contributions and commitment to the service, and we understand that this news may be disappointing for those who have worked closely with them.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to providing essential support for stroke survivors and their families and we will continue to explore ways to enhance our services for everyone in need.

## News from the Cornwall Key Worker service

### What difference has the Cornwall Key Worker Service made?

Since January 2025, the Cornwall Key Worker service has received **34 referrals**, the majority have been made by NHS colleagues working in the **Integrated Community Stroke Service (ICSS)**.

**Benefits and Finance, Understanding of Stroke and Emotional Wellbeing and Health** have been the main identified needs for the stroke survivors referred to the service.

Since January 2025, the **Cornwall Key Worker Service** has also provided **£1,056.95** in **hardship grants for food or clothing support** for those stroke survivors and families in financial difficulty.

### Feedback received from those accessing the Cornwall Key Worker service between January and March 2025

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"At my six month review I mentioned you by name as one of the most kind, informative and helpful people I met that really helped me. Thank you so much".

#### **Feedback from a stroke survivor**

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"You are the only person through my stroke journey that has made me feel confident and able to do things for myself. And thank you for calling today, you have really raised my spirits and have made me feel so happy. I feel like me again."

#### **Feedback from a stroke survivor**

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A **stroke survivor** shared on a home visit that while attending a Stroke Association online webinar he wrote an introduction as he was worried about his aphasia. He asked me to read it, he explained he had received invaluable support from the Stroke Association and that his support worker was a ray of sunshine that was keeping him motivated.

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"I just wanted to email and send you a big thank you for all your support with this chap. They found your session this week really helpful and trialled having savoury snacks overnight rather than chocolate with good effect! It is wonderful having your

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support, the patients are speaking very highly of your service." **Feedback from a Stroke Specialist Occupational Therapist**

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### **Online communication workshop**

In March, the Cornwall Key Worker service team launched a 6 week, weekly online **communication workshop for stroke survivors with aphasia.**

Each week **different topics are suggested as the focus** of the session and have included: **Communication, Hobbies, Travel, and The Senses.** Games and conversation starters have been used within the sessions but **the stroke survivors attending really like to chat to each other.** The weekly workshop is an opportunity for those attending to be vulnerable and to **practice talking in a safe space,** as well as a way to **increase confidence in their communication** and to **share their lived experience.**

**Feedback** has already been **really positive;**

"It is really lovely to speak with people that know what I am going through. You have picked a good bunch of people - we all get on well"

"The support that I have received from the Stroke Association has been amazing and I am very grateful"

"Absolutely fantastic. I love the way you have topics, but that we are able to chat and connect with each other. Conversation just flows and everyone listens to each other. Your call is my favourite call of the week."

For more information please email: [cornwallstrokesupport@stroke.org.uk](mailto:cornwallstrokesupport@stroke.org.uk)

### **Stroke Association news**

#### **Request for testimonials from our health partners.**

Surviving a stroke is just the start of a long recovery journey. The Stroke Association supports stroke survivors and their families to find the strength they need to find their way back to life.

Testimonials from the professionals we work with are really important. They can help to demonstrate how the support that we provide benefits their patients throughout their recovery journey. We are asking our health partners to provide testimonials that we can use to demonstrate the value of our stroke support.

If you are able to provide a testimonial please follow the link below.

[Healthcare professional testimonial](#)

## Contact details

Cornwall Emotional Support Service	Cornwall Key Worker Service
Phone: 01872 301 689 Email: <a href="mailto:cornwall@stroke.org.uk">cornwall@stroke.org.uk</a> Visit: <a href="#">Cornwall Emotional Support Service</a>	Phone: 01872 300 350 Email: <a href="mailto:cornwallstrokesupport@stroke.org.uk">cornwallstrokesupport@stroke.org.uk</a> Visit: <a href="#">Cornwall Key Worker Project</a>
<b>Stroke Association</b> Stroke Support Helpline: 0303 3033 100 Visit: <a href="#">Stroke Association   Strength through support</a>	

The **Cornwall Emotional Support Service** has been made possible by **The Elwyn Thomas Memorial Fund**. The **Cornwall Key Worker Service** has been made possible by **an individual donation**.

This update combines news from the **Stroke Association's Cornwall Emotional Support Service** and from the **Cornwall Key Worker Service**.





12<sup>th</sup> February 2025 - Stroke awareness raising session delivered at Truro College

**Reflections by Jo Garbett, Engagement Officer (South West)**

I wanted to share with everyone some amazing collaborative work that recently took place in Cornwall. Here in the far South West, we feel a fortunate bunch as we have an Emotional Support Service and a Stroke Recovery Service (SRS) operating in the County. In October 2024, we were approached by Truro and Penwith College with a request to speak to some students who were undertaking a Health and Social Care course. As part of their course the students undertake a person-centred case study about a younger person who has had a stroke. In previous years, the results of this case study were very one dimensional and didn't consider or reflect that a stroke can affect a person in so many ways, as well as their family and carers. We suggested that we could deliver a session that focussed on stroke awareness, how the Stroke Association can support and also what community support is available in Cornwall for stroke survivors and their families/carers.

I took the lead on this project and approached the whole Cornwall Services team to see what we could put together. Initially we came up with some very energetic plans to fully engage the students. However, we realised that we had to be slightly more realistic and look to provide information that was both engaging and educationally helpful to their case study.

The whole morning session was delivered by Lucy from the Emotional Support team, Krissie from SRS, Kate a Specialist Stroke Nurse & Practice Educator for Stroke from Cornwall NHS, Allyson a volunteer from a local stroke peer support group and the local Engagement Team.

We had about 70 students attend and we presented a 45 minute 'What is a Stroke' session and then the students were split into three groups. In these three groups we covered peer support and what support the Stroke Association can offer plus a great MIRO quiz and a session sharing information about the Emotional Support and the Stroke Recovery services.

Here is some feedback from our evaluation, as well as students' comments.

After the session, the level of knowledge improved with 83% of the students highlighting that they knew 'lots' about stroke the condition: an improvement of 73% from their knowledge at the start of the session.

**100% of the students attending the awareness raising session gained a deeper understanding of stroke.**

**94% of the students attending the awareness raising session felt that they gained a deeper understanding of the community support available for stroke survivors and their families living in Cornwall.**

Comments from Students included:

*"The stroke association talk was very informative and helped me to understand what a stroke actually is, how it can effect a person's physical and mental health, and how it can affect their family and friends. As well as this, it helped me to understand the services available to individuals who have suffered a stroke. It was very useful to our case study and course we are doing and will help a lot for when we have to complete our assignments."*

*"This morning was really useful to know about what strokes are in general and for our upcoming assignment. I learnt the type of support available for strokes and ways we can reduce strokes from happening e.g. smoking and alcohol consumption"*

I have requested some feedback from the course leaders to find out whether the session and information that we shared supported the students to submit case study assignments that are more person- centred. My hope is that the assignments will show a deeper understanding of the impact of stroke and wider knowledge of the support that is available locally from the Stroke Association and community partners.

My key learnings from delivering this session was the realisation that so little was known about stroke by this typical group of 16 to 18 Year olds. I also realised that the session delivery of over 2.5 hours was probably a little too long, I hasten to add that we did all have a break halfway through!

My reflections on the day, well, firstly what a great team but also that we can all learn and share so much when we all get together, there was a real feeling of Team Stroke. It was so positive to bring together internal teams and external partners to co-produce and deliver this session! Maybe those 70 students have gone home and shared just a little bit of what they learnt to their friends and families and that stroke survivors can find strength through support.



**From left to right:** Kirsty Jones (Project Engagement Officer), Lucy Johnson (Emotional Support Coordinator/Counsellor), Jo Garbett (Engagement Officer -South West), Allyson James (Falmouth Stroke Club & Stroke Café), Simon Eastment (Project Engagement Officer) and Krissie Aked (Stroke Association Support Co-ordinator)

**For further information please contact:**

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