



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 13 September 2013

PRAISE FOR BANKSTOWN-LIDCOMBE HOSPITAL STROKE UNIT

Health Minister Jillian Skinner and Member for East Hills Glenn Brookes today visited the Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital Stroke Unit to congratulate staff on the hospital's recent accreditation as a 24/7 Acute Stroke Thrombolysis Centre.

To qualify as an Acute Stroke Thrombolysis Centre, a hospital must have a 24/7 imaging department, 24/7 neurology service, 24/7 emergency department and a 24/7 acute stroke unit with monitored beds and specialised staff.

"It is sobering, during National Stroke Week, to think that one in six people will suffer a stroke," Mrs Skinner said.

"We know that early admission to a Thrombolysis Centre is one of the biggest factors impacting survival following an ischaemic stroke caused by a blood clot.

"Through its 24/7 Acute Stroke Thrombolysis Centre, Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital is ensuring people suffering stroke receive immediate access to clot-busting drugs which can save lives and reduce the risk of permanent brain damage and disability."

Mrs Skinner said all members of community should remember the six steps of stroke prevention:

1. Know your personal risk factors, such as high blood pressure, diabetes and high blood cholesterol.
2. Be physically active and exercise regularly.
3. Avoid obesity by keeping to a healthy diet.
4. Limit alcohol consumption.
5. Avoid cigarette smoke / seek help to stop smoking now.
6. Learn to recognise the warning signs of stroke and act fast.

Symptoms of stroke may include:

- Weakness, numbness or paralysis of the face, arm or leg on either or both sides of the body.
- Difficulty speaking or understanding.
- Dizziness, loss of balance or an unexplained fall.
- Loss of vision, sudden blurring or decreased vision in one or both eyes.
- Headache, usually severe and abrupt.
- Difficulty swallowing.

Professor Daniel Chan, Director of Aged Care and Rehabilitation at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital, explained some of the hospital's innovative rehabilitation programs for stroke patients.

Mr Brookes said Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital's stroke unit was a one-stop-shop for people impacted by stroke.

"This stroke unit combines a patient's initial treatment with their rehabilitation. The benefit for patients is that care is continuous and rehabilitation can start without delay," Mr Brookes said.

"I am proud that the people of East Hills and beyond have access to such high quality care," he said.

The signs of stroke may occur alone or in combination and they can last a few seconds or up to 24 hours and then disappear. For more information, visit www.strokefoundation.com.au.