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NEW STROKE EDUCATION MATERIALS LAUNCHED

To coincide with the second annual National Stroke Week (Sept 19 to 25), the National Stroke Foundation has developed a comprehensive information kit for GPs and their patients.

The new materials feature a 2005 **stroke safe** campaign poster, a '**stroke safe** for life' brochure and a comprehensive 20 page patient information booklet: 'make yourself **stroke safe**'.

According to National Stroke Foundation CEO, Dr Erin Lalor, the new booklet will be a particularly useful patient education tool. She said: "the booklet explains the facts about stroke in an easy to understand manner that people of all ages will relate to.

"It uses simple language, large print and diagrams to explain the signs of stroke, why stroke is an emergency, how embolic, thrombotic and haemorrhagic strokes occur and what can be done to control the different risk factors.

"It also explains, in plain English, the role that interventions such as antihypertensives, antiplatelet agents, anticoagulants and carotid endarterectomy can play in the fight to prevent stroke."

The new materials will be mailed to over 21,000 health professionals in September.

"We want to ensure that GPs are aware of the messages that we will be relaying to their patients and that they have information at hand to meet the increased interest in stroke that National Stroke Week will prompt," Dr Lalor said.

The 2005 National Stroke Week campaign will build on the initial awareness created by the launch of the **stroke safe** campaign in 2004.

A feature of the 2005 campaign is a new television commercial, created by the National Stroke Foundation's pro bono advertising agency, Foote Cone Belding.

The ad shows three apparently healthy Australians, a young mum, a middle-aged man and an elderly woman, experiencing – and ignoring – some of the signs of stroke: numbness, blurred vision and difficulty speaking.

"The initial four-year phase of **stroke safe** aims to improve people's understanding of stroke and teach the signs of stroke. Once the signs are understood, an educational program of risk reduction will be implemented," Dr Lalor said. "**stroke safe** also aims to fill in the gaps in treatment and aftercare amongst health care professionals."

Copies of the 2005 **stroke safe** campaign information materials can be ordered directly from the National Stroke Foundation on 1800 787 653 or accessed via: www.strokefoundation.com.au

National Stroke Week - September 19 to 25, 2005

For further information please contact: Kelly Ward on 03 9744 1855 or 0407 860 834