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NEW STROKE HELP LINE FOR QUEENSLAND

Queensland stroke sufferers and their carers are set to benefit from Australia's first Stroke Support Line.

Set up by the Stroke Association of Queensland to put people, in touch with other stroke survivors and carers, the new service was launched on Monday, September 19 – the start of National Stroke Week.

President of the Stroke Association of Queensland, stroke survivor Ian Murdoch, said the phone line would provide the support and care that Queensland's stroke survivors desperately need.

"For many of the thousands of stroke survivors each year being alone and wondering where to get information and support can be one of the most difficult hurdles in their rehabilitation," he said.

Stroke does not discriminate, affecting old and young, male and female. It is the third largest killer in Queensland today, after heart disease and cancer, and it is important that we provide help to these people and their carers.

The Stroke Support Line will be staffed by other survivors and carers of this debilitating condition.

Suzie Wright will be one of the volunteer phone counsellors on the service and is confident that the service will provide vital understanding and support for stroke survivors and carers.

Suzie was 36 when she suffered a "catastrophic" stroke nine years ago. It was morning and she had just finished proof reading a document for her husband and was sitting at the kitchen table with her four-year-old son when her whole life, and that of her family, was turned upside down.

Suzie went from being a vibrant wife and mother of two kids to no longer being able to walk or talk and her left arm hung by her side "like a useless piece of meat".

"My son has had dreadful psychological problems as he remembered the fit and healthy mother when I went to hospital," she said. "And then three months later the other mother came home – one that was badly damaged and needing all the attention."

Suzie said callers to the Stroke Support Line would learn that stroke affects the whole family and that steps can be taken to lessen the impact on other family members.

If you would like to talk with someone who understands what it is like to have life changed by stroke – call (07) 3277 3838, Monday to Thursday between 10am and 4pm. Callers from outside Brisbane can request to have their call returned to avoid extra charges.

This is phase one of a state-wide service made possible by a generous grant from Jupiters Casino Community Benefit Fund.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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