

**Dudley**

**Stroke**



**Association**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021**

Charity No.: 1100690

Company Limited by Guarantee No.: 04873607

16 High Street, Pensnett, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 7YD

# Aims and Objectives

## Our Vision

Our vision is a borough in which people that have had a stroke, their families and carers are supported, able to live fulfilled and independent lives, and people are aware of strokes, its effects, and preventions.

## Our Mission

Dudley Stroke Association aims to provide high quality advice, guidance and support to people, carers and their families who have experienced a stroke and to raise awareness of strokes and stroke prevention in Dudley borough.

## Our Values

**Respect and Confidentiality** – we will always treat others with respect and retain confidentiality

**Commitment and Support** – we are committed and supportive to the people who need our help

**Access** – we believe that people who have had a stroke, their families and their carers should have access to information and support

**Equality and Diversity** – we strive for equality of opportunity and value diversity

## **Governance**

### **Board of Directors:**

Alan Hackett	-	Chair
Graham Jones	-	Treasurer
Anne Adams	-	Company Secretary
Ann Cashmore		
Christine Charles		
David Tuplin		

### **Staff**

Laura Martin	-	Manager
Roger Edwards	-	Development Officer/Long Term Support
Pauline Caines	-	Support/Stroke Reviews
Wendy Jackson	-	Support/Stroke Reviews
Lynne Evans	-	Support/Stroke Reviews
Cathy Watson	-	Support/Stroke Reviews
Gaynor Avison	-	Admin Officer
Chris Fradgley	-	Admin/ Long Term Support
Karen Walters	-	Long Term Support

### **Volunteers:**

Neil Fulton  
Brian Holliday

# Chairman's Foreword

2020 was to be a year when, settled into new offices, we could begin to benefit from the experience and fresh perspective of our new Manager, Laura Martin. What we had not anticipated was a global pandemic which would bring serious restrictions on our stroke support operations and turn working practices on their head. Face to face support became impractical and even our new offices could not be properly utilised as 'working from home' became the new normal.

However, the updates to our IT arrangements executed in 2019-20 and the upgraded telephone and database systems installed during the move to new offices proved most fortuitous in enabling the path to remote working. Our staff as ever quickly adapted to the changes in working practice and stroke survivors became used to regular 'phone calls and zoom support groups.

Throughout the repeated imposing and easing of restrictions we continued to reassess and modify our support offering to best meet the needs of stroke survivors and their families in Dudley, so that recovery Reviews and information flow could continue unabated.

With more normal times on the horizon, we can get back to planning new ways to fulfil the needs of our ever-growing number of users.

I remain indebted to all our staff and the Trustees who have supported the Association without falter through trying times to ensure our objectives are met and good governance prevails.

Alan Hackett

Chairman

## Current Year

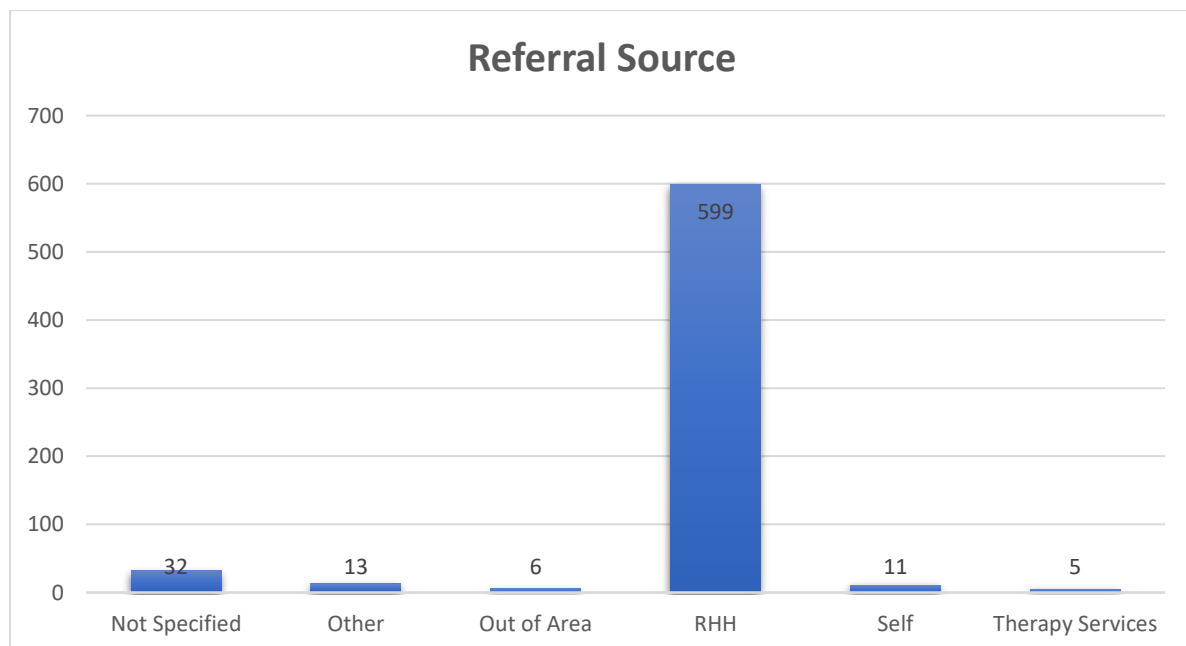
2020-2021 has been another busy year facing the challenges brought to us by COVID-19. All staff, trustees and volunteers have continued to work flexibly, and embraced the virtual world to offer a full service to meet the needs of those who access our support. Dudley Stroke Association have continued to provide high quality services that enhance the lives of people and families who have had a stroke. We passionately believe that **'life goes on after a stroke.'**

### Family and Carer Support/Stroke Review service

Our Family and Carer support and stroke review service continued throughout 2020-2021 being funded by Dudley Integrated Health Care Trust (DIHC). Majority of our referrals are received from Russell's Hall Hospital. Every person admitted and diagnosed with stroke within a Dudley Hospital is referred to us. We receive twice weekly admission and discharge reports to ensure we receive all necessary referrals.

Due to COVID-19 we have been unable to visit the ward, all patients have been contacted within 14 days of discharge home, where our services have been discussed, including our review process and our support services. Where patients have been discharged to step down beds or alternative addresses letters have been sent to relatives to inform of our involvement.

666 people were referred to us in 2020-2021



On discharge people are contacted within 14 days to ensure that they have everything in place and any concerns can be raised. Following this for some it may be a weekly/bi-weekly

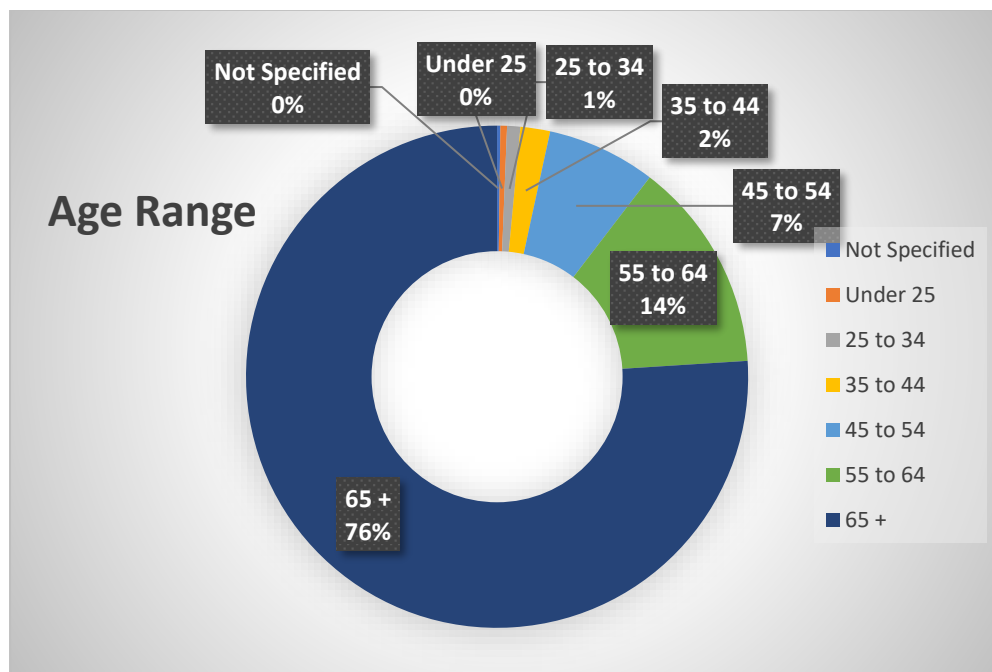
or monthly support call, sending out information, providing emotional support, or signposting to other organisations. Others will be happy to wait until their review is due, knowing we are only a telephone call away if their situation changes.

People who do not have a Dudley GP are also contacted and with their permission referred to their local support/stroke review service for ongoing support.

One of the key benefits of our stroke support service is our ability to be flexible to meet and respond to people’s needs.

### Age range of referrals with a Dudley GP

Stroke affects people of all ages, during 2020-2021 we had 471 people referred to us with a Dudley GP. Of these people the majority (358) were aged 65+, 2 people were under the age 25, 110 people were aged 25 to 64. Breakdown of age ranges is shown in the charts below.



Not Specified	1
Under 25	2
25 to 34	4
35 to 44	9
45 to 54	33
55 to 64	64
65 +	358

### Stroke Reviews

Our Support Workers provide reviews for stroke survivors at 6 weeks following their discharge from hospital and then at 6 months and 12 months post stroke. Copies of reviews are sent to the stroke survivor along with their GP and carer where deemed appropriate.

We do not work on our own but have strong links to therapy and other services, enabling us to make referrals as appropriate to help with difficulties/problems identified.

6-week reviews conducted via the telephone (unless information indicates a home visit is required) ensure that stroke survivors have the appropriate information and services

required following their discharge and to see how they are progressing. 196 6 week reviews we completed during 2020-2021.

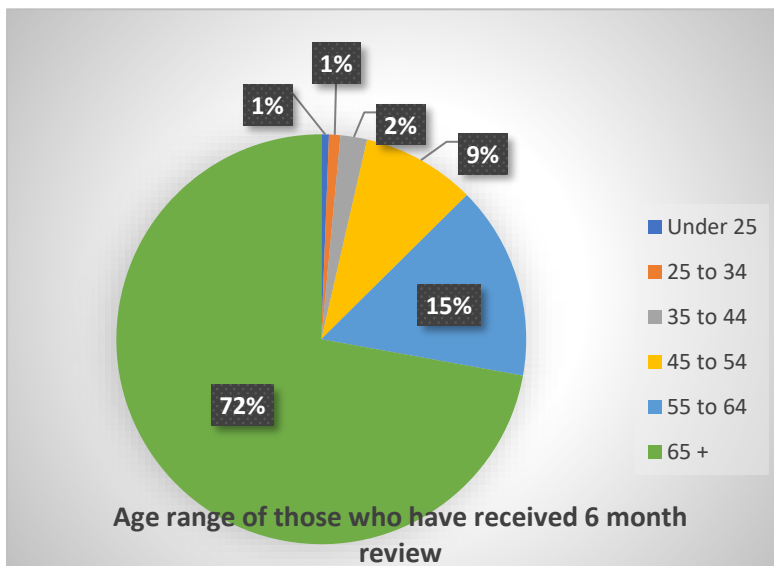
The Stroke Sentinel audit states all people are required to have a 6-month stroke review between 4 – 6 months post stroke, and we like other organisations are required to fill in data (non- identifiable, with their permission) stating it has been conducted and how the stroke has affected them. During 2020-2021 reviews were conducted via telephone unless it was deemed a home visit was necessary. The review looks at all aspects of their recovery, and during home visits includes taking their blood pressure.

During 2020-2021 336 6-month reviews were due. 330 were completed within the 4-8month time.

**Ninety-eight percent of people received their review within the requisite period.**

April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	October 2020	November 2020	December 2020	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021
29	28	22	25	33	19	25	31	30	30	28	30
32	29	22	25	33	21	25	31	30	30	28	30
91%	97%	100%	100%	100%	90%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Age range of people receiving a 6-month stroke review with a Dudley GP**



Age Range	
Under 25	2
25 to 34	3
35 to 44	7
45 to 54	30
55 to 64	51
65 +	241

12-month reviews take place over the telephone and enable our Support Workers to check how a stroke survivor has progressed from their 6-month review and to check if there are any new concerns. During 2020-2021 our team completed 87 12-month reviews.

## Long Term Support

Stroke does not go away after 12 months, people may continue to improve for years, albeit at a slower rate, and we believe that **“Life does go on after a Stroke”**. Our group activities enable people to meet like-minded people, support each other and build up on skills, together with providing much needed support also to other family members (and friends) who are also living with the effects the stroke has had on their loved one.

This non-funded work provides a much-needed lifeline to many people.

During April 2020 – March 2021 our groups were suspended due to COVID-19. We embraced the virtual world and offered groups via the platform of zoom. Here we offered a weekly social catch up and a weekly exercise group. We supplemented our virtual offer alongside making regular contact via telephone and/or email and by sending regular postal activities including quizzes, newsletters.

## Group Activities

Due to COVID-19 we were unable to deliver our usual group outline instead we offered virtual groups

These activities include:

**Zoom zoom in the afternoon** – a weekly virtual get together. A group for stroke survivors and carers to meet for a weekly chat, offer peer support, reduce social isolation, and offer a safe environment to discuss any concerns. On average 12 people attend the session each week, a total attendance during the year of 624

**Virtual Exercise Class** – a weekly group where gentle chair-based exercise is provided via a virtual platform. On average 6 people attend each week totalling 312 attendees through the year

We also held special events online to celebrate Christmas including a sing-along and Christmas quiz. We also held a special event to mark national stroke awareness day in October.



## **Public Health Self-Management Programme**

This 6-week course funded by Public Health aims to improve quality of life by giving people confidence, skills, and information to help them manage their long-term condition or caring role better on a daily basis.

During the year we were able to offer the course virtually, we successfully completed one course where 5 people completed fully.

## **Rotary Stroke Awareness Day – Stourbridge**

We were unable to take part in Rotary's stroke awareness day due to continued restrictions in relation to COVID-19. We maintained our close working relationship with Rotary and hope to be offering more stroke and health awareness days in the future.

## **Looking forward....**

As we closed the end of this year, measures, and restrictions in relation to COVID-19 were lifting and we are looking forward to restarting our support groups, seeing people, and offering our support and services face-to-face whilst also embracing the virtual world and continuing our offer online groups. We carry some uncertainties still in relation to the pandemic and are fully aware we need to continue to adapt, change and be flexible to meet the needs of those who use our services.

**Over the last 12 months people have expressed their appreciation of our work, some of the comments made include:**

*"it's reassuring that Dudley Stroke care about me."*

*"I was thankful that someone was interested in my well-being."*

*"Thank you all for your support during this time with COVID. It has been morale boosting."*

*"Thank you for the support shown by yourselves over the last 12 months following my Mums stroke".*

*"I am really grateful for all of Wendy's care, advice and help for several years now, for which I will always treasure. – I think you are doing amazing work for the group."*

We thank the people for their kind comments and are certain that regardless of whatever challenges are thrown at us, we do know as an organisation that the welfare of people who have suffered a stroke and their families will continue to be at the centre of everything we do.