

# Stroke Recovery Association of BC

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**The Stroke Recovery Association of British Columbia is a non-profit society, incorporated under the Societies Act of British Columbia. It is a registered Canadian charitable organization and reports annually to the Canadian Revenue Agency and to the BC Registrar of Societies.**

## **HOW TO START A NEW BRANCH OF STROKE RECOVERY ASSOCIATION OF BC (SRABC)**

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## HOW TO START A NEW BRANCH OF SRABC: WHERE TO BEGIN

The first task is to find out if there is enough interest and commitment from stroke survivors and caregivers by holding an introductory community meeting.

### SETTING UP THE COMMUNITY MEETING

- Contact **local facilities** to see if you can hold a meeting there. Explain what you are trying to accomplish.
- Examples of the kind of **places you can contact** for this purpose are:
  - Community Centres
  - Churches, temples and other places of worship
  - Seniors Centres
  - Community Health Centres
- Try to find somewhere that is offered **free of charge**.
- If you **can't get access** to a local facility hold the event in a local business (e.g. coffee shop) or someone's home.
- Wherever you choose must be **suitable for the meeting** and should accommodate the special needs of stroke survivors. It should:
  - Be private and free from noise and distractions
  - Be conveniently located and wheelchair accessible
  - Have parking close enough to the entrance to accommodate those with walking problems
- Decide on the **day, date and time** for the meeting.
- **Confirm with the facility/host** the day, date and time scheduled for the meeting and thank them for their time and generosity.
- You can determine **what day and time is best** for your schedule.
- NOTE: Remember to **notify health care providers and your regional health authority** of the meeting. Give them as much notice as possible.

## PROMOTING THE COMMUNITY MEETING

- Send a **press release** to your local newspaper(s) and free community newspapers. A sample press release is included in this guide on page 6.
- Place a free **advertisement** in your local community newspaper if possible.
- Contact your local Cable TV station CBC radio and your local radio station(s) to see if they will run a **Public Service Announcement** (PSA). A PSA is an advertisement broadcast on radio or television, for the public interest. If they are willing you can send them the information in your press release.
- Modify and print the **poster** on page 5. Distribute the poster to key locations in your local area such as in hospitals, health centres, doctors offices, physiotherapy and/or OT practices, seniors centres, community centres, shopping centres, grocery stores, etc. Put the SRABC's provincial office contact information on your poster-unless you wish to handle the enquiries yourself.
- Make contact with your **health authority** and let them know what you are trying to do. If you are not sure which authority your area belongs to, we can tell you. They might have ideas on how to help and could promote the meeting on your behalf. Contact information for BC's health authorities is here: <http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/socsec/contacts.html>
- **Call** the program coordinator from your local community centre, seniors' centre or recreation centre to see if there are any groups using their facilities which would be interested in hearing that you are starting a new branch of SRABC.

# Have you or a loved one had a stroke?



The Stroke Recovery Association of BC (SRABC) invites stroke survivors and their caregivers and friends to attend a community meeting to discuss starting a new branch in

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## A branch of SRABC:

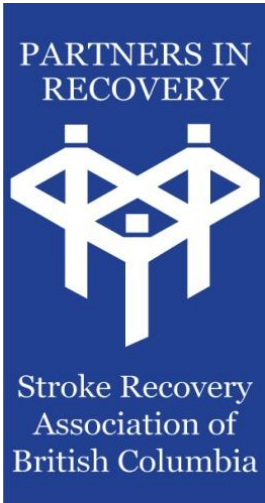
- Helps stroke survivors maintain and improve mobility, communication and memory
- Helps stroke survivors regain independence
- Provides an accepting and supportive social environment
- Provides support to caregivers
- Increases awareness of stroke risk and healthy lifestyle choices

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**PLEASE JOIN US ON**  
**Day / Month / Year / Time**  
**at Location**  
**Address**

For more information please contact SRABC at  
1-888-313-3377 or visit [www.strokerecoverybc.ca](http://www.strokerecoverybc.ca)

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**PRESS RELEASE** (For immediate release)

**[Insert Date]**

## **[Insert name of CITY/TOWN] – Stroke Recovery Association of BC Looking for Support to Start Stroke Recovery Branch**

After receiving several inquiries from **[insert city/town name]** concerning community support for stroke survivors, we are interested in starting a local branch of Stroke Recovery Association of BC (SRABC). SRABC is a nonprofit organization dedicated to assisting stroke survivors and their families, whose lives have been altered by stroke, to recover to the best of their ability in all aspects of life.

Stroke Recovery Association of BC runs programs for people who have had a stroke and still live independently. The goal is to improve quality of life for stroke survivors and their caregivers. Our branches provide a social and empowering environment where stroke survivors and caregivers find mutual understanding, acceptance and support. Typically, branches meet weekly in the community for 3 hours.

A branch of SRABC:

- Helps stroke survivors maintain and improve mobility, communication and memory
- Helps stroke survivors regain independence
- Provides an accepting and supportive social environment
- Provides support to caregivers
- Increases awareness of stroke risk and healthy lifestyle choices

To ensure success and continuity, starting a stroke recovery branch requires community support, including finding a meeting space at minimal charge or by donation, assistance with transportation, financial support and a coordinator to run the branches programming. SRABC provides a start-up fund, a monthly coordinator's honorarium and training for volunteers and coordinators.

If you are a stroke survivor or know someone who has suffered a stroke and would be interested in attending a support group, please call **[insert local contact person's name and telephone and/or email]**. Service providers and health professionals with ideas or anyone willing to provide in-kind donations, financial support or sponsorship, please call the Stroke Recovery Association of BC at (604) 688-3603 or email [office@strokerecoverybc.ca](mailto:office@strokerecoverybc.ca).

## COMMUNITY MEETING AGENDA

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Introductions
2. Minute-taker assigned
3. What are Stroke Recovery Branches?
  - i. Programs & Services
  - ii. Funding
4. The Stroke Recovery Association of BC
  - i. History
  - ii. Mission & Objectives
5. What's Involved in Starting New Group

Questions/Comments

## HOW TO RUN THE COMMUNITY MEETING

You'll be responsible for running the meetings until an executive committee for the branch is formed. There's more information on the executive committee on Page 17.

### **1) Welcome**

Greet people as they arrive. Introduce yourself, thank them for coming and if possible, have name tags for each participant.

### **2) Introductions**

When you are ready to begin, get everyone's attention and start by re-introducing yourself. State the purpose of the meeting by saying something like, "A Stroke Recovery Branch runs programs for people who have had a stroke and still live independently. The goal is to improve quality of life for stroke survivors and their caregivers. Today we are meeting to find out if there is enough interest in starting a group in our area."

Next ask the participants to introduce themselves and say something about why they are here today. Ask them to tell everyone their name and to state whether they have had a stroke, are a caregiver for a stroke survivor, or if you would like to be a volunteer. A caregiver can be either a spouse/family member or a friend.

### **3) Meeting Agenda**

After each participant has introduced themselves, you can state what the agenda is-see page 7. Ask if someone will take minutes.

Ask if anyone has any questions or additions. Go through each item on the agenda.

### **4) Closing the Meeting**

Thank everyone for attending the meeting. If you have enough support, decide on a time and place for the next meeting. Make sure that you have the participants' contact information and that you obtain the written minutes from the minute-taker.

### **5) After the meeting**

Please contact the SRABC provincial office, to update the program director and prepare for the next steps.

**COMMUNITY MEETING CHECKLIST  
WHAT TO BRING!**

- MEETING AGENDA  
(You may wish to make copies depending on how many participants are attending)
- INFORMATION PACKAGE ABOUT SRABC (history, mission, programs & services, etc.)
- SIGN-IN SHEET  
(To be used to get contact information from all attendees)
- PENS AND PENCILS
- BLANK PAPER for the minutes
- NAME TAGS  
(You can use a variety of products: blank sticky labels, paper folded into a “standing triangle, “Hello. My name is...labels, etc.)

## HISTORY OF SRABC

Stroke survivors and their families often find their lives severely and permanently changed by stroke. Isolation and caregiver burnout commonly result. In the 1970's there were few places to turn for help once the survivor was discharged from hospital. Stroke recovery programs started because people saw a need to change this situation. Often the prime movers were stroke survivors and family members, determined to make the way easier for other survivors and family members.

One of the first stroke recovery programs (1967) started in Tunbridge Wells, England, by a stroke survivor and his wife, at the suggestion of the local speech therapist. With the development of stroke recovery programs throughout the U.K., the Chest, Heart and Stroke Association was prompted to hold a one-day conference in London in March 1976 entitled "Stroke Clubs - a modern concept in rehabilitation".

### **North America**

The first Stroke Club in North America, organized under the direction of the American Heart Association, started in Galveston, Texas in 1968 with a membership of seven people.

### **Canada**

The Manitoba Stroke Club, founded in 1971, was probably the first in Canada.

### **British Columbia**

Stroke survivors, attending the Margaret Fulton Day Centre in North Vancouver, formed the first BC club in 1974. Clubs in Nelson, Vancouver, Richmond, and Burnaby soon followed.

In 1975 the branches incorporated as the Lower Mainland Stroke Association. Meanwhile, as the result of a letter to the Vancouver Sun by a frustrated daughter of a Vancouver stroke survivor, representatives of the Lower Mainland Stroke Association met with a group of health care professionals to form an Advisory Committee to foster improvement of services to stroke people. With funding from the Vancouver Foundation, a study was commissioned. The study recommended that a coordinator be employed to develop stroke programs throughout BC. Funding for a two-year pilot project was subsequently obtained from the BC Heart Foundation. Phyllis Delaney was hired as coordinator and office space was secured in Vancouver.

In 1979 The Lower Mainland Stroke Association became incorporated as the Stroke Association of BC, and the Advisory Committee, which had served its purpose, was dissolved.

In 1993 the Association's name was changed to the Stroke Recovery Association of British Columbia. Stroke clubs are now known as branches of Stroke Recovery Association of BC.

**Today virtually every major centre from Prince George to Campbell River has a Stroke Recovery Branch.**

## MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

The Stroke Recovery Association of British Columbia supports post-hospital community-based Stroke Recovery Programs throughout British Columbia.

### ***Mission Statement***

Through its local Stroke Recovery Branches, SRABC is committed to assisting stroke survivors and their caregivers throughout the Province to improve their overall quality of life.

### ***Objectives***

1. SRABC will assist the local branches by:
  - Establishing policies and guidelines for branch operations
  - Developing and publishing guidelines and standards for branch service delivery
  - Providing funding to support local service delivery and local branch operations
  - Providing a group network and forum for the exchange of information and ideas across the organization
  - Disseminating educational and informational materials to the branches
2. SRABC is further committed to ensuring that branches are distributed effectively throughout BC in order to enable those stroke survivors who desire support and participation to be served.
3. SRABC is dedicated to raising the profile and the awareness in the community of SRABC and of the services offered throughout BC to stroke survivors and their caregivers.
4. Fund raising is a prime activity for SRABC so we can provide consistent program and service delivery.

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## BRANCH SUPPORT FROM SRABC PROVINCIAL OFFICE

The SRABC Provincial Office is located in Vancouver and provides administrative, financial and educational support to its Stroke Recovery Branches as follows:

- **Financial**

- 1) Provide monthly honorarium to support the Coordinator
- 2) Process donations made to individual branches
- 3) Provide fundraising opportunities
- 4) Make branches aware of grants
- 5) Assist branches to prepare grant applications
- 6) Provide start-up funding for new branches of SRABC

- **Education**

- 1) Provide training programs for Coordinators and volunteers
- 2) Provide a lending library of books, periodicals, pamphlets and videos.

- **Information**

- 1) Supply brochures and displays for community awareness events
- 2) Send copies of a quarterly newsletter, the "*Voice of the Turtle*" to members of the Stroke Recovery Branches, health care organizations and interested individuals.

- **Annual Retreat**

A three-day retreat has been incorporated into the June Board of Directors meeting at Naramata, BC. Stroke survivors, caregivers, branch directors and coordinators attend from all parts of BC.

- **Life After Stroke Awards**

SRABC established the annual "Life After Stroke Awards" to recognize:

- 1) Outstanding achievement by a stroke survivor;
- 2) Exceptional artistic talent or success in a sport by a stroke survivor;
- 3) Exceptional emotional and personal support provided by a caregiver.

All branches are encouraged to submit nominations. The awards are presented in a ceremony following the Annual General Meeting. In 2000 the awards were renamed the "Phyllis Delaney Life After Stroke Awards" to honour the Association's first Provincial Coordinator.

- **Stroke Booklet**

This booklet is an introduction to the services of SRABC.

- **Community Awareness Events**

SRABC participates in events which give us the opportunity to promote our work on behalf of BC's stroke survivors.

- **Website**

Our website contains information and resources for stroke survivors and caregivers. Please visit [www.strokerecoverybc.ca](http://www.strokerecoverybc.ca)

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## **SRABC BRANCHES - PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

Branches of SRABC are self-help, community-based programs led by a local coordinator, assisted by a group of volunteers. Most branches meet for three hours each week. They provide a social environment where stroke survivors and caregivers are encouraged to meet new friends, develop new skills and hobbies. Successes of members inspire others to walk, talk, and become more independent; foster a return of independence and self care and help to restore dignity, self worth and hope. Stroke survivors and their caregivers join SRABC to find mutual understanding, acceptance, support and enjoyment in living.

Our branches offer a range of programs designed to assist in reintegration of stroke survivors into the community. Branches range in size from approximately 7 to 170 members. Activities offered vary depending on the resources available.

### **Branch Program Description - Objectives and examples of activities**

- 1. Maintain and improve mobility**
  - Exercise class taught by a physiotherapist or exercise trainer
  - Exercise class taught by a volunteer or branch coordinator
  - Activities and games which promote mobility
  
- 2. Maintain and improve communication and memory**
  - One to one speech therapy offered by a speech-language pathologist
  - Communication program offered by a speech-language pathologist
  - Therapist-designed computer program providing independent speech, language and cognitive stimulation (Bungalow software)
  - Cognitive stimulation through individual and group activities
  
- 3. Provide an accepting environment for social interaction and recreation**
  - Games, leisure activities, social events and entertainment designed to promote functional independence
  - Community activities to promote reintegration e.g. outings, community events
  
- 4. Create opportunities for peer support**
  - Encouragement/motivation from other stroke survivors
  - Training of peer mentors
  - Stroke survivors in BC can access peer support using a variety of approaches to meet their needs, including but not limited to 1:1 matched peer mentoring, group support, informal support through social and recreational activities, telephone support, email support and online peer support
  
- 5. Support caregivers**
  - Caregiver support groups
  - One to one support to caregivers by volunteers/branch coordinator
  - Encourage caregivers to use branch programs as an opportunity for respite
  - Referral to caregiver support agencies
  
- 6. Increase awareness of stroke risk and impairment after stroke**
  - Individual teaching, guest speakers, learning material

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## FUNDING SRABC BRANCHES

Stroke Recovery Branches receive funding from the following sources:

1. **Fees**

a. Drop In

Some branches charge a drop-in or meeting fee to cover refreshments.

b. Events

Most branches charge a fee to cover the cost of outings, meals, dances, or special programs.

c. Membership

Branches collect annual membership fees from each member.

Each member shall pay one SRABC fee per year. Branches remit the SRABC fees to the provincial office in January of each year, along with a membership list. Branches shall collect and remit the SRABC fee in the month that a new member joins the branch. Currently, the membership fee to SRABC is \$20.00 per member.

d. Some branches also have a branch fee whereby a small yearly membership fee goes to the operation of the individual branch.

*For example: Membership in the "XXXXXX Stroke Recovery Branch is \$25.00 per year. \$5.00 stays at the branch and \$20.00 goes to SRABC).*

2. **Donations**

The provincial office processes donations and issues tax receipts.

3. **Fundraising events.**

4. **Grants** from local businesses, service clubs, and community foundations, for capital items or specific programs.

5. **Monthly cheque** from the Stroke Recovery Association of British Columbia (if eligible) to pay all or part of the Coordinator's honorarium.

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## **Following up after your community meeting**

Now you have held a successful community meeting(s) and decided there's enough interest, you are ready to begin the work of setting up a new branch of SRABC.

### **1) Next Meeting**

- a) Contact the group who attended the first community meeting(s) and schedule another meeting to go over the points outlined below. Invite anyone else who has expressed interest. Whoever can attend will be your 'temporary task group' to get things moving.
- b) At this meeting you should appoint 4 officers to be the Executive Committee for your branch – a president, a treasurer, a secretary and a director. They all must become members of SRABC.
  - The president chairs all meetings and makes sure all decisions are reached by majority vote.
  - The treasurer is responsible for all financial record keeping, handling the money, banking and financial reporting.
  - The secretary takes and distributes minutes and sends out agenda to all branch members. The secretary also keeps all the branches records and documents on file.
  - The director is the link between the branch and the Provincial Office in Vancouver and attends provincial board of directors meetings as your branch representative.

### **2) Recruitment of Members**

You need 10 members to start a new branch. Members can be stroke survivors, caregivers or volunteers interested in helping to support stroke survivors in your community.

### **3) Membership Fees**

Collect membership fees (\$20) and issue membership cards (available from the SRABC Provincial Office in Vancouver).

### **4) Branch Coordinator**

Hire a coordinator (advertise, interview candidates, select, train). Contact Provincial Office in Vancouver for information on how to do this.

### **5) Recruitment of Volunteers**

Recruit volunteers (advertise, interview, select, train). Contact Provincial Office in Vancouver for information on how to do this.

### **6) Find a location to hold your Stroke Recovery Branch meetings.**

- a. Where possible it should be inexpensive or, even better, free, e.g. a room in your local community centre
- b. The location must be accessible to wheelchairs and to those with walking difficulties and have suitable parking
- c. It should have enough space for all of the different activities you are planning
- d. You will need a room suitable for private meetings
- e. The location has to be free from distractions which make it difficult for stroke survivors to communicate, e.g. outside noise, piped music, other groups with loud activities such as a dance class

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### **7) Stroke Recovery Branch meetings**

Decide on the day and time of your Stroke Recovery Branch meetings. Most branches meet weekly for 3 hours. Others meet more often.

### **8) Naming your branch.**

We need a name we can officially register with the province of BC. It has to reflect your location and the fact you belong to SRABC as follows Stroke Recovery Association of BC, \*XXXXXXX Branch.

\*Insert the name of your location here.

### **9) Bank Account**

Open a bank account, and obtain a proof of banking resolution. The bank account should be in the name of your group. You must name at least two officers (members of your executive committee) who both have to sign cheques for them to be valid.

### **10) Referrals**

Contact your community resources - hospitals, physiotherapists, community nurses, home care, etc. so they can refer stroke survivors to your branch. Contact Provincial Office in Vancouver for information on how to do this.

### **11) Join SRABC**

Become an official branch of SRABC. Contact Provincial Office in Vancouver for information on how to do this.

### **12) Bylaws**

Obtain a copy of SRABC's bylaws from the provincial office.

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<b>Documents required by SRABC Provincial Office to receive start-up funds</b>
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- 1) A copy of the Branch's **Banking Resolution** including the bank account number.
- 2) You need to start a **register of members** that you must keep up to date. It should include the following information:
  - a. Full name
  - b. Full mailing address
  - c. Telephone and fax number
  - d. Email address
  - e. Membership status (stroke survivor, caregiver or volunteer)
  - f. Fees paid
  - g. Date joined
  - h. An up to date list of members who leave and the date they left
- 3) Stroke Recovery Branch **Executive Committee members** must be members of SRABC and be on the register of members. Please indicate next to their names the office they hold e.g. 'Secretary'.
- 4) **Coordinator's** name and contact information (address, phone, fax and email).
- 5) A completed **coordinator's contract** (available from the SRABC Provincial Office). Original to be kept at the Provincial Office, please make a copy for your files
- 6) **Branch Information**
  - a. Name of branch
  - b. Mailing Address (most branches use the Coordinator's home address. Alternatively the location where you meet may allow you to use their address, or you can rent a PO Box)
  - c. Meeting Location
  - d. Frequency, i.e. weekly, bi-monthly
  - e. Day of the week
  - f. Time and duration, i.e., 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.