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STROKE RECOVERY ASSOCIATION
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Snippets November 2014



Facebook and Twitter

SRABC is now on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/StrokeRecoveryBC>

and Twitter at:

<https://twitter.com/StrokeRecovBC>

- **Snippets** is published on the 10th day of each month by Stroke Recovery Association of BC
- **Snippets** contains SRABC news and information and stroke recovery resources for stroke survivors and caregivers
- **Snippets** is for our Branch Coordinators to assist them in their work with

people whose lives have been affected by stroke

- **Snippets** can also be useful for people recovering from a stroke, their caregivers, their friends, family and supporters
- We welcome your comments and feedback about **Snippets**
- If you know anyone who will find **Snippets** useful please forward it to them or ask them to add their name to our mailing list by sending an email to office@strokerecoverybc.ca
- All past issues of Snippets are available on the SRABC website at: <http://strokerecoverybc.ca/snippets/>

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Update Regarding the New SRABC Bylaws
- Phyllis Delaney Life After Stroke Awards 2014
 - Art Therapy Session at 2014 AGM
- Branch Update - News from SRABC's Branches
 - Gordie Howe's Stroke
- Stroke Survivors Needed for UBC Research Studies
 - Bridges Conference 2014
 - Caregiver Action Network
 - 10 Tips for Family Caregivers
- Partners in Stroke Recovery- Kingston General Hospital
- Canadian Best Practice Recommendations for Stroke Care
- Supported Communication for Adults with Aphasia Resources
- Aphasia Etiquette - Ask Wait Listen - YouTube <http://ow.ly/CVTKE>
 - Aphasia Information and Resources
- Tool Launched to Support Stroke Survivors to Make Best Possible Recovery
 - How Can Magic Help Stroke Survivors?
 - The Importance of Categories in Speech Therapy
 - Remember: "Ask, Don't Tell"
- Caregiver Toolkit: Simplifying Your Senior Care Journey
 - Dealing With Challenging Relationships as a Caregiver

Update Regarding the New SRABC Bylaws

- SRABC has new bylaws. Thank you to every one of our members that participated in the democratic process to make this decision. Here are the technical details:
- Special Resolution before the 2014 SRABC AGM:

RESOLVED as a special resolution that the existing Bylaws of the Society be deleted and that the form of Bylaws circulated to all members with the notice of this meeting be adopted as the Bylaws of the Society in substitution for, and to the exclusion of, the existing Bylaws of the Society.

- A special resolution must be approved by not less than 75% of those members who vote on the resolution. 75% of the 538 members and proxies voting at the meeting is 403.5.
- Results:
 - For - 427 (403 proxy votes and 24 by show of hands)
 - Against - 105 (98 proxy votes and 7 by show of hands)
 - Abstentions - 6 by show of hands
- This Special Resolution was therefore passed.

The Special Resolution altering the bylaws of our Association has been accepted by the Registrar of Companies. The new bylaws are now in effect. It will take time to implement them and develop the necessary policies. We'll keep you informed as this work progresses.



Casey Crawford receives his SRABC long service award from Atul Ghadia

The SRABC Phyllis Delaney Life After Stroke Awards 2014

- **Outstanding Achievement Award**

Battista Rizzuto - Oceanside Branch

Nominated by: Kathleen Falvai

- **Caregivers Award (Joint winners)**

Gary Reynolds - Nanaimo Branch

Nominated by: Rose Zajonskowski

Jerica Greene - Vanderhoof Branch

Nominated by: Penny Swales

- **Award for Achievement in the Arts or Sport**

Glenys Doddington - Kamloops Branch

Nominated by: Iris Nicol

- **Volunteer of the Year Award**

Barbara Alexander - Surrey Branch

Nominated by: Diana Emsley

Special congratulations to the winners! Award Ceremonies are being held at their Branches. Thank you to everyone who nominated and helped in organizing the award presentations.

Art Therapy Session at 2014 AGM

This year's Branch Coordinators' Education Session which took place on the morning of the AGM at Creekside Community Centre was on Art Therapy. It included:

- Overview of Art Therapy with stroke survivors
- Samples of stroke survivors' artwork
- Hands-on session

The presenter was Alannah MacPhail, professional Art Therapist, B.A. (Psych); B. Ed.; DVATI Alannah currently runs art therapy classes at the North Shore Stroke Recovery Centre in North Vancouver.

“Art therapy is a form of expressive therapy that provides the client with an opportunity to explore personal problems and potentials, resolve conflicts, and facilitate self-awareness and understanding through a variety of artistic activities. As an art therapist my role is to engage the client in a healing process by fostering and encouraging creative expression. This work is founded on a therapeutic relationship of acceptance, support and trust.” <http://artthatmatters.ca/>

The session coordinator was Peggy Kane, Shaughnessy Branch Coordinator. The session was very well received and gave coordinators lots of ideas for how Art Therapy can benefit stroke survivors. Thank you to all concerned!

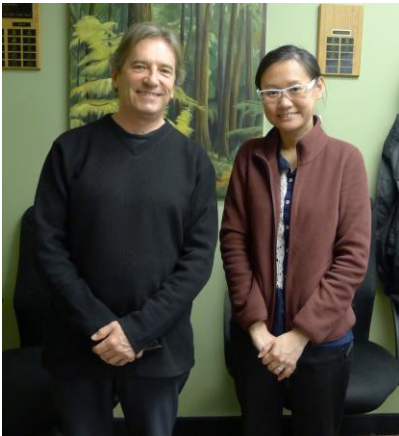


Alannah MacPhail

Branch Update - News from SRABC's Branches

- **Branch Visitor from Singapore**

We were delighted to host an Occupational Therapist (OT) from Singapore, Sabrina Ow Yong, who is Senior OT, at Tan Tock Seng Hospital. Sabrina was visiting BC in partnership with our friends at the UBC OT program as part of her work investigating stroke self-management. Sabrina attended six SRABC Branches. Thank you to Gail Snelling; Irene lu; Joanne Patterson; Ruby Gill; Patricia Chow and Mandy Channa for arranging for Sabrina to visit Branch programs at our North Shore; Burnaby South; Vancouver Shaughnessy; Burnaby North; Vancouver Strathcona and Vancouver Douglas Park Branches.



- **Templeton Branch**

We are looking for a new Branch Coordinator for this Branch. To apply please send a detailed current resume outlining relevant qualifications and experience and a cover letter explaining your interest in the position and the names of three professional/employment references to: execdir@strokerecoverybc.ca.

Ruby Gill is still a part of our team and will be focusing her energies and great ideas on the Burnaby North Branch. We look forward to continuing to work with Ruby there.

- **Port Coquitlam Branch**

Leigh Square Community Arts Village and The Port Coquitlam Stroke Recovery Association

have partnered together to present a new community program called The Singing Project – an informal music program open to everyone interested in singing, socializing and having fun. The program began on Thursday, October 23rd in The Gathering Place at Leigh Square from 1:00-2:30pm and anyone can join in at any time. Singing sessions are free of charge and led by a professional musician from Long & McQuade. Refreshments are provided.

The goal of the program is to start a weekly song-based music session where Stroke Survivors and the citizens of Port Coquitlam can equally participate. The Singing Project is open to all the citizens of Port Coquitlam providing benefits to all residents. The Singing Project will offer functional communication, physical, psychological, social and recreational benefits through the innovative use of the creative medium of music. There is a great deal of scientific research that indicates that stroke survivors can be helped in recovering their speech by singing, an added benefit.

The Singing Project offers a place to build friendships and to encourage other residents (stroke survivors) to keep working at their recovery. It also offers the opportunity to belong to a program where people have the positive experience at maintaining their “brain health”, as well as the chance to have an outing included in their daily schedule. It also offers residents the opportunity to feel a part of the community.

The community is invited to join in on the fun, informal weekly music sessions at Leigh Square. For more information on the program, please contact Program Coordinator Deanna MacKinnon, Port Coquitlam Stroke Recovery Branch at portcoquitlamstrokerecovery@gmail.com.

The Leigh Square Community Arts Village encourages and facilitates community development through arts, culture and heritage within Port Coquitlam and serves as a cultural meeting place, a 21st century community arts centre. See www.portcoquitlam.ca/leighsquare for details.

- **Kamloops Branch**

The Kamloops Stroke Recovery Branch was honored to recognize Glenys Doddington for the Phyllis Delaney Life After Stroke Award in the Category of Achievement in Arts and Sports. We held a special presentation for Glenys on Thursday, October 30th. She celebrated this moment surrounded by the love of her family and her dear friends at the Branch. Congratulations to Glenys, all Stroke Survivors, Caregivers and Volunteers, you are truly an inspiration.

Shona Cox - Branch Coordinator



Glenys Doddington

- **North Vancouver Branch**

40th Anniversary Tea: Forty years ago a stroke survivor attending a North Shore adult day centre gathered together several of his fellow stroke survivors and formed a peer support group. Over the past 4 decades, this group has grown in size and scope and now is a 4 day a week program that offers peer and caregiver support, speech, art, music and exercise therapies and has a membership of 75+ stroke survivors, 4 staff and 20+ volunteers.

On Sunday, October 19 NSSRC celebrated this milestone with a High Tea at a local hotel and welcomed over 100 people. In addition to those currently involved with NSSRC, guests included many individuals who have supported or participated in the NSSRC program over the years - members and their families and caregivers, staff, directors and volunteers as well as local politicians and service providers. We were grateful for the sponsorship of 3 North Shore businesses that assisted in presenting this very successful event. City of North Vancouver Mayor, Darrel I Mussatto, presented NSSRC with a framed certificate on behalf of the 3 North Shore municipalities recognizing the significant work done by the centre over the past 40 years. This special celebration was a big success and highlighted the important work that the stroke recovery centres do for stroke survivors in their communities.

- **Victoria Branch**

The Victoria Branch celebrated Thanksgiving by hosting a luncheon, they had a raffle basket

with fruits, cheeses, special drinks and chocolates. There was also a salmon which was donated by one of the members. In the photo below, Bill Cox is collecting his winning from the donor, David. They also hosted a very successful Halloween party, photo below. Great costumes!



Delta Branch

Duncan Holmes from our Delta Branch wrote to let us know about a fabulous little movie he put together about their recent Fund Raiser.

“A short movie that illustrates the theme and purpose of a fund raiser that we had last weekend at a local gym. The total raised exceeded \$2000.00. I made the movie from stills taken at the event. Gloria Gaynor’s 'I Will Survive' matches well with stroke recovery.”

Branch Coordinator, Dawn Sillett added, “The event was put on by fitness instructors, our volunteers and stroke survivors (Silvo in the blue jacket and Duncan in blue striped sweater- they are in the wheelchair race). Terry Day of the "New Day Gym" (blond/reddish hair with moustache) asked his fitness instructors to take part by getting pledges on fitness challenges - the minimum was a \$20 pledge. Anne Herringer -our fitness instructor is in the black track suit – taken during wheelchair races ... with arms and legs in the air! They had a great time.”
Congratulations to everyone involved!

You can see the movie by downloading from here:

<http://tinyurl.com/np5garg>



Gordie Howe's Stroke

We were all saddened to hear that Canada's 'Mr. Hockey' had a stroke.

Karel Ley, of our Delta Branch wrote:

"Having heard of Gordie's stroke on tonight's news I think it would be a worthwhile gesture for our association to send him wishes of encouragement. Although I believe his home is in Ontario he does spend a fair amount of time in BC and we would certainly welcome him at our recovery group while he is visiting his property at Tsawwassen Springs."

SRABC followed up and sent a message. There's an article about Gordie Howe here:

http://espn.go.com/nhl/story/_/id/11781322/gordie-howe-serious-stroke-recovering-daughter-home

Stroke Survivors Needed for UBC Research Studies

- **FREE exercise, cooking, computer classes for stroke survivors 55+**

We are currently conducting a study to determine whether a group based exercise program or a group cognitive/social activities program will benefit brain functioning, such as memory, after stroke. Participants will be randomly put into groups where they will receive **FREE group exercise classes or FREE cooking classes, computer classes, board games sessions** etc. twice a week for 6 months. In total the study is 12 months long including 6 months of activities and a follow up assessment 6 months after the programs finish. All activities will take place at Vancouver General Hospital.

We are looking for...

- Individuals 55 years old or older
- Have had a stroke at least 12 months ago
- Interested in participating in either an exercise program or cognitive social program twice a week for 6 months
- Able to walk short distances (use of cane or walker is acceptable)

Participants who are interested or would like more information can contact Research Coordinator Michelle Munkacsy by phone at 604-875-4111 extension 69056 or by email at michelle.munkacsy@hiphealth.ca

Thank you for your time and consideration! If you have any questions, would like more

information or know of anyone interested please don't hesitate to contact myself or Michelle.

Laura Kean

Work Study Student for Dr. Teresa Liu-Ambrose

Aging, Mobility and Cognitive Neuroscience Laboratory, Dept. Physical Therapy

Centre For Hip Health & Mobility

Vancouver Coastal Research Institute & University of British Columbia

- **FEATHERS: Functional Engagement in Assisted Therapy Through Exercise Robotics**

What is the FEATHERS project?

FEATHERS = **F**unctional **E**ngagement in **A**ssisted **T**herapy through **E**xercise **R**obotics

FEATHERS is research project undertaken by researchers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists together with patients and their families.

The aim of FEATHERS is to develop a **fun and easy way** to help older adults after stroke to practice their arm exercises at home by using games readily available on the internet. There's a very short video at the link below. And you can find out more about what they're doing at their lab site: <http://caris.mech.ubc.ca/research/research-areas/therapy-robotics/>.

Website with more information about

the project: <http://caris.mech.ubc.ca/research/experiments/#bulmaro>

And this is a video of the project: <http://youtu.be/XiPuJmyz-s0>

Let me know if you need any more information,

Thanks again,

Bulmaro Valdés

The University of British Columbia

Biomedical Engineering, PhD Candidate

Robotics for Rehabilitation Exercise and Assessment in Collaborative Healthcare (RREACH)

Collaborative Advanced Robotics and Intelligent Systems Lab (CARIS)

Email: bulmaro.valdes@alumni.ubc.ca

Phone: +1.778.628.7056

Profile: <http://rreach.mech.ubc.ca/people/researchers/bulmaro-valdes-benavides/>



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Bridges Conference 2014

White Rock/South Surrey Branch Co-Coordinator Judith McBride kindly represented SRABC at this year's event in Langley. Bridges is designed to help Occupational Therapists connect with community based services and programs. 170 Occupational Therapists and Rehabilitation Assistants, plus 50 vendors, presenters and display people were in attendance on the day of the event. Thanks to Jennifer Hall, Occupational Therapist and the Bridges 12 Planning Team for putting on a successful event. Thanks to Judith for promoting SRABC at this great event!



Caregiver Action Network

The Caregiver Action Network is the USA's leading family caregiver organization working to improve the quality of life for the than 65 million Americans who care for loved ones with chronic conditions, disabilities, disease, or the frailties of old age. CAN serves a broad spectrum of family caregivers ranging from the parents of children with special needs, to the families and friends of wounded soldiers; from a young couple dealing with a diagnosis of MS, to adult children caring for parents with Alzheimer's disease. CAN (formerly the National Family Caregivers Association) is a non-profit organization providing education, peer support, and resources to family caregivers free of charge.

<http://www.caregiveraction.org/about/>

<http://www.caregiveraction.org/resources/toolbox/>



10 Tips for Family Caregivers

1. Seek support from other caregivers. You are not alone!
2. Take care of your own health so that you can be strong enough to take care of your loved one.
3. Accept offers of help and suggest specific things people can do to help you.
4. Learn how to communicate effectively with doctors.
5. Caregiving is hard work so take respite breaks often.
6. Watch out for signs of depression and don't delay in getting professional help when you need it.
7. Be open to new technologies that can help you care for your loved one.
8. Organize medical information so it's up to date and easy to find.
9. Make sure legal documents are in order.
10. Give yourself credit for doing the best you can in one of the toughest jobs there is!

Partners in Stroke Recovery- Kingston General Hospital

This book is available for download with iBooks on your Mac or iPad, and with iTunes on your computer. Multi-touch books can be read with iBooks on your Mac or iPad. Books with interactive features may work best on an iPad. iBooks on your Mac requires OS X 10.9 or later.

If you or a loved one has had a stroke this guide is for you. It is to use during your recovery in hospital and as you continue your recovery journey after discharge. It will help you learn more about stroke. It will support you to be involved and take charge of your health.

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/partners-in-stroke-recovery/id872582026?mt=11>



Canadian Best Practice Recommendations for Stroke Care

Fourth Edition Lindsay MP, Gubitz G, Bayley M, Phillips S (Editors), on Behalf of the Canadian Stroke Best Practices and Standards Working Group.

Follow the link below to read CHAPTER 6 'Managing Stroke Transitions of Care'

http://www.strokebestpractices.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Ch6_SBP2013_Transitions-28Oct13_Final_Post-2.pdf



Supported Communication for Adults with Aphasia Resources

Here are some resources that you will find interesting and of use in meeting the needs of people with Aphasia. I hope you find them useful.

Megan S. Sutton, M.S., RSLP, CCC-SLP (C), Speech-Language Pathologist, Surrey Memorial Hospital - High-Intensity Rehabilitation at Laurel Place

- Training Videos and Powerpoint on SCAA:

http://www.slideshare.net/aphasiaweb/sca-sdlm-3?from=share_email

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=edYvgSS8VQY&list=PL973A0B204DC16C6E&feature=player_embedded

- About Supported Communication for Aphasia:

<http://www.aphasia.ca/health-care-professionals/communicative-access-sca/>

- Tools for SCAA:

<http://www.aphasia.ca/shop/>

- Another Resource:

http://strokenetworkseo.ca/public/pdf_docs/ABrown%20Supported%20Conversation%20for%20Adults%20With%20Aphasia.pdf



building communication ramps

Aphasia Etiquette - Ask, Wait, Listen

Check out this great video on YouTube about communication with a person with aphasia.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTh86NoQh7Q&feature=youtu.be>

Aphasia Information and Resources

Follow this link for aphasia information and resources from the UK.

<http://www.speakability.org.uk/Aphasia+Information>



Tool Launched to Support Stroke Survivors to Make Best Possible Recovery

A web tool to support stroke survivors to make their best possible recovery was launched by charity the UK Stroke Association in October 2014. 'My Stroke Guide' enables patients to manage their rehabilitation by providing interactive information and tracking progress towards personal goals. It is being made available to those stroke survivors who receive the charity's Life After Stroke services so that they can be supported by its staff.

There are around 152,000 strokes in the UK every year and over 1.2 million people in the UK are living with the effects of stroke. The guide's resources include videos of stroke survivors offering tips and advice from their own experiences, information guides and games, interactive message boards and expert recommendations from stroke therapists.

Topics on the site cover physical, emotional and practical issues including mobility and communication, managing pain and medication, as well as common problems with emotional wellbeing, cognition and memory.

<http://www.stroke.org.uk/my-stroke-guide>



How Can Magic Help Stroke Survivors?

People who have had a stroke - where the blood supply to part of the brain is blocked - are often left with after effects such as muscle weakness, which can be frustrating. Rehabilitation and therapy play a vital role in recovery, helping stroke survivors to maintain their independence. It can be difficult to keep up enthusiasm for doing exercises - so a new magical approach could make recovery from stroke more entertaining.

There's short video from BBC News in the UK, showing a magician at a work with stroke survivors here: <http://www.bbc.com/news/health-29568165>

The Importance of Categories in Speech Therapy

by Tactus Therapy

Categorization is the process in which ideas and objects are recognized, differentiated, and understood. Categorization implies that objects are grouped into categories, usually for some

specific purpose. Ideally, a category illuminates a relationship between objects. Categorization is fundamental in language, prediction, inference, decision-making and in all kinds of environmental interaction. – Wikipedia

We use categories to organize our world and our thoughts. The aisles of a grocery store, the clothes in our closets, and the books in the library are all arranged and sorted based on categories. Our ability to understand and navigate these categories makes it easy to find what we're looking for more efficiently.

Similarly, we store words in our brain using categories. Networks of meaning link concepts with shared features. When one network is activated, the words linked along it are more quickly understood and produced. In a brain that is damaged, these networks may be broken, slowing thought, speech, and comprehension.

Categories help us organize words & our world

- Learn something new

Categories not only help us to process information, they also help us to learn, remember, and integrate new information. A new person we meet may be categorized in the brain according to where we met, the role they play, or who introduced us. We learn new words by inferring the part of speech and the meaning through context, then integrating the words into our mental network with connections to synonyms, antonyms, and related concepts. When we go back to retrieve these words, we may first access the category before honing in on the exact concept or name.

People who have difficulty speaking often have trouble with categories. They may struggle to see how items are connected, and without this connection, they have more difficulty finding the word they are looking for. Unfortunately, many of the assistive devices that have been designed for people with aphasia rely on category-based grids of words. These Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC) apps organize words into categories such as 'Food,' 'Feelings,' and 'Basic Needs' and then expect the user to find the right word by navigating to it.

If we want a person with aphasia to use such a communication system, we must first make sure that the person understands that 'happy' is a feeling and 'hot dog' is a food. This seems intuitive, but a damaged brain does not work the way a healthy one does. Assessing and treating the ability to find members of a given category and classify given items as belonging to a particular category is an important step in the speech therapy process.

In more advanced processing of categories, it can be valuable to not only identify the category, but also to generate other members belonging to that category. This is called generative or divergent naming. The ability to fluently list members of a category is a common diagnostic tool of brain health. Clinicians ask patients to name all the animals they can in one minute, and compare the results to norms of the general and impaired population. Rapid naming in categories is a way to see how healthy your brain is

- Now it's your turn

Go ahead – try it!

How many animals can you name in 60 seconds?

How did you do?

A typical range is 15-20 but this changes based on gender, education, and age. What strategies did you use? Did you start with cat and dog, then perhaps name a few more pets before moving on to horse, cow, and other farm animals? If you did something similar, you were using a subcategory search strategy within the parent category of animals. Pets, farm animals, zoo animals, forest animals, reptiles, birds, sea animals, etc. This is a very efficient strategy, and one that may need to be relearned after a stroke.

Here are some common speech therapy exercises that can help reinforce the concepts of categories:

Name the category e.g. What category does 'dog' belong to?

Find the category member e.g. Which one is an animal? Dog, rock, or apple?

Name one more in an unstated category e.g. Dog, horse, lion. What's one more?

Find the one that doesn't belong in an unstated category e.g. Which one doesn't belong? Dog, horse, lion, apple?

Name 5 category members e.g. Name 5 types of fruit.

Name a category member that begins with a certain letter e.g. Name a fruit that starts with A.

Category Therapy, a professional speech therapy app, allows for unlimited practice of 70 categories in 3 levels of difficulty across 4 activities to strengthen categorization skills essential for everyday life. Try it for free by downloading Category Therapy Lite on your iPhone or iPad. <http://tactustherapy.com/importance-of-categories/>



Remember: "Ask, Don't Tell"

When a client is struggling with a task, we often feel the need to jump in and tell them the answer, or at least give a hint. This makes the person reliant on us for the support. To help them become independent, when the client struggles, ask what they could do to solve the problem, find the answer, or cue themselves. If they won't know the answer, consider changing the focus of therapy to teaching strategies to help clients learn to help themselves.

Caregiver Toolkit: Simplifying Your Senior Care Journey

<http://www.aplaceformom.com/senior-care-resources/caregiver-toolkit>

This website has some very useful information as follows:

Educational guides providing an overview on senior care:

- PLANNING - Checklists to help ensure your loved one is taken care of
- EMERGENCY PREP - Trackers to organize your most critical information
- FINANCING - Financial tools to help maximize your budget
- CARING - Worksheets to care for yourself while you support others



Dealing With Challenging Relationships as a Caregiver

by Emily Shearing

After her stroke, Aimee Messerschmidt became much quicker to anger than before. Her husband, Messerschmidt says, not only had to deal with her temper and personality changes,

but also became the main caregiver for their two young daughters. He handled chores throughout the house for the first few weeks after her stroke too. “It was burden on my family—I laid in bed and they’re the ones that had to do everything,” she says.

- Family Dynamics.

Messerschmidt’s husband and caregiver is like so many others who face difficult and unexpected changes to their loved ones’ disposition after a stroke. In situations where a survivor may become verbally combative, take a deep breath and call a friend or family member to discuss how you feel, advises Dr. Sara Palmer, a psychologist and faculty member of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Retaliating with anger or keeping your feelings to yourself won’t make the situation any better. And remember that the survivor’s behavior isn’t personal.

- At the Doctor’s Office.

Caregivers are often faced with more responsibilities on behalf of stroke survivors, including asking questions at neurology and rehab appointments survivors may not think to ask. But not all doctors are understanding when it comes to answering questions from someone other than the patient. If a doctor or member of the rehab team dodges a caregiver’s questions, it might be time to find another physician or specialist.

- Handling Visitors.

Not everyone feels comfortable seeing their loved one disabled and, in some cases, guests might even be a burden on both survivors and caregivers.

In the case of a rude visitor, Palmer says it’s important to make clear to guests about time limits for visits, as well as any physical and cognitive limitations the stroke survivor might have, even giving them a fact sheet about stroke. “It’s a good idea for spouses, or whichever family member is the primary support person, and the stroke survivor to define for themselves what is and isn’t helpful, depending on their needs and personalities,” she says. “Some want lots of visitors and some want more privacy. Some caregivers are fine with educating their friends about stroke and others don’t have the energy to deal with that.”

And don’t be afraid to ask visitors to take a break. “If friends cannot be helpful, and are in fact harmful, then clearly they should be asked to step back for a while until they can better handle

the situation,” Palmer says. <http://www.strokesmart.org/new?id=269>

StrokeSmart

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We send out the snippets newsletter to all of our Coordinators to keep everyone connected.

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