



Stroke and return to work

Life after Stroke

Introduction



Introduction

- Many people can and do return to work after a stroke.
- The information within this resource provides practical advice and support to help you in returning to work after your stroke.
- Returning to work can have a positive impact on your mental well being.
- However, there may be a number of things to consider to ensure that you return to work at the right time and with the right support.





Returning to work after your stroke

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Your ability to return to work will depend on:

- The type of work you do.
- The severity of your stroke.
- The duration of your recovery.

Remember: there is lots of support available to help you return to work wherever possible.



Things to consider before you return to work

Important to know that:

- You should not go back to work before you are ready.
- Depending on your recovery journey, it may be necessary for your employer to make reasonable adjustments to enable you to return to work.
- Your employer is required by law to make these adjustments.
- These adjustments should help to ensure the right fit between you, your work tasks and the work environment.
- This can help make a successful return to work.





Planning your return to work

Planning for returning to work

Access to **Work Occupational Health Service**:

- Many employees will have access to an Occupational Health Service (OHS) through their employer.
- The OHS will give impartial advice about a disabled employee's ability to do their job and about any adjustment needed to support them to remain in or return to work.
- OHS staff are usually medical and nursing staff who specialise in understanding and improving the relationship between work and health.
- To help them do this they may seek further information and support from other health professionals, such as the employee's general practitioner (GP) or medical consultant.
- The OHS may also provide or access additional services to support the employee to return to or remain at work, such as counsellors, occupational therapists and physiotherapists.





Who can help you return to work?

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Support services are available to help you return to work wherever possible:

- Talking to Rehabilitation Staff about your job: Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists & Nurses will help to give you a clearer picture of what you need to be able to return to work.
- Members of the Hospital and Community Rehabilitation Teams will be able to provide support in the stages of your return to work planning.
- If you are unsure who to approach, you could discuss this at the ward meeting or your case conference.
- If you are able, it may be helpful to discuss returning to work with family and friends and how they might be able to support you.

Remember your family and friends can have a positive influence on you returning to work.



Rehabilitation staff who can help you

Occupational Therapist (OT):

- Specialise in the relationship between the person, the environment and the activity being carried out. They can help to identify the cause of a person's difficulty at work and what can be done to address it.
- Work with individuals to: improve ability and recommend changes to the work environment or changes to the way work is carried out.
- Can also suggest alternative equipment requirements in the workplace.
- In some areas, OTs will be based in out-patient rehabilitation services. In other areas they are based in community services such as community rehabilitation teams.



Rehabilitation staff who can help you

Physiotherapist specialise in identifying and treating difficulties with:

- physical strength
- posture
- balance
- movement
- stamina
- mobility



Rehabilitation staff who can help you

The Physiotherapist can:

- Help to identify whether a physical problem is caused or made worse by a person's work.
- Work with the person to improve their physical ability or suggest changes to the way they carry out their job.
- Be based in out-patient rehabilitation services, occupational health services (OHS), community health centres or community services.



Other rehabilitation staff who can help you

The Specialist Nurse can:

- Offer practical help and emotional support throughout the process of returning to work.
- Refer onto appropriate individuals and/or agencies for help.
- Liaise with employers and occupational health service (OHS) personnel on behalf of the person aiming to return to work.





Employers responsibilities

Employers Responsibility (1)

It is normal to feel worried about going back to work after illness but remember that your Employer:

- Is required by law to do what they can to support an employee at work.
- However, they can only help you return to work if you keep them informed of your circumstances. Generally, the sooner you and your employer engage in this process, the sooner the correct support can be put in place for you at work.
- Early interventions should include a plan to contact the employer. This can be done by you or alternatively your rehabilitation therapist would be happy to make that initial contact on your behalf. To explain more about what has happened to you and what you can manage well and what you are perhaps having difficulty with.



Employers Responsibility (2)

- Early interventions will help your employer to start thinking about reasonable adjustments they could make.
- You can ask for an Allied Health Professional Health & Work Report to be completed. This is a form that provides an employee, their GP and their employer with information that can be used to help manage your and your employer's expectations regarding a return to work timeframe; or a review date to look at this again.





**Government services available to
help you return to work**

Government services available to help you return to work (1)

Access to Work:

- Is a government scheme to help people who are at work, about to start work or are self-employed and whose health or disability affects their ability to do their job.
- Can help the person and their employer by providing advice and financial support to meet the person's needs at work.
- Offers financial support for equipment and adapting premises. It can provide a support worker and may be able to help if communication support is needed at job interview(s).
- Contributes to the cost of getting to work if public transport is unsuitable. For more information about Access to Work visit:
<https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/what-youll-get>



Government services available to help you return to work (2)

Jobcentre Plus is a government-funded employment agency and social security office that can be found in most cities. Their aim is to:

- Help people of working age find employment in the UK.
- Provides resources to enable job-searchers to find work, through Jobpoints (touch-screen computer terminals), Jobseeker Direct (telephone service) and the [Jobcentre Plus](#) website.
- They offer information about training opportunities for the chronically unemployed.
- They administer claims for benefits.

Government services available to help you return to work (3)

Local Jobcentre can:

- Help you find a job or gain new skills.
- Tell you about disability-friendly employers in your area.
- If appropriate, refer you to a specialist work psychologist.
- Carry out an 'employment assessment' asking you about: your skills and experience, what kind of roles you're interested in.



Government services available to help you return to work (4)

The **work coach** at your local Jobcentre can advise about programmes and grants to help you back into work. These include:

- **Access to Work** -Money towards a support worker or for the cost of equipment or travelling to work.
- **Intensive Personalised Employment Support** - Individual training and help to get you into work.
- **Work and Health Programme** - to help you find and keep a job

For more information about these schemes visit: www.gov.uk/looking-for-work-if-disabled



Legislation around work and working conditions

Legislation around work & working conditions (1)

The **Equality Act 2010** and the **UN Convention**:

- Exists to tackle any discrimination faced by disabled people, including discrimination at work.
- Requires employers to make reasonable adjustments to prevent disabled employees being disadvantaged at work compared with employees who are not disabled.
- For more information about the Equality Act, the definition of 'disabled' and reasonable adjustments visit: <https://www.gov.uk/rights-disabled-person>

Legislation around work & working conditions (2)

The **Equality & Human Rights Commission**:

- Is a statutory organisation which exists to support the implementation of legislation to promote equality and the human rights of people throughout Britain.
- Is a good source of advice about discrimination at work and can help if someone wants to consider lodging a claim at an Employment Tribunal.
- For more information about the Equality & Human Rights Commission visit:
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>



Access to support from CHSS

Access to support from Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland (CHSS)

CHSS provide free advice & support through:

- Advice Line Team Service is a free confidential telephone, e-mail and text service providing professional support and information to people living with stroke. Healthcare professionals are available to chat confidentially about any worries or concerns Monday to Friday 9.30am-4pm. Telephone: 0808 8010899, Email: advice@chss.org.uk or Text: NURSE to 66777
- Health Information Services have a range of up to date Stroke publications and information leaflets including work & financial support resources. For more information and access to these resources visit: [CHSS Resources Hub](#)
- CHSS Stroke Nurse Service provide nursing support and information to people living with stroke.





**Other information and support
services**

Other information & support services

The **Working Health Services/Fit for Work Services**:

- Is a voluntary organisation providing free, expert and impartial advice to anyone looking for help with issues around health and work.
- Through this scheme a number of vocational rehabilitation services are being developed around the country. Contact details-

Tel: 0800 019 2211. Web: www.healthyworkinglives.scot



Further information & support

- For more information on government services, benefits and schemes available to you visit: [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).
- Further advice can also be obtained from: [Citizens Advice Scotland](#).



Information used to create this resource

Information used to create this resource has been taken with kind permission from:

- STARS Professional resource Advancing Module 10: [Returning to work scenario](#).
- CHSS essential guide: [Work and financial support](#).
- [Gov.uk](#)- The best place to find government services and information simpler, clearer, faster.
- CHSS [Resources Hub](#)

If you have any comments/changes/suggestions on CHSS Tailored Talks please contact: tailoredtalks@chss.org.uk



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The following organisations contributed to this presentation

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