

Stroke Communications Toolkit

STROKE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN – BE FAST

Background

The Minnesota Stroke System ensures hospitals across Minnesota are equipped and ready to provide the best care possible for all Minnesotans. This system works best when people know and understand the signs and symptoms of a stroke and know that you should call 911. Hospitals and health systems are looking for support in delivering these messages in a consistent way across the state.

Objective

To build awareness of the signs and symptoms of a stroke, and to motivate action to call 911.

Key message

It is important for Minnesotans to know how to spot a stroke quickly and call 9-1-1. You can recognize the signs and symptoms of a stroke by remembering to B.E. F.A.S.T.

B—Balance loss, E—Eyesight changes, F – facial droop/numbness, A – arm weakness, S – speech difficulty, and T – time to call 9-1-1.

Supporting messages

- Anyone can have a stroke, everyone should be ready.
- Quality stroke care begins by calling 911, there are important steps taken in the ambulance to increase the speed at which stroke treatment can begin.
- At a stroke-ready hospital, they are prepared to evaluate, stabilize and provide emergency treatment to patients with acute stroke symptoms. That is why we recommend ambulance services take stroke patients to the nearest stroke-designated hospital.

Supporting data

- Quick Facts on [Stroke in Minnesota](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/cardiovascular/data/stroke.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/cardiovascular/data/stroke.html>)
- [Cardiovascular Health Indicator Dashboards](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/cardiovascular/cardio-dashboard/index.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/cardiovascular/cardio-dashboard/index.html>)

Campaign materials

Getting started

Follow these four steps to get your awareness campaign started.

1. Determine the best media strategies that fit within your budget.
2. Determine the best channels of communication in your community.
3. Create a content calendar for your dissemination plan – see template on p. 7.
4. Execute your plan.

Download the Graphic Images:

To access the graphic images that correspond with many of the activities described in this toolkit, complete the [Every Second Counts Toolkit Request](https://redcap.health.state.mn.us/redcap/surveys/?s=W84AEHPDDP) (<https://redcap.health.state.mn.us/redcap/surveys/?s=W84AEHPDDP>) order form.

After submission, the form will direct you to a DropBox where you can download the graphic images for printing.

Every Second Counts Website:

To download this toolkit again or see other public awareness resources, visit [Every Second Counts](http://www.health.state.mn.us/every-second-counts) (<http://www.health.state.mn.us/every-second-counts>).

Awareness Activities

Print advertising

Print advertising can be an effective way to reach your audience, especially with smaller, localized publications like a local newspaper or magazine. Your print ad costs will depend on many things: the size of your ad(s), what publication(s) you use, what sections of the paper(s) you want your ads in, the frequency with which you run the ads, and whether you use color.

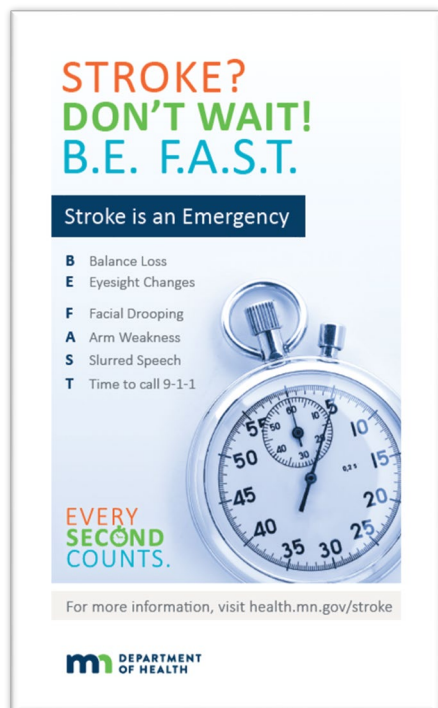
Other publication types in your community may also be a good spot to place an ad.

- Your hospital or clinic publications
- Community newsletters and calendars
- City publications
- Colleges and university publications

Build a list of publications that will best reach your target audience and reach out to those publications to find out about costs, publication dates and submission deadlines.

Images

This image is available for newspaper ads, publications, newsletters, etc.



Survivor Story/Press Release

Another way to build awareness is by telling stroke success stories where a local person recognized the stroke signs and symptoms, called 9-1-1, and by acted fast saved a life. You can promote these stories in your hospital newsletter or magazine, or write a press release for local media. These stories can also be compelling on video produced in house, through a local news station or contractor.

Things you might want to include in your survivor story:

- How the patient recognized they were having a stroke, or why 911 was called.
- How calling 9-1-1 helped them get quick treatment in the ambulance (if they arrived by EMS).
- How the emergency department staff identified them as a stroke patient, and what they did to treat the patient.
- If tele-stroke was activated, and how that works and what it brings to the community.
- The door-to-drug time, explained in a way that would make sense to a broad audience.
- The patient’s outcome, the effect on their life, and their thoughts on the care they received.
- The signs and symptoms of stroke and the importance of calling 9-1-1.

Tips for producing a success story:

- Start by meeting with your team to decide: who is your audience, what your main messaging will be, how long the message will be, and what type of media it will be (e.g., video, print, etc.). For a video, limit yourself to two main messages per video.
- When scheduling interviews, plan for 30 minutes to interview providers and one hour to interview the patient. Build in wiggle-room, as providers might not be available during their scheduled times or they might be called away. Don’t forget to schedule a break for meals. (If it is a video, also plan for 20-30 minutes of set-up time when moving to a new location.)
- For a video, schedule time to shoot B-roll (supplemental footage) for the end of the day. If providers are called away to see a patient, you can always swap their original interview time for B-roll. Some B-roll ideas: ambulance driving in; EMS provider behind the wheel; inside of the ambulance; patient and provider talking; provider walking down the hall; “Emergency” sign; Stroke Code going off; CT scanner; someone reading a CT scan; alteplase bottle and IV; Telehealth machine; ED treatment bay; EKG monitor.
- For interviews:
 - Prepare a question list. Avoid asking questions that have a “yes” or “no” answer. Start questions with leading phrases, such as “describe for me...” or “walk me through...”
 - Have an experienced interviewer asking questions if possible.
 - Coach your interviewees to speak naturally, slowly, and in plain-language that non-medical professionals will understand.

Out of home advertising – billboards, bus shelters

While large-scale advertisements like bus shelters and billboards can be expensive, they can also reach a large number of people. These types of advertisements are generally best for building broad awareness and not driving a specific action.

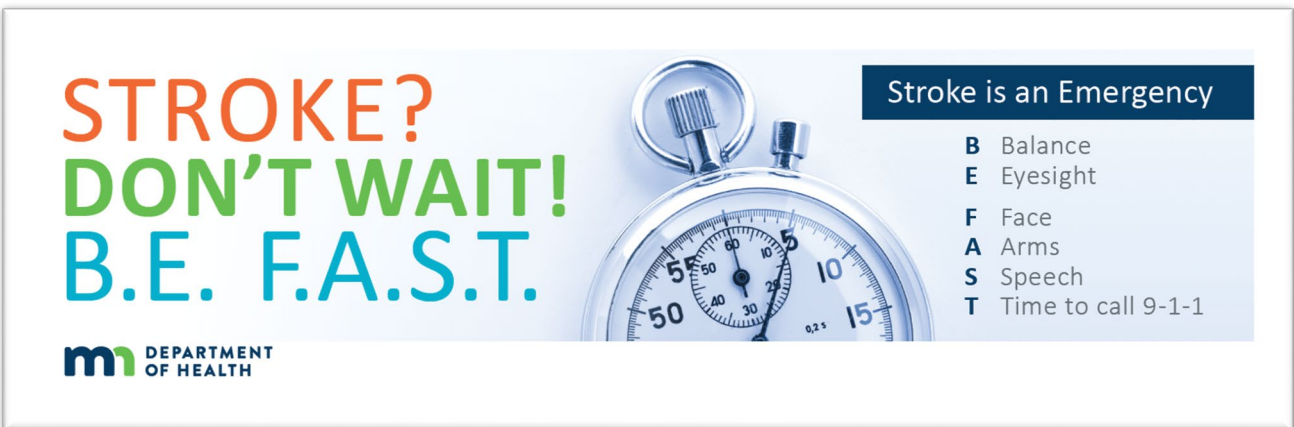
Work with your local company that sells ad space and remember to ask them key questions about location, pricing, length of time the ad will run, and the potential reach of the ad.

Things to consider

- Your budget and what portion you are willing to allocate to this tactic
- Your target audience, and where would the ad best reach them
- The best “bang for your buck,” You can prioritize the best location, highest reach, or longest placement that will fit within your budget

Images

These images are available for billboards, bus shelters, etc.



Social media

Find out which social media sites your organization supports and how you can submit content for those platforms – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn. Posting on social media is an important component of any awareness strategy. Facebook can also be an affordable paid media strategy. You can invest as little as \$20 to boost a post or push out an ad, and it allows you to target your message to your specific audience.

Your social media coordinator can help you with post timing, audience selection and platform selection.

Facebook starters

Stroke is Minnesota's 6th leading cause of death. Becoming an Acute Stroke Ready Hospital has prepared our hospital to provide the best possible stroke care for our community.

May is American Stroke Month. Make sure your family and friends know the warning signs of a stroke. It could save their life. Remember to BE FAST because time lost is brain lost.

With a stroke, calling 911 can save your life. Your care starts in the ambulance and Emergency Medical Services is an important part of our Acute Stroke Ready team.

One American dies from stroke every 4 minutes. We're on the clock as soon as you see the signs and symptoms of a stroke. Balance loss. Eyesight changes. Face drooping. Arm weakness. Speech difficulty. Time to call 911.

Twitter starters

#Stroke is MN's 6th leading cause of death. As an Acute Stroke Ready hospital, we're ready to provide you the best possible stroke care.

May is American #Stroke Month. Know the warning signs of a stroke b/c time lost is brain lost – BE FAST

Calling 911 matters. Your #stroke care starts in the ambulance w/ stroke-ready #EMS professionals.

1 American dies from stroke every 4 minutes. We're on the clock as soon as you see the signs and symptoms of a stroke. Balance loss. Eyesight changes. Face drooping. Arm weakness. Speech difficulty. Time to call 911.

Images

These images are available for social media posts, ads and banners, as web banners for your organization’s site or in emails.

**STROKE?
DON'T WAIT!
B.E. F.A.S.T.**

Stroke is an Emergency

- B** Balance Loss
- E** Eyesight Changes
- F** Facial Drooping
- A** Arm Weakness
- S** Slurred Speech
- T** Time to call 9-1-1

m DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**STROKE?
DON'T WAIT!
B.E. F.A.S.T.**

Stroke is an Emergency

Nearly **800,000** people in the United States have a stroke every year.

More than **690,000** strokes in the U.S. are caused by a blood clot in the brain. **PER YEAR**

www.mnhealth.gov

**STROKE?
DON'T WAIT!
B.E. F.A.S.T.**

Stroke is an Emergency

Stroke is the No. 5 cause of death in the United States, killing nearly **130,000** Americans a year.

1 in 20 DEATHS

Call 9-1-1 AT THE FIRST SIGN OF STROKE!

m DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**STROKE?
DON'T WAIT!
B.E. F.A.S.T.**

QUICK TREATMENT = LESS BRAIN DAMAGE

Call 911 at the first sign of stroke. If diagnosed quickly, there are treatment options to help patients recover.

Clot-busting drug **within 4.5 hours**

Clot removal procedure for some strokes **up to 24 hours**

Medicine can dissolve the blood clot if given within 4.5 hours from when symptoms began. For some strokes, a doctor can remove the clot by guiding a device into the brain through a small, flexible tube.

www.mnhealth.gov

Print materials

Posters are another way to spread your awareness message. You can print posters and distribute them throughout your community.

Possible poster locations

- Emergency rooms
- Waiting rooms at hospitals or clinics
- Healthcare providers themselves
- Grocery store
- Pharmacy
- Gyms
- Church
- Health fairs/County fairs
- Fire stations where they provide blood pressure checks
- Community centers

Images

This image is available for posters, fliers, etc.



Infographic

Infographics are a good way to tell a story or visually guide someone through a process. You have the option to use this infographic electronically through emails, social media or on your web page. You can also print an infographic and use it as a poster, handout or as a direct mail piece to your target audience.

Talk with your organization’s marketing department to ask for recommendations about the best way to use this infographic.

Images

This image is available as an infographic for emails, social media, posters, handouts, mailings, etc.



Evaluation

You can evaluate your awareness activities for reach and impact. To measure the reach of your program, you can look at measures like:

- # of materials distributed
- # of events, trainings and educational programs
- # of ads placed (bus, billboard, newspaper, TV radio)
- # plays for radio, TV ads, interviews
- # of people reached at events, by radio, TV

To measure impact, you can look at your stroke data in the Minnesota Stroke Registry or in your EHR. You can examine these measures the month before your awareness campaign, each month during the campaign, the month after the campaign, and six months later:

- Average # of minutes from LKW to ED
- % Acute stroke patients arrival by EMS
- % Arrival in ED within 3-4.5 hours from LKW
- % Stroke patients that are candidates for intervention

Minnesota Department of Health's Cardiovascular Health Unit can also provide resources and support for evaluating the effectiveness of your stroke awareness campaign. For more information, please contact us at health.stroke@state.mn.us.

Content Calendar Template

	Print ads	Public relations	Out of home ads	Digital – Social	Print materials
January					
February					
March					
April					
May					
June					
July					
August					
September					
October					
November					
December					