



Josh Frydenberg MP Federal Member for Kooyong

12 March 2013

3 Minute Constituency Statement Stroke Prevention and Treatment – An Important Priority

E&OE

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong) (16:11): I rise to raise an important health issue, namely, the prevalence of strokes in our community and the impact that it has on our fellow citizens.

In Australia today there are 60,000 strokes every year, a number which will only increase as our population ages.

One in six people in Australia will suffer a stroke in their lifetime. In fact strokes kill more women than breast cancer, more men than prostate cancer and is the second biggest killer after heart disease.

Around 20 per cent of people who suffer strokes are under the age of 55. The cost to society in terms of human hardship is extreme, not to mention the more than \$2 billion financial cost that has been quantified as a result of strokes.

I want to pay tribute to important organisations in our community like the Howard Florey Institute which does so much work in stroke prevention research and in its clinical trials. Also at a local level, I have had the privilege of getting to know the Boroondara Stroke Support Group and its founder and President Jenny Cheng, and last year I attended its 10th anniversary celebrations. It has around 100 members that are affected by stroke and provides self-help for these survivors, for their carers and for volunteers, and provides a range of activities including art and recreation, sport and strength training, as well as gardening and other activities.

I also had the privilege recently to meet with two outstanding women, Dawn Oldham, and a lady called Emma Gee. Both are stroke survivors. Dawn Oldham, who is a resident in the Boroondara, was a talented stockbroker. At age 42 she was struck down by a stroke. In her words, 'I had a stroke in my pantry while I was preparing for dinner, the same day I played basketball and scored three goals and was feeling fantastic.' It was because her husband had seen the advertisement for FAST, the Face, Arm, Speech and Time campaign on TV, that he was able to deal with her incident of stroke.

So it was too with Emma Gee. Emma was 24 years of age, working full time as an occupational therapist and was an avid runner when she was struck down with a stroke while having an operation to remove the arteriovenous malformation, AVM, which had formed in her brain.

Both are outstanding people who have supported the National Stroke Foundation's call for action and its eight particular calls. I have spoken to the member for Dickson, the shadow minister for health, to express my support for the call to action and for the \$198 million package of measures which has been called for to increase our ability as a community to support those who have a stroke and ensure their better treatment.

End.