Marketing Your Stroke Support Group

Once you have decided what type of group you want to start, where and when it will meet, you are ready to consider how to get the word out to potential members. You want everyone in your community to know about the group so that they can spread the word to those who would benefit from attendance.

**Talk to everyone.** The more people hear about your group, the more people they will talk to and soon the people you want at your group—stroke survivors and caregivers—will hear about it.

**Make a flyer about the group.** Be sure to include the location and the date and time of the meeting. If you know someone who can help design the flyer, don’t hesitate to ask for help. The flyer doesn’t need to be fancy; it just has to communicate the details.

**Distribute the flyer everywhere.** Start with your sponsoring agency, if you have one. Leave flyers in all the offices and in public places. Let all the hospitals in your area know about the group and leave lots of copies of the flyer. Drop off flyers at nursing homes in your area. Let ministers at local churches know. Consider leaving a flyer at senior centers and even at fitness centers that have senior programs such as Silver Sneakers.

**Visit patients at hospitals who have recently had a stroke to let them know about the group.** Get permission from the hospital to visit their patients. Meeting you personally means the stroke survivor will have a connection to the group already and may feel less anxious about coming to a new place. Leave a flyer with the survivor.

www.stroke.org
Let doctors, nurses and social workers know about the group. Who are the physicians in your area who treat stroke survivors? If you have neurologists, neurosurgeons and rehab doctors in your area, consider visiting their offices to drop off flyers. Request that they display the flyers for their patients to see. Many hospitals have hospitalists, a group of physicians who practice only in hospitals. Try to get flyers to these physicians because they see a lot people who have had strokes. Most hospitals have social workers or case managers who work directly with stroke survivors and their families. Make sure they have flyers to hand out.

Visit outpatient therapy clinics to let them know the group exists. Ask the clinic to display your flyer for their patients to see.

Ask newspapers to include information about your group in their publication. Many newspapers have listings of community activities that they publish weekly. Be sure to ask them to write a feature story about the group at a later date.

Use social media to get the word out. Let your Facebook friends know you are starting a new group. Ask them to share the information with their friends.

Register your group at www.stroke.org. National Stroke Association receives many calls from people looking for support groups. If your group is registered, we can give that information to our callers.