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# AFTER STROKE CARE

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## Emotional Well-Being and Counselling Resource

*A resource for people living with stroke and their care partners - shaped  
by insights from the stroke community*



Updated June 2025

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# INTRODUCTION

**Stroke** has **effects** that **you cannot see**. Changes to the way you feel can have a big impact on your life. The emotions you have throughout your recovery can be intense and change quickly. Intense feelings are a **NORMAL** reaction to a big health event, but they **can also be a result of brain injury from a stroke**. People who have had a stroke are at higher risk for developing depression. (Your Stroke Journey, Heart and Stroke Foundation 2023). **IT IS OK TO NEED HELP.**

According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada (2025), emotional issues are part of your journey. Keeping emotions inside can interfere with your recovery. **Sharing your feelings**, as hard as it may be, is a step toward meeting your recovery goals.



This resource was developed in response to the **Community Consultation completed in 2023: What We Heard: Enhancing Individualized Community Stroke Services**.

One of the four key themes that emerged was **Wellbeing and Mental Health** and one of the top five recommendations was support for mental health. There was an identified need for a well-being and counselling resource **focusing on grief and disability** available to those living with a stroke in Southeastern Ontario. This resource is designed to assist persons with lived experience and their care partners. Services range in fees from those that are fully, partially covered and some private resources.

# INTRODUCTION

1 in 3 people who have had a stroke will experience depression. Depression is most common in the **first 3-6 months** after a stroke, **but can occur at any time.** You are at higher risk if you have aphasia post stroke.

There is a difference between **sadness** and **depression**. Sadness comes and goes. It is normal to feel sadness and a sense of loss after a stroke. Sadness that does not go away may be a sign of depression.

If you **OR** your family member(s) notice any of these symptoms, contact your doctor or medical professional. Treatment can involve speaking to a trained mental health professional, taking medication or both. If the signs below persist for two or more weeks with no new explanation, you should seek help.

## **Physical signs:**

- changes in your sleep pattern (not sleeping well, or sleeping more than normal)
- changes in appetite
- gaining or losing weight without trying
- feeling tired, having much less energy
- feeling restless
- chronic pain or digestive problems (such as stomach aches, nausea, constipation or diarrhea)

## **Emotional signs:**

- feeling sad, anxious, irritable, nervous, guilty, worthless or hopeless
- not feeling interested in doing things you used to enjoy
- finding it hard to focus, remember things or make decisions
- changes in your work style or zest for work
- constant thoughts of death and/or suicide

**If you believe you or someone is in danger because of their thoughts of suicide, call a distress line 9-8-8 or 9-1-1 right away.** (Heart and Stroke Foundation, 2025)

# SEEKING SUPPORT

Find people you can talk to about your feelings. This might be family, friends, other stroke survivors or a member of your health care team. Consider joining a support group. **If any of your feelings become overwhelming, talk with a healthcare professional right away.**

Sharing your feelings, as hard as it may be, is a step toward meeting your recovery goals. It is normal to feel many emotions after a stroke. Some days may be harder than others. You can check in with yourself by asking:

**How do I feel today?  
Am I being kind to myself?  
What have I done to take care of me?**

If you're feeling sad, stuck or not like yourself, **it's okay to ask for help.** Talking to someone-like a counsellor or support person-can make a difference.



# SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER

- **Your needs and goals?**
  - What do I want help with? (for example, depression, anxiety, grief, trauma, life transitions)
- **Type of support?**
  - Am I looking for a counsellor, psychologist, psychiatrist, social worker, or peer support?
  - Do I want someone with specific experience?
- **Accessibility?**
  - Do I prefer virtual or in-person sessions?
  - Do I need services close to home or accessible by public transportation?
  - Do I need physical accommodations (for example, wheelchair access)
  - Do I need communication accommodations (for example, aphasia supports)
  - Parking?
- **Finances and insurance?**
  - What can I afford to pay per session and is it covered by my insurance? Are there free services?
  - Are there discounted rates based on income?
- **Scheduling?** Do their hours work for me?
- **Comfort and trust?**
  - Was this provider recommended to me by someone I trust?
  - Do I feel safe and respected by this person?
- **Follow-Up and continuity?**
  - Can I reach out between sessions if I need help?
  - Are there resources if I need more intensive support?

The following list contains **general** emotional well-being and counselling resources. It's okay to contact more than one service and ask questions - this can help you find the support that best fits your needs. For personalized guidance related to your stroke recovery, please connect with your stroke care team - they can help link you to the right supports in your community.

**Thank you** to members of the ***Community Reintegration Leadership Team*** (CRLT) for your valuable feedback.

**Disclaimer:** The material provided is for general guidance only and is not meant to take the place of medical advice or support from your care team. Please consult your primary care provider with any questions or concerns. **If this is a medical emergency, please call 9-1-1, or go to your local emergency department.** These are resources that can begin to guide you on your journey of recovery. The creators of the resource library have no direct financial interest in any tools, services or interventions listed. While we endeavor to keep the resource up to date and comprehensive, it is not an exhaustive list of all the resources available in your community.



Consumer Protection Ontario can help you ask the right questions before you choose a service. If you have a concern or serious complaint about a non-regulated service, visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/your-rights-under-consumer-protection-act> for further information. This service is not intended for emergency situations.

**If you are experiencing a medical emergency, please call 9-1-1 or visit your nearest emergency department right away.**





# COUNSELLING RESOURCES

## Local Area - Hastings, Prince Edward County (HPE)

Resource	Services Provided	Fees	Contact
<p>Canadian Mental Health Association Hastings Prince Edward Addictions and Mental Health Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical counselling via evidence-based psychotherapy at each of 5 office sites.</li> <li>• Services in a variety of methods – virtually or in person depending on needs.</li> <li>• *Individual counselling.</li> <li>• Triaged care with possible wait times depending on individual needs.</li> </ul>	<p>No Cost</p>	 <p><a href="https://cmhape.ca/programs-and-services/clinical-counselling/">https://cmhape.ca/programs-and-services/clinical-counselling/</a></p> <p>613-967-4734</p> <p>You can self-refer via <a href="http://www.AccessMHA.ca">www.AccessMHA.ca</a> coordinated access</p>
<p>Enrichment Centre for Mental Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Counselling that offers short-term (8-12 sessions) strength-based and solution-focused counselling that empowers clients and provides tools to manage and improve mental health and well being. Based on a recovery framework.</li> <li>• Offerd 8-week support groups of a variety of topics.</li> <li>• In-person but may accommodate for virtual (zoom) sessions if required.</li> <li>• Fully accessible-ground floor with parking on premises.</li> <li>• *Individual counselling only</li> <li>• Triaged care with possible wait times depending on individual needs.</li> </ul>	<p>No Cost</p>	 <p><a href="https://enrichmentcentre.ca/">https://enrichmentcentre.ca/</a></p> <p>613-969-8874</p> <p>*Contact to set up an appointment to speak with a counsellor to ensure program fit (self-referral is preference and encouraged)</p>



# COUNSELLING RESOURCES

## Local Area - Lanark, Leeds and Grenville (LLG)

Resource	Services Provided	Fees	Contact
<p>ConnectWell Community Health – Counselling Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For non-urgent mental health concerns.</li> <li>• In-person or virtual.</li> <li>• Provide time-limited, short-term counselling.</li> <li>• Also offers several wellness groups throughout the year (Managing Powerful Emotions, Stepping Stones to Wellness etc)</li> <li>• *Individual counselling</li> <li>• *Self-refer for counselling and offers on-line booking for appointments</li> <li>• *Wait-lists may occur, and appointments are triaged based on need</li> </ul>	<p>No Cost</p>	 <p><a href="https://connectwell.ca/services/counselling-services/">https://connectwell.ca/services/counselling-services/</a></p> <p>613-259-2182 <a href="mailto:info@connectwell.ca">info@connectwell.ca</a></p>
<p>Lanark County Mental Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide practical support programs. Case Managers. For people with pre-existing or suspected diagnosis of a severe and persistent mental illness.</li> <li>• Offers in-person or virtual services</li> <li>• *Individual counselling</li> <li>• *Wait lists may occur</li> </ul>	<p>No Cost</p>	 <p><a href="https://www.lcmh.ca">https://www.lcmh.ca</a></p> <p>Smiths Falls - 613-283-2170 Carleton Place - 613-257-8101 *Self-refer on website <a href="http://www.lcmh.ca">www.lcmh.ca</a></p>



# COUNSELLING RESOURCES

## Local Area - Lanark, Leeds and Grenville (LLG)

Resource	Services Provided	Fees	Contact
<p>LLG Addictions and Mental Health – Counselling (Psychotherapy)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive up to 8 sessions. Wide range of concerns, including anxiety, depression, grief from disability, and self-esteem.</li> <li>• *Trained counsellors at the master’s level in counselling Psychology and Master of Social Work</li> <li>• *Offer in-person or virtual</li> <li>• *Individual Counselling</li> <li>• *Wait-list may occur and managed on a first-come-first serve basis</li> </ul>	<p>No Cost</p>	 <p><a href="https://llgamh.ca/counselling.php">https://llgamh.ca/counselling.php</a></p> <p>613-342-2262 Toll Free: 1-866-499-8445 *Self-refer via <a href="http://www.AccessMHA.ca">www.AccessMHA.ca</a></p>
<p>Release Counselling Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team of two Social Workers</li> <li>• *Offer individual and couples counselling</li> <li>• *Offer virtual options</li> <li>• No waitlist</li> </ul>	<p>\$145/session *Sliding scale to support financial abilities</p>	 <p>Debbie Smith, MSW, RSW 11 St. George Street, Lyn, Ontario K6T 1B7 613-340-0657 <a href="mailto:debbie@releasecounsellingservices.ca">debbie@releasecounsellingservices.ca</a></p>



# COUNSELLING RESOURCES

## Local Area - Lanark, Leeds and Grenville (LLG)

Resource	Services Provided	Fees	Contact
<p>Rideau Community Health Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For non-urgent mental health concerns: anxiety, depression, grief, stress, managing relationships, emotional regulation and behaviour change.</li> <li>• Focus is not for those with severe or persistent mental health conditions. Offers psychoeducational groups throughout the year.</li> <li>• Offers Meditation Group.</li> <li>• Offers Grief Group.</li> <li>• *Individual Counselling</li> <li>• *Offer over-the-phone counselling or in-person</li> <li>• No waitlist</li> </ul>	<p>No Cost</p>	 <p><a href="https://www.rideauchs.ca/programs-services/counselling-services">https://www.rideauchs.ca/programs-services/counselling-services</a></p> <p>Merrickville Site - 613-269-3400 Smiths Falls Site - 613-283-1952 Perth Site - 613-264-1576</p> <p>Self-refer by contacting the office or on-line form</p>
<p>St. Lawrence Psychotherapy and Wellness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling and psychotherapy by trained Social Worker and/or Registered Psychotherapist to help deal with stress of a stroke, caregiving, planning and partner support.</li> <li>• *Offer Individual and Couples Counselling</li> <li>• *No waitlist</li> </ul>	<p>Initial Assessment Cost \$220 for 1.5 hours</p> <p>Follow-up Sessions Cost \$190.00 for 1 hour</p>	 <p>Meredith Armstrong, MSW Syttana El Mubarak, Registered Psychotherapist <a href="mailto:hello@stlawrencetherapy.ca">hello@stlawrencetherapy.ca</a> 613-213-8076 4501 Rowesome Rd. E Suite 1, Brockville ON K6T 1A9 *Call/email for appointment</p>


# COUNSELLING RESOURCES

## Local Area - Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington (KFLA)

Resource	Services Provided	Fees	Contact
<p>Addictions &amp; Mental Health Services - KFLA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling and Treatment program offers psychotherapy with a focus on recovery and wellness</li> <li>• If eligible for services (case by case), Access Coordinators assist with linkages.</li> <li>• Offer support groups such as Managing Personal Wellness &amp; Recovery, Musicalize Your Mental Health Music Group</li> <li>• *Offer in-person, virtual or phone</li> <li>• *Individual Counselling</li> <li>• * Wait time variable (often 2-4 months)</li> </ul>	<p>No Cost</p>	 <p><a href="https://amhs-kfla.ca/programs-services/counselling-treatment/">https://amhs-kfla.ca/programs-services/counselling-treatment/</a></p> <p>Kingston &amp; Frontenac 613-544-4229</p> <p>Napanee &amp; Area 613-354-7521 * Self-refer</p>
<p>Kingston Community Health Centres – Counselling and Therapy Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offers a wide range of programs and services focusing on health and wellness, including self-management programs for chronic conditions, diabetes education etc.</li> <li>• *Will only offer counselling services with their Social Worker for “unattached patients” – patients without a Primary Care Provider</li> <li>• *In-person</li> <li>• *No waitlist</li> </ul>	<p>No Cost</p>	 <p><a href="https://kchc.ca">https://kchc.ca</a></p> <p>Various sites across Kingston and Napanee 613-542-2949 Email: <a href="mailto:info@kchc.ca">info@kchc.ca</a> *Call to book an appointment</p>





# COUNSELLING RESOURCES

## Local Area - Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington (KFLA)

Resource	Services Provided	Fees	Contact
<p>Resolve Counselling Services Canada – Family Counselling Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A non-profit, social service agency which offers a variety of counselling programs; one-to-one, with couples and families, or in groups to help people cope with a variety of challenges</li> <li>• *Experienced Social Workers or Psychotherapists</li> <li>• *No waitlist</li> </ul>	<p>Range from \$110 per hour. Offer sliding scale.</p> <p>Some groups have fees. Subsidy applications for fees available if client eligible.</p>	 <p><a href="https://resolvecounselling.org/">https://resolvecounselling.org/</a></p> <p>613-549-7850</p> <p>*self-refer, speak to intake worker to assist with most appropriate linkages</p>




# COUNSELLING RESOURCES

## Provincial and National Resources

Resource	Services Provided	Fees	Contact
AccessMHA	Connection service to a variety of mental health services depending on your need (mental health and substance use health and addictions)	No Cost	<a href="http://www.accessmha.ca">www.accessmha.ca</a> 
AbilitiCBT	An on-line therapist-guided support for mental wellness using a cognitive behavioural therapy model	Fees apply	<a href="https://myicbt.com/en-CA">https://myicbt.com/en-CA</a> 
Affordable Therapy Network	A Directory of Therapists offering low cost and sliding scale counselling across Canada	Costs vary depending on Therapist	 <a href="https://affordabletherapynetwork.com">https://affordabletherapynetwork.com</a>
BounceBack Ontario	Free skill-building program managed by the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA). Designed to help adults and youth 15+ manage low mood, depression, anxiety, stress or worry *Delivered over the phone with a coach and through online videos (up to 6 telephone sessions)	No Cost	 <a href="https://bouncebackontario.ca">https://bouncebackontario.ca</a> or call 1-866-345-0224  *Refer through primary care provider or self-refer





# COUNSELLING RESOURCES

## Provincial and National Resources

Resource	Services Provided	Fees	Contact
CAMH – Centre for Addiction and Mental Health	Variety of support services for addictions and mental health	No Cost	 <a href="https://www.camh.ca/en/your-care/access-camh">https://www.camh.ca/en/your-care/access-camh</a> Call 416 535-8501, option 2 for more information about services 1-800-463-2338
Canadian Mental Health Association – National Site	Variety of support services and resources	No Cost	 <a href="https://cmha.ca/">https://cmha.ca/</a>
Family Health Teams	May have Social Workers as part of their team *Often have wait time	No Cost	
Hope for Wellness Helpline	Available to all Indigenous people across Canada. Experienced and culturally competent counsellors reachable by telephone and online chat 24hours/7days a week. Available in English and French. (Also Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut but not 24/7)	No Cost	 <a href="http://www.hopeforwellness.ca">www.hopeforwellness.ca</a> Chat Online or Call 1-855-242-3310





# COUNSELLING RESOURCES

## Provincial and National Resources

Resource	Services Provided	Fees	Contact
Mind Beacon	Wide range of mental health supports; Guided Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), virtual sessions with Therapists, mental health educational materials	Varied depending on service and Therapist	<a href="http://www.mindbeacon.com">www.mindbeacon.com</a> 
Ontario Health atHome	Help at home. Coordinators work with you to determine the right care and health supports, develop an individualized plan based on your care needs. Have Community Social Workers to offer support on a short-term basis.*Wait list may occur for Social Work	No Cost	 <a href="https://ontariohealthathome.ca">https://ontariohealthathome.ca</a> 310-2222 (no area code required) *Can self-refer
Ontario Structured Psychotherapy Program	Individuals aged 15+ with depression and anxiety-related conditions will have access to different services (including BounceBack and Psychotherapy) in the OSP program. The services recommended will depend on what's most appropriate for your needs	No Cost	 <a href="https://www.ontarioshores.ca/services/ontario-structured-psychotherapy-program">https://www.ontarioshores.ca/services/ontario-structured-psychotherapy-program</a>
Psychology Today	Listing for mental health professionals in Canada	Varied depending on Therapist	 <a href="https://www.psychologytoday.com/">https://www.psychologytoday.com/</a>




# COUNSELLING RESOURCES

## Provincial and National Resources

Resource	Services Provided	Fees	Contact
Togetherall	Digital mental health support service, available online, 24/7, anonymous.	Free to join	 <a href="https://togetherall.com/en-ca/">https://togetherall.com/en-ca/</a>
211 Ontario	Telephone helpline and website that provides information on referrals to Ontario's community, social, health-related and government services *includes all resources related to mental health and therapy	No Cost	<a href="http://www.211Ontario.ca">www.211Ontario.ca</a> Call 2-1-1  *Answered 24 hours per day, every day of the year 
811 (Health 811, formerly Telehealth Ontario)	Connect with a registered nurse day or night for free, secure, and confidential health advice.	No Cost	<a href="http://Health811 - Health811">Health811 - Health811</a> 
9-8-8	Call or text 9-8-8 for trauma-informed and culturally affirming support to anyone who is thinking of suicide, or who is worried about someone they know	No Cost	Call or text 9-8-8  *Answered 24/7/365 

# COUNSELLING RESOURCES

## OTHER - Stroke-Specific Support GROUPS (\*Does not include 1:1 counselling)

Resource	Services Provided	Fees	Contact
Community Care for South Hastings (CCSH)	Variety of Stroke Support Groups and Aphasia Support Groups for stroke survivors and their caregivers	No Cost	<p>Belleville Office 470 Dundas Street East, Unit 63 Belleville, Ontario</p>  <p><a href="http://www.ccsch.ca">www.ccsch.ca</a> 613-969-0130</p>
Senior Support Services (CPHC)	Variety of Stroke Support Groups and Aphasia Support Groups for stroke survivors and their caregivers	No Cost	<p>Administration 235 Parkedale Ave. Brockville, ON K6V 6B2</p>  <p><a href="https://cphcare.ca">https://cphcare.ca</a> 613-342-3693 1-800-465-7646</p>
Victorian Order of Nurses (VON)- Greater Kingston (GK VON)	Variety of Stroke Support Groups and Aphasia Support Groups for stroke survivors and their caregivers	No Cost	<p>745 Progress Ave. Unit#1 Kingston, Ontario K7M 6S4</p>  <p><a href="https://von.ca">https://von.ca</a> 613-634-0130</p>

# TAKE TIME for YOUR SELF



**strokenetwork**  
SOUTHEASTERN ONTARIO

If you have any questions about this resource, please contact Sandra Liu, Regional Stroke Community and Long-Term Care Coordinator, Stroke Network of Southeastern Ontario, [Sandra.liu@kingstonhsc.ca](mailto:Sandra.liu@kingstonhsc.ca)



Last updated **June 2025**