



Newsletter

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Project Update

The Yarning up After Stroke team is excited to introduce our new Stroke Navigator Kazzi-Jo Dufty.

Kazzi started her new role in late January this year and we are excited to welcome her to the team.

Kazzi has been busy with 11 new referrals since she started. Kazzi has been visiting patients at the Tamworth and Armidale hospitals, offering support to patients and their families. Kazzi has also been busy looking after people now living back in the community, chasing up and making referrals, coordinating health appointments and providing whatever support is needed.

Kazzi has been attending community events including International Womens Days, the Quirindi Cook-up, Elders Olympics and connecting with the local Aboriginal Medical Services to spread awareness about stroke and her new role.

Kazzi meets regularly with the Stroke Nurses at Tamworth, Armidale and Moree hospitals and also with the Aboriginal Liasion Officers to yarn about patients and the support they require. Kazzi is based at Tamworth hospital and travels throughout the region and she works Monday to Friday.

WELCOME





Meet Kazzi-Jo



Yaama, my name is Kazzi-Jo Dufty (previously Taylor).

I grew up on a small farm between Walhallow and Quirindi, later moving to Trelawney Station near Somerton and then into Tamworth during my high school years. I have strong family ties to Walhallow, Quirindi and Moree. Family has always been a huge part of my life — there's never really been a time I can remember where we didn't have family staying with us.

Being part of a big family, I've witnessed a lot over the years — supporting loved ones through illness and experiencing sorry business. Looking back, that's probably where my passion for health first started.

My Mum and Dad always strived to look after and support mob, and watching the way they did that really inspired me to want to do the same — to care for our people and give back to community.

I've worked in community for a number of years now, including in palliative care, the justice system, and now back in health. Through all of that, one thing has always stayed the same — my passion for supporting and advocating for mob.

When I am not working, I'm a busy mum to three primary school aged children. I love spending time outdoors in nature and find joy in weaving and painting, which also gives me a chance to slow down and unwind.

In my role as Stroke Navigator, I'm here to walk alongside mob and their families, helping navigate the health system and making sure our people feel supported every step of the way.

I'm proud to be part of a role where I can help keep our mob strong, connected, and looked after.

2026 Elders Olympics

This years Elders Olympics were in Yamba on beautiful Yaegl Country. Kazzi & Heidi were there to cheer everyone on and to spread stroke awareness and yarn about our new Stroke Navigator role.



Aunty Audrey Trindall shared her thoughts on her time at this years Elders Olympics.

The Elders Olympics was held in beautiful Yamba with teams coming from far and wide such as Moree, Toomelah, Central Coast and our team from Tamworth. After Welcome to Country from the traditional elder of the Yaegl peoples the competition commenced. All the teams proudly marched into the sports centre with their colourful banners eager to test their sporting skills despite their ages, they were very competitive! It was wonderful seeing old friends and making new ones.

There was lots of information stalls such as Hearing NSW, Aged care and Yarning up after Stroke which was great to see. Food and drinks were supplied throughout the day with volunteer's from the local high school and great to have the young people cheering on the competitors as well! The winner of the 2026 Elders Olympics was the team from the Central Coast. Thanks to Tams and staff for caring for our team and to Kylie Taylor our fabulous team support.

Aunty Audrey



Stroke Navigator

Our Stroke Navigator role has been proudly developed by many Aboriginal people living on Gomeri/Gamilaraay lands.

The Yarning up After Stroke Project, is a research project led by Hunter New England Local Health District and funded by a Medical Research Future Fund Grant.

An important part of this research project is to understand how helpful this role is.

To receive support from our Stroke Navigator Kazzi-Jo you must :

Be Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander living on Gomeri/Gamilaraay lands within the Hunter New England Local Health District

Be 18 years old or older

Have had a stroke within the past 6 months

Have an optional yarn with an Aboriginal researcher three times over 3 month period, to yarn about your mood, health and wellbeing (to complete 2 surveys) at two different times. The third yarn will be to talk about your experience receiving support from the stroke navigator.

The Stroke Navigator will provide assistance for 12 weeks to help access culturally safe stroke care during stroke recovery.

This can include:

Support during your hospital stay

**Linking in with GP and/or Aboriginal Medical Service before discharge from hospital
Provide support during discussions with health staff**

Advocacy with Drs & health staff

Attend discharge planning & family meetings

Explain & provide information about hospital plans & processes

Support referral options & explain processes for discharge home

Support back at home

Regular check-ins

Provide education to friends & family about stroke

Support with health appointments

Check on referrals and follow them up



Medications After Stroke



If you have had a stroke your Stroke Doctors or your GP may have given you medications to reduce your risk of having another stroke.

Remember it is important to take your medications EVERY day at the same time.

Blood Pressure Medicines

High blood pressure is also called Hypertension and is the biggest risk factor for stroke. The medicines used to control blood pressure are called **Anti-Hypertensives**. Most people will be given anti-hypertensive medicine after they have a stroke and some people will be given this medicine even if their blood pressure is normal.

High blood pressure can cause damage to the wall of your blood vessels. This can cause things like heart problems, it can also cause blood clots or plaque to break off which can block an artery to your brain. These things can cause a stroke.

Cholesterol-lowering medicines.

The most common medicines used to control your cholesterol are called **Statins**. You may be given this medicine even if your cholesterol is normal.

Cholesterol can build up and make the walls of your arteries narrow and a clot can then block your artery and cause a stroke

Blood Thinning Medicines

Blood thinning medicines reduce your risk of forming blood clots that can cause a stroke. Most people who have had a stroke that was caused by a clot (Ischaemic stroke) will need to take blood thinning medicine.

There are 2 different types of blood-thinning medicines.

Antiplatelet medicines are used to stop platelets which are tiny blood cells from sticking together and forming clots.

Anticoagulant medicines are used to stop blood clots forming which can cause a stroke.

Atrial Fibrillation (AF) is when you have an irregular heartbeat and if you have AF or other heart conditions you will probably take an anticoagulant medicine.

Blood thinning medicines can make you bleed more easily so it is important to tell health workers you are taking these medicines before getting any medical treatments.

If you have any questions about your current medications, please see your GP.

What's Happening?

Kazzi will be participating in this years 131km in May fundraiser for the Stroke Foundation. The Stroke Foundation has been a proud supporter of Yarning up After Stroke and we wish Kazzi well in reaching her goal.

Every day in Australia, 131 people will have a stroke. Stroke is one of Australia's biggest killers and doesn't discriminate; it affects anyone, anytime. It claims more lives than breast cancer in women and prostate cancer in men. And incredibly, up to 120 babies and 400 children have a stroke in Australia each year.

By supporting my challenge, you'll be helping Stroke Foundation deliver life-changing programs that focus on:

Preventing stroke through education, awareness, and encouraging blood pressure checks

Saving lives by improving recognition and response — including awareness of the F.A.S.T. (Face, Arms, Speech, Time) signs of stroke — and strengthening stroke care

Supporting recovery with trusted information, StrokeLine, and online communities for survivors and families

Your donation is more than a contribution — it helps people understand their risk, act faster in an emergency, and find support on the road to recovery.

Thank you so much for supporting me and being part of this challenge. Together, we can help create a future with fewer strokes.

If you would like to join the fundraiser or support Kazzi below is the website address.

www.fundraise4stroke.org.au/fundraisers/kazzi-jodufty/131km-in-may

