

Media Release

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Stroke patient finds therapy in writing a book

A former Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital stroke patient has inspired the community by authoring a book less than two years after his diagnosis, as part of his recovery journey.

On 13 April, Padstow resident Tony Finneran, 57, will launch his book, *Gone But Not Forgotten*, in the Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital Stroke Rehabilitation Ward as a tribute to the staff who helped him recover.

Mr Finneran said the seed for the concept of the book was sewn in bed 1a of Stroke Ward 2B at Bankstown Hospital one night during his treatment.

"I knew I had to become left hand dominant with any future computer work and if my first goal was to return to work then I needed to challenge my skill sets," Mr Finneran said.

"The book made me cut and paste, insert, and use the appropriate mouse keys to succeed. It wasn't long before I was back into full-time work.

"As a stroke survivor it made me realise the high importance of setting goals, staying focused on the things you can achieve and hopefully it will inspire other survivors to achieve what may seem impossible.

"In reality, without my stroke, this book just wouldn't have happened."

Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital acting General Manager Carol Farmer said Mr Finneran's successful recovery has been an inspiration to staff as well as patients.

"Tony's story is testament to the dedication of our staff who strive to continue to deliver the best possible care," Ms Farmer said.

"Inspiring patient stories like this help drive the passion and commitment that our staff demonstrate every day.

"We are proud of Tony and the resilience he has shown in his recovery journey, and wish him continued good health."

Mr Finneran has chosen to donate a large portion of the sales of the book, which is about the history of Sydney's buses, to the National Stroke Foundation.

Greg Cantwell, Executive Officer for the National Stroke Foundation in New South Wales said the Foundation was incredibly grateful for Tony's support.

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“Tony has shown courage and determination in his recovery after his stroke. From being locked in his own body to now having written a book, he has inspired countless others through his journey,” Mr Cantwell said.

“Unfortunately Tony’s stroke is not a rare occurrence. Last year alone, people in New South Wales suffered more than 17,000 strokes.

“Tony’s generous offer to donate a portion of the proceeds of his book to the National Stroke Foundation will help us to continue on our mission to stop stroke, save lives and end suffering. We thank Tony for his support and wish him all the very best with the launch of his book.”

Facts about Stroke

Stroke is a leading cause of adult disability in NSW, and is Australia’s second biggest killer.

A stroke happens when blood supply to the brain is interrupted. Blood is carried to the brain by blood vessels called arteries.

One in six people will have a stroke in their lifetime. In 2012 there were 50,000 new and recurrent strokes – that is 1000 strokes every week, or one stroke every 10 minutes.*

In 2012, there were nearly 130,000 or 30 per cent of stroke survivors under the age of 65 in the community, and more than 420,000 people living with the effects of stroke.*

Stroke kills more women than breast cancer and more men than prostate cancer.*

*Source: National Stroke Foundation, Australia