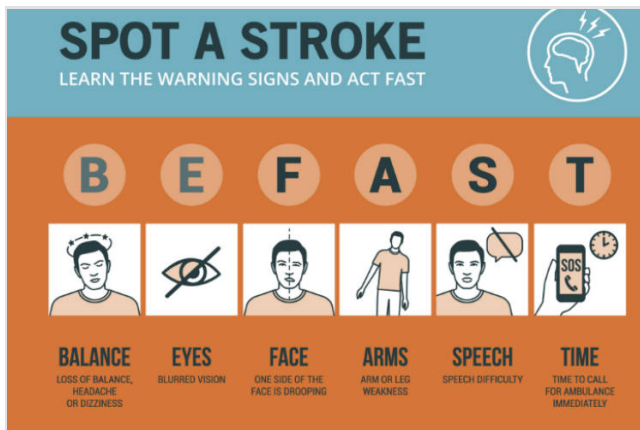


May is National Stroke Awareness Month



Employees at Advocate Sherman Hospital, Advocate Christ Medical Center, Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest Hospital and Vista Health System are educating patients, coworkers and visitors with their SSEEO BEFAST t-shirts.



May is National Stroke Awareness Month and an opportunity to review the signs and symptoms for stroke.

After a stroke, minutes matter.

Use the letters **B-E-F-A-S-T** to spot a stroke and act fast to get help:

B – Balance – Does the person have trouble walking, feel dizzy or have loss of coordination or balance?

E – Eyes – Does the person have trouble seeing in one or both eyes?

F – Face – Does one side of the face droop or does it feel numb? Ask the person to smile – is the smile uneven?

A – Arms - Is one arm weak or feel numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Is there a downward drift of their arms?

S – Speech - Does the person's speech sound normal? Is there any slurring of words or incomprehensible words/sounds when trying to speak?

T – Time - It is **TIME** to call 911- Don't Delay! Make a note of when the symptoms started. When was the last time the person did not have signs or symptoms?

Other signs and symptoms of a stroke:

- Numbness/Weakness - the face, arms or legs may be numb or



weak, especially on one side of the body more than the other

- Confusion – difficulty understanding speech
- Vision – blurred, inability to see peripherally on one side
- Comprehension - difficulty reading or not being able to see letters or words
- Severe Headache – sudden onset of unknown cause

Interested in having your organization teach others about stroke by wearing these t-shirts? Contact christine@sseo.org for bulk orders of 50+ shirts.

SSEEO & North Central College

Written by Maureen Pekosh, stroke survivor and SSEEO volunteer

Innovation has been life changing. We now meet virtually with groups and healthcare professionals and work from home is universal rather than infrequent. A novel collaboration between Stroke Survivors Empowering Each Other (SSEEO) and North Central College is equally innovative. Stroke survivors and Masters of Occupational Therapy (MOT) students partnered to learn from each other. It too should become standard practice.

Two assistant professors oversaw 12 stroke survivors meeting with 44 MOT students in the second semester of their master's program. Many stroke survivors live with issues including speech, balance, walking, hand use, swallowing, and vision. With this pilot, each stroke survivor met individually with a team of students for a semester which was mostly virtually. The students assessed each survivor, listening, asking questions, and researching before offering discharge recommendations. The pilot allowed the MOT students to perform occupational therapy rather than reading a textbook case study and the stroke survivors received quality guidance without paying a penny or justifying anything to insurance.

- Survivor Kathy stated, “The young ladies were genuinely interested in listening to my journey in stroke recovery along with remaining challenges and struggles I face daily. One of my favorite aspects ... has been working on a strategy of what is important to me, like printing, cursive, playing the keyboard etc. and what I'd like to continue to work on with the hope of recovering additional fine motor skills.”

- Survivor Nancy added, “I am so glad I participated! The students were beyond good and so passionate about helping me. They did a fabulous job researching drinking tools, bathroom tools and misc. They took me on a deep dive about how I could effectively combat eye fatigue, given that I have only one eye and read about 8-12 hours a day! I experienced this stroke over 6 years ago. I have had about 10 OTs, probably only 2 outstanding. The students, with their passion, were truly outstanding!”
- Final survivor thoughts: Jim, “The students were professional at analyzing my problems.”; Phyllis, “They all were engaged, compassionate and intelligent. I could see their growth in each session as we progressed thru pilot program.”; and Doug, “This allowed me to get multiple opinions and strategies on how to approach the functional deficiency that was being targeted.”

Students summarized best, “We learned a lot from the stroke survivors throughout this experience ... he has such a positive mindset. It was inspiring! This experience is one I will never forget.” “I feel so honored to have worked with such resilient people and aside such brilliant peers. I learned so much about stroke survivors and myself through this process.”

If you are interested in participating in the pilot program for the Fall 2022 or Spring 2023 semesters, email Christine at christine@sseo.org.

WGN News featured a story about the program, click [here](#) to watch.



Podcast Alert!

SSEEО recently spoke with Kelly Frystak, Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy at North Central College (NCC) in Naperville, Illinois.

Click [here](#) to listen!

Adaptive Sailing Podcast

Kerry Tarmey of Judd Goldman Adaptive Sailing Program (JGASP) will discuss their adaptive sailing program which includes classroom and on-water instruction for the physically disabled.



JGASP is a public/private partnership with the Chicago Park District whereby the Foundation raises funds for instructor salaries, boats and maintenance costs while the Park District is responsible for the infrastructure.



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