

Christmas, 2018

Ups 'n Downs

Stroke Recovery Association of
Manitoba Inc. (SAM)

SAM's mission is to improve the quality of life for Stroke Survivors by assisting them to once again become a participating member of society through mental stimulation, self-help & socialization.

Drive – **D**esire – **D**etermination
Dedication – **D**o it!

WINNIPEG CENTRAL
BUSINESS ASSOCIATION



THE
WINNIPEG
FOUNDATION



Merry Christmas and Season's Greetings to All

The staff, volunteers and the board of directors at the Stroke Recovery Association of Manitoba would like to wish all SAM members, their friends and their families a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and an enjoyable and safe New Year.

These same wishes also go to our friends at the United Way of Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Central Business Association. May this Season and the coming year bring everyone happiness and peace in their minds and their hearts.

SAM Care for Caregivers:

The Stroke Recovery Association is introducing a new Caregiver program on January 16, 2019, from 12:30 to 2:30. Due to the lack of experience of new caregivers, certain issues can arise.

The purpose of this program will be to assist the husbands, wives, children and other family members and friends of recent stroke survivors to cope with the problems that can occur following release from hospital.

Typical problems that face the stroke survivor are aphasia, emotional and behavioral problems, physical difficulties and so on. (continued on last page)

2019 SAM Valentine Tea

Top o' the season to our whole SAM family. The New Year is once again breaking down our door and the never ending cycle begins once again with our time-honoured February fundraising event.



The 2019 Annual Stroke Recovery Association Valentine Tea will be held on Saturday, February 9th at Immanuel United Church in East Kildonan. The address is 755 Golspie at Kimberly and the time is 11:00 am – 2:00 pm.

There will be marvelous SAM auction prizes, delicious freshly made baked goods for sale and every kind of knitted product that you can imagine, available for very reasonable prices.

This is an important SAM fundraising event so come out and share in the fun. Bring the kids, the aunts, uncles, grandmas, grandpas and all the neighbours. We sincerely hope to see everyone there.

A Word from the President



Merry Christmas to one and all!

We have had a great year at SAM, exceeding our fundraising goal of \$50,000 and the year is not finished. Our sincere thank-you's go out to everyone.

We have now resurrected the Christmas Stars for Stroke about which you will have received emails. Don't forget to get your Star while you still have time!

We had a wonderful time at our Christmas Dinner. Thanks to everyone who attended.

Don't forget about the Open House on December 27 and 28. I am sure you haven't had enough to eat, so come on down and have a snack or two.

On behalf the Board I wish you and yours a Merry Christmas and all the best wishes in 2019!

SAM Board Members Wanted

If you or someone that you know would like to serve on the Stroke Recovery Association Board of Directors, give us a call or come down to Unit B – 247 Provencher Blvd. to inquire.

This is a great opportunity to help the folks in your community and to add a new and enjoyable dimension to your life. We're a fun group and it's a great cause.

SAM Events & Programs:

Adapted Exercise: Every Tuesday at 11-11:45 am, at the SAM Centre.

Drop in for Art: Every Wednesday from 10 am – noon at the SAM Centre on Provencher.

Thursday Games Day: We meet for games, fellowship and snacks from 11:00 am - 2:00 pm. Loonies are collected for special meals & events.

Tablet/Cell Phone Help Group: Thursday afternoons from 2 - 3 PM. Tone up your technology skills with Laurisa.

Speakeasy Friday: 11:00 AM. This group is for anyone who has trouble speaking their mind, telling a joke or even speaking in public; in other words, everyone. Bring a joke if you have one handy. This is a perfect, friendly environment for anyone to practice a speech before they present it. Everyone welcome.

In Your Prime Peer Support Group: 2nd Monday of each month at Access Transcona. Facilitator: Anne Manitowich; 669-3264. If you are in the prime of your life, as we all are, we all are, come and join us for a stroke related chat, helpful hints and just plain old camaraderie.

St. James Peer Support Group: 4th Wednesday of each Month, 1:00 – 3:00 pm at St. James 55 Plus Centre, 2109 Portage Avenue. Our meetings consist of current SAM news and discussions on various topics brought up by the members.

Portage La Prairie Peer Support Group: 3rd Tuesday of each Month. Call the SAM Centre for details. (204) 942-2880

Prime Time Support Group: 3rd Tuesday of every month from 1 – 3 pm at the SAM Centre. We talk about a wide variety of subjects; your choice. Perhaps you're looking for advice. Or maybe you just need to vent. The main purpose is for everyone to feel more positive about their life after the meeting.

Art Therapy: Every Monday. Bring your lunch and make a day of it. (phone 204-942-2880 for times)

SAM Auxiliary: Every Monday morning and bring your lunch and make a day of it. (phone 204-942-2880 for times)

I am a stroke survivor and this is my story

by Allison Staff

I was thirty-nine years old, living in Yellowknife and I had just bought a share in a taxi company. I was a single mom of two with a son who was just 18 months old and a seventeen year old daughter who had just graduated high-school. As you can imagine I had a very busy life.

I had been having headaches for over a month or more thinking that they were just sinus headaches. The morning my stroke occurred, I woke with my head in a fog and didn't want to talk. I had also been unable to recall what I took in my coffee, something that I would normally not forget.

I dropped my son off at daycare and my daughter off at work and I was dispatched to my first cab trip of the day.

The first stop was Tim Horton's and just when we were leaving Tim's, my body stiffened up, my head went from side to side and my foot slammed down on the gas.

Luckily, my passenger was able to kick my foot off the gas pedal before we crashed in to another car. Then he called 911.

I had a carotid artery dissection. This is where the artery in my neck frayed and pieces let go.

When the stroke happened, I was instantly blinded, couldn't walk or talk but I was able to still hear the paramedics clearly.

I could hear the doctor talking to my dad, saying, "Your daughter has had a severe stroke and we are not sure of the damage yet." My dad in return said, "Maybe we should just let her go then."

I remember thinking, *What? No! I'm still here!* But I understand how my dad felt, he was very vulnerable at time as was I and I know my dad would never want to live if he endured a major stroke.

I woke up in the hospital, I had my sight back and had to use the washroom in the worst way. I went to roll over to get up, but my right arm stayed behind me. I had to pick it up and pull it over in front of me. When I went to jump out of the bed, I was unable to move my right leg, and if that wasn't bad enough, I went to call out and no words would come out of my mouth. I just had to stay where I was and wet myself and wait.

Now I was on the long road to recovery. I had to learn how to walk and talk again. I would go to speech therapy every day as I had a communication disorder called Aphasia. This affected my ability to speak, read, write or work with numbers and it also affected my emotions.

After a month and a half in the hospital, I was given a little card to carry with me when I went out in the community. It read, *STROKE SURVIVOR, I do understand but I cannot talk very well, so please be patient.*

This is where Family Dynamics, made it possible for me to go speech therapy by providing me with free daycare for my young son.

I felt for the first time in my life, that I went from being a productive contributing member of society to having to totally depend on society and I felt defeated and worthless.

I found myself sitting at home alone and not talking to anyone and afraid to go out because I was unable to communicate with people. People have such busy lives themselves and I didn't want to take up their time when I could see that they didn't want to be rude and were trying nervously to be patient and listen to me. This is just one example and there are many other reasons that stroke survivors need extra support like The Stroke Recovery Association of Manitoba.

The recovery is a slow and an ongoing process. I was determined to not take my ability to read or write for granted ever again. I can still remember my girlfriend Amie would right me letters and I would not be able to read them and I was too embarrassed to tell her until I was able to read again.

With the support of Society for Manitobans with Disabilities (SMD), I was able to go back to school, receive my grade 12 and move on to university to proudly achieve my bachelor's degree in Social Work.

In closing, with my stroke, I lost my business, my driver's license and my mind on June 21, 2002. Out of all the reasons that I thought I could have lost my licence, having a stroke wasn't one of them.

And now it is 2018. Following a long sixteen years of recovery, I feel I now have my mind back, although with some minor glitches.

I have a good job now and I can drive again. I have an education and I am finally able to be a productive and contributing member of society again, "YEAH!"

Become a SAM Member

Membership entitles you to:

- ✚ four newsletters per year
- ✚ reduced fees for adapted exercise
- ✚ vote at the Annual General Meeting
- ✚ attend any program of the Association

Recognize a Stroke

(by Bev Dunlop)

The signs and symptoms of stroke can vary from person to person and also the region of the brain that is being affected. The most common symptoms usually include:

1. Sudden weakness
2. Trouble sp-speak...ing
3. Vision problems
4. Headache
5. Difficulty in understanding what others are saying
6. Problems with balance and coordination, dizziness
7. Difficulty swallowing
8. Numbness or weakness that can cause complete paralysis

A stroke is the disruption of oxygenated blood to the brain. There are two main types of stroke, ischemic (blockage) and hemorrhagic (bleeding), while there is a third more minor stroke called transient ischemic attack (TIA).

As the symptoms of both ischemic and hemorrhagic strokes are similar, a diagnosis requires both physical tests and brain scan images at the hospital to confirm and ascertain how to proceed with treatment. Physical tests also include taking blood samples to check for cholesterol, glucose levels and your pulse for an irregular heartbeat (a symptom of atrial fibrillation) or taking a blood pressure measurement. Swallow tests are essential for anyone who has had a stroke, as swallowing ability is commonly affected early after having a stroke.

An ischemic stroke can be caused by a blood clot that formed in the heart and travelled to the brain or by atherothrombosis.

Hemorrhagic strokes, conversely are caused by a rupture in the blood vessels that causes bleeding within the brain.

A TIA is a blood clot that temporarily interrupts blood flow in the brain and is a major risk factor for future strokes that could cause more serious damage.

Ischemic strokes can be classified into embolic strokes and atherothrombotic strokes. Embolic strokes occur when a blood clot forms in another part of the body such as the heart (in atrial fibrillation) or from a carotid artery thrombus and travels to the brain causing damage, whereas atherothrombotic strokes result from the build-up and rupture of fatty deposits in the arteries in the brain that cause the formation of

(Recognize a Stroke continued)

blood clots.

A hemorrhagic stroke can either be caused by a bulge in a brain artery that causes it to branch and or a weakened blood vessel that ruptures causing it to bleed causing that part of the brain to swell and damage the cells and tissue in the brain.

Although hemorrhagic strokes account for only 15% of all strokes, they are responsible for around 40% of all stroke deaths.

Ischemic strokes are the most common type of stroke accounting for more than 85% of all strokes and are brought on by unhealthy lifestyles such as smoking, high-calorie diets, low levels of exercise and poor habits such as smoking and drinking. Similarly, hemorrhagic strokes are caused by damage to the arteries brought on by intake of substances that cause chemical damage, e.g. alcohol, smoking, weakening the arteries.

(Caregivers continued from front page)

Most loved ones have difficulty coping with these issues initially.

We aim to help the families remedy these problems. The group will meet monthly at the SAM Centre at Unit B - 247 Provencher Blvd. Join us to share your stories, learn about stroke recovery, and receive support from others who have experienced significant life changes after their loved one has suffered a stroke. For further information, call 204-942-2880.

Newly arrived: Fidget Muffs



These are colourful multi-textured knit muffs with interesting loops, strings, buttons, bells, etc. both inside and out. They are designed to reduce stress levels. If your loved one is pulling threads, wringing hands or showing signs of stress, buy them a Fidget Muff to occupy their fingers and calm their thoughts.

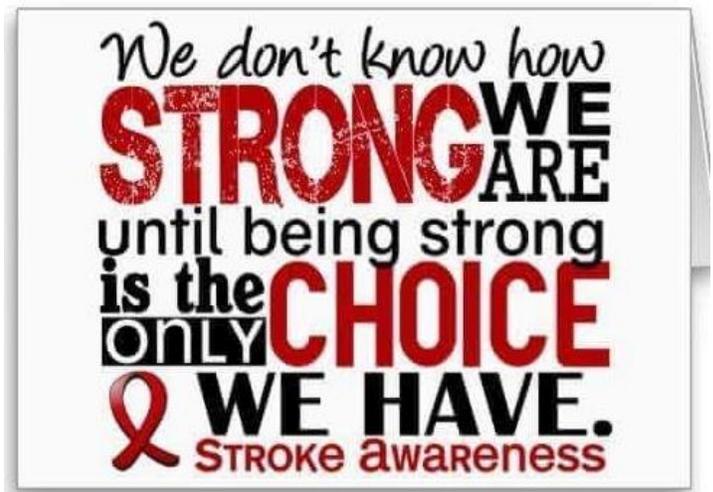
Come on down to the SAM Pancake Breakfast at Applebee's neighbourhood Grill & Bar.



Saturday March 9th – 8-10 AM
1150 Grant Ave.,
R3M 2A6.
204-475-2277

Tickets are \$15 each and go on sale January 15th at the SAM Centre on Provencher.

Bring your appetites!



Year End Donations:

To qualify for a 2018 donation receipt, donations must be made prior to December 28th, 2018.

Donations can be post marked no later than December 31st.

They can be made in person at the SAM office until, 4:00 on December 28th.

They can also be made via our website or by sending an e-transfer to finance@strokerecovery.ca

Stroke Recovery Association of Manitoba Inc. (SAM)

Unit B – 247 Provencher Blvd. – Winnipeg, MB.
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SAM is a proud agency partner of the United Way of Winnipeg

