Talking to Carers

Health education resource to provide non-English-speaking carers and residents with information and contact details for health issues
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Introduction

In NSW, there are already 857,200 carers – 12 per cent of the NSW population. There are 2.7 million carers Australia-wide.* We already know that the demand for informal carers is increasing and the supply decreasing as more women join the workforce and people nearing retirement either choose to continue working or feel forced to do so through economic necessity.

Parallel and current concerns about health literacy levels in our English-speaking population speak to the need for health literacy to be addressed among our cultural and linguistically diverse residents. This resource will help CALD residents, people in the health service, teachers of English as a second language and carers to increase their English competence, learn the relevant vocabulary, and learn where they can obtain further information to understand the conditions of those they care for.

Talking to Carers is about providing non-English-speaking carers and residents with information, language and skills to communicate with doctors and other health staff and access services related to care issues.

Tony Phiskie
Manager, Carers’ Program, Sydney Local Health District (SLHD)

* Taken from Carers NSW website, citing Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2012
Acknowledgements

Talking to Carers is an initiative of Mary Kang, Care Project Coordinator, Carers’ Program, SLHD

Researcher and writer: Mary Johnston

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Andrea Salmon, Education Program Manager, MS Connect Team

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Images for Talking to Carers were sourced from www.freedigitalphotos.net
Objectives

Unit 1: Motor neurone disease
Participants will be provided with information and the contact details of services to support them in their role as carer for a dependant with motor neurone disease.

Unit 2: Parkinson’s disease
Participants will be provided with information and the contact details of services to support them in their role as carer for a dependant with Parkinson’s disease.

Unit 3: Multiple sclerosis
Participants will be provided with information and the contact details of services to support them in their role as carer for a dependant with multiple sclerosis.

Unit 4: Falls prevention
Participants will be provided with information and the contact details of services to support them in their role as carer in preventing falls.

Unit 5: Stroke
Participants will be provided with information and the contact details of services to support them in their role as carer for a dependant who has suffered a stroke.

Unit 6: Vision loss
Participants will be provided with information and the contact details of services to support them in their role as carer for a dependant with vision loss.
Unit 1: Motor neurone disease

1 Information

Motor neurone disease (MND) often begins with weakness of the muscles in the hands, feet or voice. People with MND become more and more disabled. MND cannot be cured but can be managed with help from health workers.

2 Vocabulary

2.1 Write the meanings of each word in your own language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>muscle</td>
<td>very painful tensing of muscle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twitching</td>
<td>dropping and knocking things over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ache</td>
<td>small fast muscle movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clumsy</td>
<td>soft tissue of the body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cramp</td>
<td>pain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 Now match the words to the meanings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>muscle</td>
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<td>clumsy</td>
<td>soft tissue of the body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cramp</td>
<td>pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>stumbling</strong></td>
<td>can’t say words properly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>slurred</strong></td>
<td>crush food into smaller pieces with the teeth to swallow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>swallowing</strong></td>
<td>grow weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>chew</strong></td>
<td>something, especially food or drink, going down the throat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>waste</strong></td>
<td>tripping when you walk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3 Symptoms of motor neurone disease

#### 3.1 Talking to the doctor

**Listening 1:** Write the dialogue number next to the correct topic

Topics:

___ tired and weak
___ lost a lot of weight
___ sad and depressed
___ tripping and stumbling
___ can’t talk and can’t eat
___ twitching and leg cramps

1
**Doctor:** Good morning. How are you?
**Patient:** Not great. All my muscles are aching – and my legs are twitching.
**Doctor:** Have you noticed anything else?
**Patient:** Yes, I seem to get more cramps.

2
**Patient:** I play tennis every Sunday. I am very fit.
**Doctor:** Yes, that’s good.
**Patient:** But now I have started tripping and falling.
**Doctor:** OK. Not so good.

3
**Carer:** Good morning. I am worried as my husband was diagnosed with motor neurone disease last month.
**Doctor:** That’s not good news.
**Carer:** He already can’t talk and can’t eat.
**Doctor:** Yes, it can get worse very quickly.
4
**Patient:** I feel so tired and weak.
**Doctor:** These are the symptoms of your MND.
**Patient:** I used to be fit and strong – I went to the gym three times a week! Now my muscles are disappearing.
**Doctor:** Yes, you look like you have lost a lot of weight.

5
**Carer:** My husband used to be my rock and best friend.
**Doctor:** Yes . . .
**Carer:** Now he has MND he cries a lot and talks about suicide.
**Doctor:** Yes, you need help to look after him. It’s very tough for you.

**Listening 2:** Listen again and fill in the gaps with the missing words

1
**Doctor:** Good ____ How are you?
**Patient:** Not great. All my ____ are aching – and my legs are twitching.
**Doctor:** Have you noticed anything else?
**Patient:** Yes, I seem to get more ____.

2
**Patient:** I play ____ every Sunday. I am very fit.
**Doctor:** Yes, that’s good.
**Patient:** But now I have started ____ and falling.
**Doctor:** OK. Not so good.

3
**Carer:** Good morning. I am ____ as my husband was diagnosed with motor neurone disease last month.
**Doctor:** That’s not good news.
**Carer:** He ____ can’t talk and can’t eat.
**Doctor:** Yes, it can get worse very quickly.

4
**Patient:** I feel so ____ and weak.
**Doctor:** These are the symptoms of your MND.
**Patient:** I used to be fit and ____ – I went to the gym three times a week! Now my ____ are disappearing.
**Doctor:** Yes, you look like you have lost a lot of weight.

5
**Carer:** My husband used to be my rock and best ____.
**Doctor:** Yes . . .
**Carer:** Now he has MND he ____ a lot and talks about suicide.
**Doctor:** Yes, you need help to look after him. It’s very ____ for you.
3.2 Match what the carer says with the symptoms of MND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptom</th>
<th>Carer's Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>experiences mild mental and behavioural change</td>
<td>‘My husband can’t move either side of his body.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>become increasingly dependent on others for all aspects of day-to-day activity</td>
<td>‘My mum can’t talk anymore – or swallow her food.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muscle weakness and wasting on both sides of the body</td>
<td>‘My dad is different now – he cries a lot and is often angry.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loses speech and has difficulty swallowing</td>
<td>‘Every day I have to do more and more for my dad – he has MND.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Looking after the carers

Listening 1:

**Doctor:** Now that your husband has motor neurone disease he may change very quickly, so he will need more and more help.

**Carer:** OK.

**Doctor:** You will need help to care for him.

**Carer:** OK, doctor.

**Doctor:** You must look after yourself as well as your husband because it will be tough.

Listening 2: Listen again and fill in the gaps with the missing words

**Doctor:** Now that your ____ has motor neurone disease he may change very quickly, so he will need more and more help.

**Carer:** OK.

**Doctor:** You will need help to ____ for him.

**Carer:** OK, doctor.

**Doctor:** You must look after ____ as well as your husband because it will be ____.
5 Find out more

Motor Neurone Disease Association of NSW
www.mndnsw.asn.au
Freecall: 1800 777 175

Disability Care Australia
www.ndis.gov.au
Call 1800 800 110

NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service
www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au

Carers NSW
www.carersnsw.org.au
Freecall: 1800 242 636

Carer Gateway
www.carergateway.gov.au
Freecall: 1800 422 737

SLHD Carers’ Program
www.slhd.nsw.gov.au/carers

Get Healthy
www.gethealthynsw.com.au
Call 1300 806 258

To speak in your own language, call a telephone interpreter on 131 450 (the cost of a local call).
Unit 2: Parkinson’s disease

1 Information

- Parkinson disease is a disease of the nervous system that affects movement.
- No two people with Parkinson’s disease have the same health issues.
- Parkinson’s disease affects a person’s control of their body movements.
- Parkinson’s disease cannot be cured.

2 Symptoms

2.1 Match the symptom on the left with the description on the right

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptom</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tremor</td>
<td>not able to move, e.g. not able to take a first step or may find a real or imagined obstacle that causes the feet to remain in one spot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rigidity</td>
<td>slow movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bradykinesia</td>
<td>muscle stiffness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freezing</td>
<td>shaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stooped posture</td>
<td>small handwriting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shuffling gait</td>
<td>no energy and enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>micrographia</td>
<td>stand or walk with the head and upper back bent forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lethargy</td>
<td>short steps with feet barely leaving the ground</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Looking after your Parkinson’s disease

3.1 Match the advice with the correct picture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advice</th>
<th>Picture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>exercise for your arms and torso</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
exercise your face

exercise your hands and wrists

exercise for overall fitness

exercise for muscle flexibility

exercise for your head and shoulders

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4 Support for people with Parkinson’s disease

Use health workers to help you.

4.1 Match the health worker with what they say they do

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Worker</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>physiotherapists</td>
<td>‘I will tell you what food to eat to keep healthy.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>occupational therapists</td>
<td>‘I can tell you the services which can support people with Parkinson’s disease.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speech therapists</td>
<td>‘I can give exercises to do to keep you moving. The earlier you see me the better.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dieticians</td>
<td>‘I can give you things to do to help you to continue living independently.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social workers</td>
<td>‘I can give you exercises to help you to continue to speak clearly and keep swallowing. The earlier you see me the better.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specialist nurses</td>
<td>‘I help people and their families cope emotionally with Parkinson’s disease.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neurologist</td>
<td>‘I am your family doctor and will work with you and your neurologist and other health workers.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>‘I am a specialist doctor who diagnoses Parkinson’s disease and manages the medication.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counsellor/psychologist</td>
<td>‘I care for people and their families with Parkinson’s disease.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5 Exercise and Parkinson’s disease**

Regular exercise can improve some symptoms of Parkinson’s disease.

**5.1 Talking to the health worker about exercise**

**Listening 1:** Write the dialogue number next to the correct topic

Topics:

- _____ stretching
- _____ warming up and cooling down
- _____ stop if it hurts
- _____ make exercise fun

1  
**Carer:** How much exercise should my dad do? He has Parkinson's disease.  
**Physiotherapist:** He should try to do at least 15 minutes of exercise every day.  
**Carer:** What exercise should he do?  
**Physiotherapist:** Firstly, stretching is very important.  
**Carer:** Stretching – what do you mean?  
**Physiotherapist:** Make sure he stretches every joint and every muscle. I can give you exercises for him.

2  
**Physiotherapist:** Remember – before exercise he must warm up and cool down.  
**Carer:** What do you mean? How can he ‘warm up’?  
**Physiotherapist:** He can warm up and cool down by marching in one place and stretching.  
**Carer:** OK.
Physiotherapist: Remember – start with the easy exercises first. Slowly do the more difficult exercises as he becomes fitter.
Carer: He has never been very fit.
Physiotherapist: He can do the exercises as best he can and definitely stop when he gets tired.
Carer: What about if it hurts him?
Physiotherapist: Definitely stop if it hurts him.

Carer: Dad gets very tired after lunch.
Physiotherapist: If he gets tired in the afternoon, then he can exercise in the mornings.
Carer: But my dad is really hard to get moving.
Physiotherapist: Try to make exercising fun. He can go to exercise groups with people like him, perhaps playing music he likes and socialising afterwards.

Listening 2: Listen again and fill in the gaps with the missing words

1
Carer: How much _____ should my dad do? He has Parkinson’s disease.
Physiotherapist: He should try to do at least _____ minutes of exercise every day.
Carer: What exercise should he do?
Physiotherapist: Firstly, stretching is very important.
Carer: Stretching – what do you _____?
Physiotherapist: Make sure he stretches every joint and every muscle. I can _____ you exercises for him.

2
Physiotherapist: Remember – before exercise he must warm up and _____ down.
Carer: What do you mean? How can he ‘warm up’?
Physiotherapist: He can warm up and cool down by _____ in one place and stretching.
Carer: OK.

3
Physiotherapist: Remember – start with the _____ exercises first. Slowly do the more difficult exercises as he becomes _____.
Carer: He has never been very fit.
Physiotherapist: He can do the exercises as best he can and definitely _____ when he gets tired.
Carer: What about if it hurts him?
Physiotherapist: Definitely stop if it _____ him.

4
Carer: Dad gets very tired after _____.
Physiotherapist: If he gets tired in the afternoon, then he can exercise in the mornings.
Carer: But my dad is ____ hard to get moving.
Physiotherapist: Try to make exercising _____. He can go to exercise groups with people like him, perhaps playing ____ he likes and socialising afterwards.
6 Find out more

Parkinson’s NSW
www.parkinsonsnsw.org.au

Disability Care Australia
www.ndis.gov.au
Call 1800 800 110

NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service
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Get Healthy
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Call 1300 806 258

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Unit 3: Multiple sclerosis

1 Information

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is an incurable disease that can affect the brain, spinal cord and optic nerve. No two people with MS will have the same symptoms.

2 Vocabulary

2.1 Write the meanings of each word in your own language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>drag</td>
<td>accidental leak of urine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spasms</td>
<td>to pull along with difficulty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incontinence</td>
<td>difficulty emptying the bowels, often with hard faeces (poo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constipation</td>
<td>sudden tensing of muscles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dizzy</td>
<td>intense, stabbing pain usually in the head or face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pins and needles</td>
<td>feels like everything is spinning and unbalanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neuralgia</td>
<td>pricking, burning, tingling or numbing sensations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 What’s the problem?

Early symptoms of multiple sclerosis.

3.1 Talking to the doctor

**Listening 1:** Write the dialogue number next to the correct topic (some have numbers that come up twice)

Topics:

___ tired and dizzy
___ weakness, coordination, balance and movement of the arms and legs
___ can’t read small print
___ dragging one foot
___ eyesight is blurred
___ sensitive to heat
___ muddled and forgetful
___ pins and needles
___ incontinence and constipation
___ sharp pain in the face

1
**Patient:** I don’t know what is wrong with me, doctor.
**Doctor:** Tell me what’s happening.
**Patient:** My leg muscles often cramp and I feel weak. I can’t play soccer any more. I can’t kick the ball and my left foot won’t do what I want it to do.
**Doctor:** OK, we will do some tests.

2
**Patient:** I am so tired and sometimes I feel dizzy.
**Doctor:** What else have you noticed that is different.
**Patient:** Well, I can’t stand the heat of the shower.
**Doctor:** OK, we must run some tests.

3
**Wife:** My husband is depressed all the time and so muddled.
**Doctor:** OK, that can be caused by a few things. Have you noticed anything else?
**Wife:** Yes, he can’t see very well. And he is soiling his underpants . . . then other times he says he is constipated!
**Doctor:** OK, please bring him in to see me.
4
Doctor: Hi, what has been happening with you?
Patient: I often feel dizzy. I am worried.
Doctor: Have you any other problems?
Patient: Yes, my hand sometimes feels like someone in sticking pins in it.
Doctor: Right, that could be caused by a few things so I will do some tests.

5
Doctor: Good morning. How are you?
Patient: Sometimes I feel a sudden sharp pain in my face.
Doctor: Is there anything else you have noticed?
Patient: And I can’t read the train timetable now.
Doctor: OK, let’s do some tests.

Listening 2: Listen again and fill in the gaps with the missing words

1
Patient: I don’t know what is ____ with me, doctor.
Doctor: Tell me what’s happening.
Patient: My leg muscles often ____ and I feel weak. I can’t play ____ any more. I can’t kick the ball and my ____ foot won’t do what I want it to do.
Doctor: OK, we will do some ____.

2
Patient: I am so ____ and sometimes I feel dizzy.
Doctor: What else have you ____ that is different.
Patient: Well, I can’t stand the ____ of the shower.
Doctor: OK, we must ____ some tests.

3
Wife: My husband is ____ all the time and so muddled.
Doctor: OK, that can be ____ by a few things. Have you noticed anything else?
Wife: Yes, he can’t ____ very well. And he is ____ his underpants . . . then other times he says he is constipated!
Doctor: OK, please ____ him in to see me.

4
Doctor: Hi, what has been happening with you?
Patient: I often feel ____ . I am worried.
Doctor: Have you any other problems?
Patient: Yes, my ____ sometimes feels like someone in sticking ____ in it.
Doctor: Right, that could be caused by a few ____ so I will do some tests.

5
Doctor: Good morning. How are you?
Patient: Sometimes I feel a ____ sharp pain in my face.
Doctor: Is there anything ____ you have noticed?
Patient: And I can’t ____ the train timetable now.
Doctor: OK, let’s do some ____.
3.2 Match the possible symptoms with what you would say if you had them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptom</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sensitive to heat</td>
<td>‘I feel so confused.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muddled</td>
<td>‘I feel sad.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>depressed</td>
<td>‘I forget my appointments all the time.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fatigue</td>
<td>‘I can’t see the whiteboard.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muscle spasms</td>
<td>‘I felt a sharp pain in my face.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constipation and incontinence</td>
<td>‘I am so tired.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neuralgia</td>
<td>‘I feel like I will fall down.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lose movement of arms and legs</td>
<td>‘I can’t stand the heat of the sun on my skin.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dizzy</td>
<td>‘When I try to cross the road quickly my foot won’t move.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weakness in arms and legs</td>
<td>‘I can’t play tennis anymore.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can’t see properly</td>
<td>‘I can’t lift the shopping bags anymore.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forgetting</td>
<td>‘My calf muscle suddenly clenched up.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dragging foot</td>
<td>‘Sometimes I can’t go to the toilet and sometimes I leak into my pants.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1 Match what is said with the health professional who would say it

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>physiotherapist</td>
<td>‘I will teach your mum new ways to help her live without help and give her aids she can use to help herself.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>occupational therapist</td>
<td>‘I will check your mum and work out what is working well and what is not working.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>europsychologist</td>
<td>‘I will design special exercises for your father to help him be stronger and more flexible.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 Find out more

Multiple Sclerosis Limited
www.ms.org.au
Freecall: 1800 042 138

Disability Care Australia
www.ndis.gov.au
Call 1800 800 110

NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service
www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au

Carers NSW
www.carersnsw.org.au
Freecall: 1800 242 636

Carer Gateway
www.carergateway.gov.au
Freecall: 1800 422 737

SLHD Carers’ Program
www.slhd.nsw.gov.au/carers

Get Healthy
www.gethealthynsw.com.au
Call 1300 806 258

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# Unit 4: Falls prevention

## 1 Information

Falls are a major cause of injury for older people.

## 2 Vocabulary

### 2.1 Write the meanings of each word in your own language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning in Your Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>balance</td>
<td>easy to bend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strength</td>
<td>easy to wear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flexible</td>
<td>keep stable position when walking or standing or even sitting still</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comfortable</td>
<td>having power in the body</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.2 Now match the words to the meanings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning in Your Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>balance</td>
<td>easy to bend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strength</td>
<td>easy to wear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flexible</td>
<td>keep stable position when walking or standing or even sitting still</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comfortable</td>
<td>having power in the body</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 Stopping falls

3.1 Talking to the health professional

Listening 1: Write the dialogue number next to the correct topic

Topics:

1. ____ good shoes
2. ____ good exercises

1
Son: My father often falls over. What can I do?
Doctor: He can do exercises to help himself.
Son: Which exercises are good?
Doctor: Weight-lifting will make him strong, tai chi will help his balance and stretches will help him to be flexible. A trained health professional can give him balance and leg strength exercises.
Son: It is very hard to make him do anything.
Doctor: There are groups which he can join to do exercises and make friends.

2
Daughter: My mum is not steady on her feet – how can I help her?
Nurse: Are her shoes OK for her?
Daughter: What do you mean?
Nurse: They must be wide, fit well, have low heels and soles which do not slip.

Listening 2: Listen again and fill in the gaps with the missing words

1
Son: My father often falls _____. What can I dào?
Doctor: He can do exercises to ____ himself.
Son: Which exercises are ____?
Doctor: Weight-lifting will make him ____, tai chi will help his ____ and ____ will help him to be flexible. A trained health professional can give him balance and leg strength exercises.
Son: It is very hard to make him ____ anything.
Doctor: There are groups which he can join to do exercises and make ____.

2
Daughter: My mum is not ____ on her feet – how can I help her?
Nurse: Are her ____ OK for her?
Daughter: What do you mean?
Nurse: They must be wide, ____ well, have low heels and ____ which do not ____.

4 Improve safety in the home

Listening 1:
- Have good lighting.
- Put in strong light globes.
- Use night lights.
- Put in lights near the stairs and the bathroom which light up when someone moves near them.
- Remove clutter.
- Make sure walkways and corridors are clear and well lit.
- Repair or replace carpets that have holes or long threads.
- Check that mats and rugs will not slip and have no tears or wrinkles.
- Put sticky tape on all mats and rugs everywhere.
- Make sure that chairs and beds are strong and easy to get into and out of.
- Make sure tables and benches do not have sharp corners.
- Check that all doors can be opened and closed and do not have locks.
- Check that doors outside can be locked and unlocked easily.
- Wipe up spills immediately.
- Put grab rails in the bathroom.
- Store and use medicines safely.
- Check the house smoke alarms work.

Listening 2: Listen again and fill in the gaps with the missing words
- Have ____ lighting.
- Put in ____ light globes.
- ____ night lights.
• Put in lights near the stairs and the bathroom which light up when ____ moves near them.
• Remove ____.
• Make sure walkways and corridors are ____ and well lit.
• Repair or ____ carpets that have holes or long threads.
• Check that mats and ____ will not ____ and have no tears or wrinkles.
• Put sticky tape on all ____ and rugs everywhere.
• Make sure that chairs and beds are ____ and easy to get into and out of.
• Make sure ____ and benches do not have ____ corners.
• Check that all doors can be ____ and closed and do not have locks.
• Check that doors outside can be locked and ____ easily.
• Wipe up ____ immediately.
• Put grab rails in the ____.
• ____ and use medicines safely.
• Check the house smoke ____ work.

5 Improve safety outside the home

5.1 Match the beginning of the sentence with the correct end of the sentence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clear away . . .</th>
<th>. . . with white paint so they are easy to see.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kill plants that make garden paths slippery . . .</td>
<td>. . . of obstacles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paint the edge of outside steps . . .</td>
<td>. . . garden tools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put lights over outside steps so that they . . .</td>
<td>. . . broken uneven or cracked paths.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep paths clear . . .</td>
<td>. . . when the path is wet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fix . .</td>
<td>. . . are well lit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6 Find out more

NSW Falls Prevention Network
http://fallsnetwork.neura.edu.au

My Aged Care
www.myagedcare.gov.au
Call 1800 200 422

NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service
www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au

Carers NSW
www.carersnsw.org.au
Freecall: 1800 242 636

Carer Gateway
www.carergateway.gov.au
Freecall: 1800 422 737

SLHD Carers’ Program
www.slhd.nsw.gov.au/carers

Get Healthy
www.gethealthynsw.com.au
Call 1300 806 258

SHARE – Learn for Life
www.share.org.au
Call 0415 715 899

Stepping On
www.steppingon.com

Clinical Excellence Commission, NSW Falls Prevention Program

To speak in your own language, call a telephone interpreter on 131 450 (the cost of a local call).
Unit 5: Stroke

1 Information

A stroke stops blood flow to the brain. If you have high blood pressure, smoke, have diabetes or high blood cholesterol, drink heavily, eat a high-salt high-fat diet and lack exercise, you are more likely to have a stroke.

2 Vocabulary

2.1 Write the meanings of each word in your own language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>atrial fibrillation</th>
<th>tube that carries blood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>clot</td>
<td>something that makes greater a person’s chances of developing a disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>artery</td>
<td>a thick mass of blood stuck together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blood vessels</td>
<td>irregular heartbeat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>risk factor</td>
<td>tubes that carry blood from the heart to all parts of the body</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 Now match the words to the meanings

3 Prevention and help

3.1 Match each strategy for preventing another stroke with the correct picture

stop smoking
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>drink less alcohol</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>exercise more</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reduce salt</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reduce fatty food</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2 Who can help you?

The following are health workers who work with stroke sufferers. Match their title with what they say they do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Worker</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cardiologist</td>
<td>‘I operate on peoples’ blood vessels.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>geriatrician</td>
<td>‘I treat people with heart problems.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neurologist</td>
<td>‘I treat people who have problems with their brains.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vascular surgeon</td>
<td>‘I operate on brains.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neurosurgeon</td>
<td>‘I treat people with diseases common in old age.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4 Taking care of your health

#### 4.1 Talking to the health professional

If you have had one stroke you are more likely to have another.

**Listening 1:** Write the dialogue number next to the correct topic

Topics:

- ____ check cholesterol and blood sugar
- ____ check your blood pressure
- ____ do not drink alcohol two days a week
do not eat salty food
stop smoking
check your heart beat
exercise and keep a healthy weight

1
**Patient:** What can I do to avoid having another stroke?
**Doctor:** Do you smoke?
**Patient:** Yes.
**Doctor:** Stop smoking. Smoking can double or even quadruple your chances of having a stroke.

2
**Carer:** My husband has had a stroke – I don’t want him to have another. What can I do to help him?
**Doctor:** Bring him in to see me and I’ll check his blood pressure.
**Carer:** Why do you want to check his blood pressure?
**Doctor:** High blood pressure is a risk factor for a stroke.

3
**Woman:** I want to know how to avoid having a stroke because my mum had one at my age.
**Physiotherapist:** First, you must exercise.
**Woman:** How much exercise do I need to do?
**Physiotherapist:** You need to do at least 30 minutes intense exercise five days a week.
**Woman:** OK.
**Physiotherapist:** And be a healthy weight for your height.

4
**Carer:** My father likes to drink a couple glasses of wine every night – is this OK?
**Doctor:** That’s OK but he must not drink two days every week.
**Carer:** What shall I give him instead.
**Doctor:** Offer him tap water instead.

5
**Carer:** I know a high salt diet is a risk factor for another stroke. What is the best food for keeping both my and my husband’s salt down?
**Nutritionist:** Fresh food, high in fibre and grains.
**Carer:** OK, fruit and veg – and what should I not eat?
**Nutritionist:** Yes, fruit and veg is good, definitely no fast food or too many cakes or sweet things.

6
**Patient:** I have come in so you can check my blood pressure.
**Doctor:** That’s a good idea. I will also check your blood sugar and cholesterol.
**Patient:** Why is that necessary?
**Doctor:** If you have high blood sugar and cholesterol you are more likely to have a stroke.
**Patient:** You better check then.
Patient: Hi doctor, I am worried.
Doctor: Why are you worried?
Patient: Sometimes my heart races and then goes very slowly – it’s not a regular heart beat.
Doctor: I will have to check this. This problem is called atrial fibrillation. This could be a warning sign for a stroke.

Listening 2: Listen again and fill in the gaps with the missing words

1
Patient: What can I do to _____ having another stroke?
Doctor: Do you smoke?
Patient: Yes.
Doctor: Stop smoking. Smoking can _____ or even quadruple your chances of having a stroke.

2
Carer: My _____ has had a stroke – I don’t want him to have another. What can I do to _____ him?
Doctor: Bring him in to see me and I’ll check his blood pressure.
Carer: Why do you want to _____ his blood pressure?
Doctor: High blood pressure is a _____ factor for a stroke.

3
Woman: I want to know how to avoid having a stroke because my _____ had one at my age.
Physiotherapist: First, you must exercise.
Woman: How much exercise do I _____ to do?
Physiotherapist: You need to do at least 30 minutes intense exercise five days a _____.
Woman: OK.
Physiotherapist: And be a healthy weight for _____ height.

4
Carer: My father likes to _____ a couple glasses of wine every night – is this OK?
Doctor: That’s OK but he must not drink _____ days every week.
Carer: What shall I give him instead.
Doctor: Offer him tap _____ instead.

5
Carer: I know a _____ salt diet is a risk factor for another stroke. What is the best food for keeping both my and my husband’s salt down?
Nutritionist: _____ food, high in fibre and grains.
Carer: OK, fruit and veg – and what should I not eat?
Nutritionist: Yes, fruit and _____ is good, definitely no fast food or too many _____ or sweet things.

6
Patient: I have come in so you can _____ my blood pressure.
Doctor: That’s a good idea. I will also check your blood _____ and cholesterol.
Patient: Why is that necessary?
Doctor: If you have high blood sugar and cholesterol you are more likely to have a stroke.
Patient: You _____ check then.
Patient: Hi doctor, I am worried.
Doctor: Why are you worried?
Patient: Sometimes my heart _____ and then goes very slowly – it’s not a regular heart beat.
Doctor: I will have to check this. This _____ is called atrial fibrillation. This could be a warning sign for a _____.

5 Find out more

The Stroke Foundation
www.strokefoundation.com.au
StrokeLine: 1800 787 653

My Aged Care
www.myagedcare.gov.au
Call 1800 200 422

NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service
www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au

Carer Gateway
www.carergateway.gov.au
Freecall: 1800 422 737

SLHD Carers’ Program
www.slhd.nsw.gov.au/carers

Carers NSW
www.carersnsw.org.au
Freecall: 1800 242 636

Get Healthy
www.gethealthynsw.com.au
Call 1300 806 258

Heart Foundation
www.heartfoundation.org.au

To speak in your own language, call a telephone interpreter on 131 450 (the cost of a local call).
1 Information

Living with sight loss can be difficult. Vision Australia has experts who can give practical and emotional help for everyday life. For example, going out and about confidently and reading personal mail and newspapers. Our clients can also meet others with sight loss and join different social groups, including some in other languages. Vision Australia staff use interpreter services that provides phone and face-to-face support.

Causes of sight loss include:
- Retinal detachment.
- Glaucoma.
- Macular degeneration.

2 Vocabulary

2.1 Write the meanings of each word in your own language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>floaters</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>blurry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blank</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sparks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peripheral vision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shadow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distorted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>absence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>magnifying glasses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hallucinations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| ophthalmologist | being able to see |
| vision | thin film at the back of the eye |
| retina | not joined |
| detached | eye doctor |

### 2.2 Now match the words to the meanings

| floaters | unclear |
| blurry | a small burst of light |
| blank | tiny spots, specks, flecks or ‘cobwebs’ that drift around what you see |
| sparks | nothing there |

| peripheral vision | area of darkness produced when a light is blocked |
| shadow | bent or twisted out of shape |
| shade | side vision |
| distorted | area of darkness produced when a light is blocked |

| dim | something – like an image, sound or smell – that seems real but is not |
| absence | low lighting, not bright |
| magnifying glasses | not there |
| hallucinations | strong lenses used to make things look bigger |
3 What’s the problem?

3a Retinal detachment

Retinal detachment means the retina has broken free from the back of the eye. The retina can also have a hole or a tear in it.

Match the symptom with what you would say if you had the symptom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptom</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>floaters</td>
<td>‘I see flashing lights at the sides of my vision.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blurry vision</td>
<td>‘I can’t see very well out to the side.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bright lights or sparks, particularly in the periphery (outer edges) of the visual field</td>
<td>‘I cannot see now as well as I saw before.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>areas of darkness, shadow or shade in the visual field</td>
<td>‘I see things floating in the air which are not there.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loss of vision</td>
<td>‘Everything looks unclear.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Talking to the optometrist

Listening 1: Write the dialogue number next to the correct topic

Topics:

____ areas of darkness, shadow or shade in what you can see
____ floaters
____ blurry vision

1
**Carer:** Hi, my husband says he sees things floating around the room – but they are not there!
**Optometrist:** What else does he say he sees?
**Carer:** He sees flashing lights and sparks. It’s very upsetting.
**Optometrist:** OK, I will have a look at his eyes.

2
**Carer:** My husband says he sees shadows in the room which worries me because they aren’t there.
**Optometrist:** Yes, it is worrying.
**Carer:** Yes, and he says his vision is blurry.
**Optometrist:** I will have a look at his eyes. He may have a retinal detachment.
Listening 2: Listen again and fill in the gaps with the missing words

1
Carer: Hi, my ____ says he sees things floating around the ____ – but they are not there!
Optometrist: What else does he say he sees?
Carer: He sees flashing _____. It’s very upsetting.
Optometrist: OK, I will have a ____ at his eyes.

2
Carer: My husband says he sees flashing ____ and sparks in the room which worries me because they aren’t there.
Optometrist: Yes, it is worrying.
Carer: Yes, and he says his ____ is blurry.
Optometrist: I will have a look at his eyes. He may have a ____ detachment.

3b Glaucoma

Glaucoma is the name given to a group of eye diseases in which the optic nerve at the back of the eye is slowly destroyed.

Symptoms of glaucoma

Glaucoma has no symptoms until the sufferers cannot see. Glaucoma is sometimes called the ‘sight thief’ because it takes away the side vision first so the sufferers can read the chart in the optometrist and read the newspaper but they do not notice that they are losing their side vision.

Talking to the optometrist

Listening 1: Write the dialogue number next to the correct topic

Topics:
___ glaucoma is called ‘the sight thief’
___ I can still read the newspaper
___ I can read the chart

3
Customer: Good morning. I would like an eye test.
Optometrist: OK, of course. Have you had any problems?
Customer: No, I am happy because I can still read the newspaper!
Optometrist: That’s good!

4
Optometrist: OK, please read the top line of letters on the chart.
Customer: P K Y L N M.
Optometrist: OK, no problems there.
Customer: Great! Thanks.
5

**Optometrist:** I would like to now check you for glaucoma.

**Customer:** Why? My sight is OK!

**Optometrist:** Glaucoma is called the ‘sight thief’.

**Customer:** Why?

**Optometrist:** Because you can read the paper and the chart – but glaucoma takes away your side vision and you do not notice.

**Customer:** OK, please check for glaucoma then.

### Listening 2: Listen again and fill in the gaps with the missing words

3

**Customer:** Good morning. I would like an _____ test.

**Optometrist:** OK, of ____. Have you had any problems?

**Customer:** No, I am happy because I can still read the ____ !

**Optometrist:** That’s good!

4

**Optometrist:** OK, please read the ____ line of letters on the chart.

**Customer:** P K Y L N M.

**Optometrist:** OK, no ____ there.

**Customer:** Great! Thanks.

5

**Optometrist:** I would like to now check you for ____.

**Customer:** Why? My sight is OK!

**Optometrist:** Glaucoma is called the ‘____ thief’.

**Customer:** Why?

**Optometrist:** Because you can read the paper and the ____ – but glaucoma takes away your side vision and you do not notice.

**Customer:** OK, please ____ for glaucoma then.

### 3c Macular degeneration

Macular degeneration is the most common reason why older people cannot see. The macula is the centre of the retina and affects straight-ahead vision.

#### Match the symptom with what you would say if you had the symptom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>problems with close work such as reading</th>
<th>‘The white line on the road looks wavy and the telegraph pole seems to have a bend in it.’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>distorted central vision (for example, straight lines look wavy)</td>
<td>‘When I look straight at something, I can’t see it.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blurred central vision</td>
<td>‘I cannot read the newspaper print.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blank or dark spots</td>
<td>‘I see little people living in my house and garden and I see patterns on the wall that aren’t there.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complete loss of central vision</td>
<td>‘I see black spots everywhere.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Bonnet syndrome</td>
<td>‘My straight-ahead vision is not clear.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Looking after macular degeneration**

**Talking to the health professional**

**Listening 1:**

6  
**Doctor:** Good morning.  
**Carer:** Good morning. My mum has just been told she has macular degeneration.  
**Doctor:** Yes, that’s very common in older people and there are lots of things which can help her and help you to look after her.  
**Carer:** What are they?  
**Doctor:** She can get prescription glasses, magnifying glasses and tools to help her live more independently.

7  
**Carer:** Good morning. How can you help my mother who has macular degeneration?  
**Occupational therapist:** Good morning. I can help her to make the best of her vision.  
**Carer:** Yes, how?  
**Occupational therapist:** I can make changes to her home so it will be easier for her to live there.

8  
**Carer:** Do you have any other advice for my mum?  
**Doctor:** Does your mum smoke?  
**Carer:** Yes.  
**Doctor:** She must stop smoking – smoking increases her risk of more loss of her sight.  
**Carer:** OK, is there anything else I can do to help her?  
**Doctor:** She must eat healthy food and exercise and she must protect her eyes from the sun. She must wear sunglasses. This is important.

**Listening 2:** Listen again and fill in the gaps with the missing words

6  
**Doctor:** Good morning.  
**Carer:** Good _____. My mum has just been told she has macular degeneration.  
**Doctor:** Yes, that’s very ____ in older people and there are lots of things which can help her and help you to look after her.
Carer: What ____ they?
Doctor: She can get prescription glasses, magnifying ____ and tools to help her live more independently.

7
Carer: Good morning. How can you help my ____ who has macular degeneration?
Occupational therapist: Good morning. I can help her to make the best of her vision.
Carer: Yes, how?
Occupational therapist: I can make changes to her ____ so it will be easier for her to live there.

8
Carer: Do you have any other advice for my mum?
Doctor: Does your mum ____?
Carer: Yes.
Doctor: She must stop smoking – smoking increases her ____ of more loss of her sight.
Carer: OK, is there anything ____ I can do to help her?
Doctor: She must eat ____ food and exercise and she must protect her eyes from the sun. She must wear sun ____. This is important.

4 Find out more

Vision Australia
www.visionaustralia.org
Call 1300 84 74 66

Glaucoma Australia
www.glaucoma.org.au
Support Line 1800 500 880

Macular Disease Foundation Australia
www.mdfoundation.com.au
Support Line 1800 111 709

My Aged Care
www.myagedcare.gov.au
Call 1800 200 422

Disability Care Australia
www.ndis.gov.au
Call 1800 800 110

NSW Multicultural Health
Communication Service
www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au

Carers NSW
www.carersnsw.org.au
Freecall: 1800 242 636

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