**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT**

**Project: Subjective Experience of Barriers and Facilitators to Accessing Mental Health Treatment after Stroke (ID #31642)**

**Chief Investigator: A/Prof Rene Stolwyk**

**Co-investigators: Ms Priscilla Tjokrowijoto, A/Prof Nadine Andrew**

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You are invited to take part in this study. Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before deciding whether or not to participate in this research. If you would like further information regarding any aspect of this project, you are encouraged to contact the researchers via the phone number or email address listed above.

**What does the research involve?**

Following stroke, some people experience symptoms of depression and anxiety. This study aims to understand access to mental health treatment in survivors of stroke, and factors associated with access, in order to inform the steps that may be taken to improve access. The project involves participation in a qualitative interview. A researcher will ask you questions about your mood problems, your experience of seeking professional and/or informal support, and your pre-existing knowledge or assumptions about mental health treatment. The interview will require approximately 1 hour of your time, and may be conducted face-to-face or over a videoconferencing platform (e.g., Zoom). If conducted face-to-face, we will manage the risk of COVID-19 transmission by screening for symptoms and vaccination status prior to the appointment, maintaining a 1.5 m distance between interviewer and interviewee at all times, thoroughly cleaning and disinfecting all touched surfaces, and wearing appropriate protective equipment (e.g., face mask). The interview will be audio and/or video recorded (e.g., with a recording device or Zoom recording). You will be asked to provide contact details, demographic and medical information at the start of the session. With your permission, we will obtain information about your stroke from your treating doctors/hospitals. You will be reimbursed for your time ($50).

**Why were you chosen for this research?**

You are invited to take part in this research project because you had a stroke and have reported mood changes. You or your clinician have identified that you are eligible for the project and, because you expressed interest, they have provided you with our contact details.

**Consenting to participate in the project and withdrawing from the research**

Participation in this research is voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you do not have to. If you decide you want to take part in the research project, you will be asked to sign the consent form and return it to the researcher. You can withdraw from the project at any time by notifying a member of the research team. If you decide to leave the project, the researchers will keep the personal and health information about you that has been collected so far in de-identified format.

**Possible benefits and risks to participants**

We cannot guarantee or promise that you will receive direct benefits from this research. However, results from this study will improve our understanding of mental health treatment access in stroke survivors, and inform what can be done in the rehabilitation and care of stroke patients to facilitate treatment uptake and remove barriers to access.

Some participants may experience inconvenience or distress when answering questions about their mood or experience. Please let the researcher know if you are experiencing distress as a result of your participation in the project, and they will be able to arrange appropriate counselling or support services. You can also ask to discontinue the questions or withdraw from the project at any time.

**Services on offer if adversely affected**

The following is a list of services available to you in case you experience distress. The organisations listed below are not affiliated with anyone from the research team. We will also provide these to a nominated family who can help you with the call.

**Lifeline:** 13 11 14 **BeyondBlue:** 1300 22 4636

**StrokeLine:** 1800 787 653

**Confidentiality**

Any information obtained in this research will remain confidential. It will only be disclosed with your permission, if failure to disclose suggests imminent risk to you or others, or as required by law. To maintain confidentiality, a unique identification number (ID) will be assigned which will be used to label all forms and recordings. The codefile, allowing us to match the ID to the person, will be kept separate from the study data on a password protected file. Researchers plan to present the results of this research at conferences and peer-reviewed publications; however, any data presented will be in de-identified format. This means that any presentation or publication will be presented in such a way that you cannot be identified.

**Storage of data**

The data collected will be stored at Monash University in a locked filing cabinet or password protected files accessible to only the researchers of this project. A unique identification number (ID) will be assigned to each participant which will be used to label all questionnaires. The codefile, allowing us to match the ID to the person, will be kept separate from the study data on a password protected file. The study records will be retained for at least 7 years in accordance with the law. After this time, hardcopies of the data will be destroyed using Monash University’s confidential waste disposal services. All electronic data will be permanently deleted.

**Results**

Results will be available at the conclusion of this project. If you would like to receive a summary of these findings, please email A/Prof Rene Stolwyk ([psych.strokeresearch@monash.edu](mailto:psych.strokeresearch@monash.edu)).

**Complaints**

Should you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Monash University Human Research Ethics (MUHREC):

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| Executive Officer Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)  Room 111, Chancellery Building E, 24 Sports Walk, Clayton Campus Research Office Monash University VIC 3800  Tel: +61 3 9905 2052 Email: [muhrec@monash.edu](mailto:muhrec@monash.edu) Fax: +61 3 9905 3831 |

Thank you,  
**A/Prof Rene Stolwyk**