

LOTUS: Low dose cOmbinations To improve stroke oUtcomeS

– March 2025

FACTS:

- Within a year of stroke, 20–30% of survivors stop taking their blood pressure and cholesterol-lowering medications.
- Only 1 in 3 stroke survivors achieve long-term blood pressure targets; 1 in 5 achieve cholesterol targets; and only 1 in 10 achieve both.
- A 10mmHg drop in systolic blood pressure could lower the risk of another stroke by one-third and reduce the chances of heart problems by 10–20%. Every 1 mmol/L decrease in cholesterol could reduce stroke risk by about 20%.

PROJECT CYCLE:

2025 – 2028

PARTNERS:

The George Institute
UNSW Sydney, Australia

SUPPORTERS:

The George Institute for Global Health
UNSW Sydney
Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF),
Australia
New South Wales Health, Australia

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

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BACKGROUND:

- While most Australian stroke survivors leave the hospital with blood pressure-lowering medication, only one in three maintain healthy blood pressure long-term, raising the risk of future strokes.
- Many stroke survivors struggle to take their medications as prescribed, and to have them adjusted when necessary.
- Many stroke survivors have limited access to specialist care after leaving the hospital, and follow up appointments with GPs are often inconsistent – especially in rural, regional and remote communities.

AIM:

- To determine whether an innovative blood pressure medication, combined with regular telehealth visits, can help stroke survivors achieve and maintain better blood pressure control over a 26-week period.

METHODS:

- Participants have a 50% chance of either receiving the blood pressure lowering combination medication, or usual care. If participants have high cholesterol, they may also receive a cholesterol-lowering combination medication for the duration of the trial.
- This 'open label' trial means both participants and their doctors will know if they are receiving the study treatment.
- All participants will attend three clinic visits at weeks 0, 12, and 26.
- Those in the intervention group will also attend telehealth visits. Based on their blood pressure readings during these visits, their medication may be adjusted.

IMPACT

- This project tests an innovative, scalable approach that could simplify and transform stroke models of care globally.
- If successful, guidelines for the treatment of stroke survivors may be radically changed by this study, increasing the availability and efficacy of post-stroke treatments.

CONTACT:

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