MEDIA RELEASE
5 October, 2010

New DVD to help tackle depression after stroke

Event: Governor-General to Launch DVD - Tackling Depression after Stroke
Date: Tuesday 5 October 2010
Time: 10.30am - 11.30am
Location: Museum of Contemporary Art, Circular Quay Terrace

“Depression is very common in stroke survivors and their carers.”
Prof David Clarke, Research Adviser beyondblue: the national depression initiative

Stroke is a major cause of death and a leading cause of disability in Australia. Stroke survivors need significant support before they can return to their daily lives – and research shows that many are at increased risk of developing depression.

A new FREE DVD, produced by beyondblue: the national depression initiative with the National Stroke Foundation will be launched today by Governor-General, Ms Quentin Bryce AC.

The Tackling depression after stroke DVD features interviews with stroke survivors, their families and their carers, and a psychiatrist who all speak candidly about how depression commonly affects stroke survivors and their carers.

The DVD will provide helpful insights for people who have experienced stroke and will be a useful training tool for GPs, counsellors and other health professionals. The DVD features an interview with beyondblue Research Adviser Professor David Clarke who talks about the signs of depression after stroke and effective treatments.

“Up to two thirds of people who have a stroke will experience depression and although it is more common in the first year after the stroke - stroke survivors, friends and family need to be aware of the symptoms of depression so treatment is accessed at an early stage,” says Prof Clarke.

National Stroke Foundation CEO Dr Erin Lalor says stroke results in many changes for a person, but not all of them are physical changes.

“Stroke can make it difficult to do many of things we take for granted – like moving and speaking, but stroke can also affect the way people think and feel. Depression is very common – one in five people will experience depression at some time in their adult lifetime. For people recovering from a stroke, this figure is even higher.

“We hope to raise awareness of this little-recognised, but common effect of stroke in the community and hope this improves the quality of life of stroke survivors and those who care for them,” says Dr Lalor.

CEO of beyondblue Ms Leonie Young hopes the DVD will help raise awareness of depression after stroke and assist people to get the help they need.

“Depression can often go unrecognised and undiagnosed in people who have had a stroke because the two disorders have many symptoms in common. It’s important to notice the signs of depression and seek help early – the sooner the better,” she says.

The FREE DVD can be ordered online at www.beyondblue.org.au or by calling 1300 22 4636.

Available for interview: National Stroke Foundation CEO Dr Erin Lalor, beyondblue CEO Ms Leonie Young, beyondblue Research Adviser Professor David Clarke and stroke survivors who have experienced depression

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For more information about stroke go to www.strokefoundation.com.au or call 1800 787 653.
For more information about depression go to www.beyondblue.org.au or call 1300 22 4636.