



Dominic Perrottet

Treasurer

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Minister for Health and Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

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\$10 MILLION FOR LIFESAVING STROKE AMBULANCE

A specially equipped ambulance, designed to help clinicians rapidly diagnose and treat stroke patients en route to hospital, will be funded in the 2020-21 NSW Budget.

Treasurer Dominic Perrottet and Health Minister Brad Hazzard said \$10 million will be invested in the mobile stroke unit (MSU), offering life saving treatment on the go.

“One in four Australians will have a stroke and few survive without some form of disability so time saved in diagnosis and treatment is a brain saved,” Mr Perrottet said.

“This mobile stroke unit will be the first of its kind in NSW and only the third in operation in the southern hemisphere”

Research from Europe and the US has shown the use of mobile stroke units has improved patient outcomes by delivering more immediate treatment.

Health Minister Brad Hazzard said the pilot in NSW will utilise telemedicine systems which enable online, real-time communication with specialists via videoconferencing.

“A radiographer in the MSU will relay CT scans to telestroke specialists, who identify the type of stroke and then advise MSU staff of the treatment plan,” Mr Hazzard said.

“The two main types of stroke require different treatments and a CT scan is vital to identify the course of action but until now, CT scanners were only found in hospitals.”

It is anticipated the pilot program will include state-of-the-art mobile brain perfusion CT technology being developed in Europe and scheduled to be available here in 2022.

Stroke Foundation Chief Executive Officer Sharon McGowan welcomed the announcement, saying the value of early detection of stroke cannot be overstated.

“Up to 1.9 million brain cells die each minute when a stroke strikes the brain but with the right treatment at the right time, the damage can be stopped,” Ms McGowan said.

“Now NSW will have a mobile stroke unit with a portable CT scanner and access to specialists from the NSW Telestroke Service to provide life and brain-saving treatment.”

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