

# Evidence Sources: Stroke Clinical Care Standard 2026

## Introduction

The quality statements for the *Stroke Clinical Care Standard* were revised in consultation with the Stroke Clinical Care Standard Topic Working Group based on best available evidence and guideline recommendations.

Literature searches are conducted by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) at different stages during the development and review of a Clinical Care Standard and include searching for current and relevant:

- Australian clinical practice guidelines, standards and policies
- International clinical practice guidelines
- Other high-level evidence, such as systematic reviews and meta-analyses around specific aspects of the guidelines or care recommendations.

Where limited evidence is available, the Commission consults with a range of stakeholders to explore issues and develop possible solutions.

Initial searches for the *Stroke Clinical Care Standard* (the Standard) were conducted in 2024. A review of the key guidelines and other evidence sources underpinning the original Standard was conducted in 2025 to inform the review process.

An overview of the key evidence sources for the revised *Stroke Clinical Care Standard* is presented in Table 1. A full list of the evidence sources for each of the quality statements is included in the full Clinical Care Standard document reference list.

**Table 1** Key evidence sources for the Stroke Clinical Care Standard\*

| Evidence source                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Relevance to the draft Quality Statements (QS)           |                              |                         |                       |                                          |                                                             |                                 |                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | QS1<br>Early assessment and urgent transport to hospital | QS2<br>Time-critical therapy | QS3<br>Stroke unit care | QS4<br>Rehabilitation | QS5<br>Minimising risk of another stroke | QS6<br>Practical assistance for families and support people | QS7<br>Individualised care plan | QS8<br>Follow-up assessment and review |
| <b>Australian guidelines, standards, and policies</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                          |                              |                         |                       |                                          |                                                             |                                 |                                        |
| Stroke Foundation. (2023). Australian and New Zealand living clinical guidelines for stroke management.<br><a href="https://informme.org.au/guidelines/living-clinical-guidelines-for-stroke-management">https://informme.org.au/guidelines/living-clinical-guidelines-for-stroke-management</a> | ✓                                                        | ✓                            | ✓                       | ✓                     | ✓                                        | ✓                                                           | ✓                               |                                        |
| Stroke Foundation. (2026). National Acute Stroke Services Framework 2026.<br><a href="https://informme.org.au/guidelines/national-stroke-services-frameworks">https://informme.org.au/guidelines/national-stroke-services-frameworks</a>                                                         | ✓                                                        | ✓                            | ✓                       |                       |                                          |                                                             |                                 |                                        |
| Stroke Foundation. (2022). National Rehabilitation Stroke Services Framework 2022.<br><a href="https://informme.org.au/guidelines/national-stroke-services-frameworks">https://informme.org.au/guidelines/national-stroke-services-frameworks</a>                                                |                                                          |                              | ✓                       | ✓                     |                                          |                                                             | ✓                               |                                        |
| Therapeutic Guidelines Limited. (2025). Stroke and transient ischaemic attack. In Therapeutic Guidelines.<br><a href="https://www.tg.org.au/">https://www.tg.org.au/</a>                                                                                                                         | ✓                                                        | ✓                            | ✓                       | ✓                     | ✓                                        |                                                             |                                 |                                        |

| International guidelines and standards                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. (2022). Stroke and transient ischaemic attack in over 16s: Diagnosis and initial management (NICE Guideline NG128).<br><a href="https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng128">https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng128</a>                | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   |  |   |   |   |
| National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. (2023). Stroke rehabilitation in adults (NICE Guideline NG236).<br><a href="https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng236">https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng236</a>                                                                    |   |   |   | ✓ |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. (2016). Stroke in adults (NICE Quality Standard QS2).<br><a href="https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs2">https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs2</a>                                                                                  |   |   |   |   |  |   |   | ✓ |
| Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada. (2019). Canadian Stroke Best Practice Recommendations: Rehabilitation, recovery, and community participation following stroke. Part one: Rehabilitation and recovery following stroke (6th ed. update). Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

\* Only key Australian and international sources are included in this table. Consult the *Stroke Clinical Care Standard* (2026) to see all the references used in developing the Standard.