

## Letter from Westminster



**Steve Brine:**  
Winchester MP

AS reported in the *Hampshire Chronicle*, I recently visited Hobbs Rehabilitation in Martyr Worthy which was incredibly worthwhile; both as the local MP but also as England's Public Health Minister.

The purpose of the visit was to learn more about the 'Rehab

Matters' campaign and the invaluable role it can play in recovery from a wide range of illnesses, accident and trauma. The campaign aims to improve access to community rehabilitation for people leaving hospital with long term conditions. It recognises that medical advances are saving more lives than ever, but too many people who leave hospital miss out on services which would otherwise enable them to complete their recovery.

Director Nicky Ellis and Helen Hobbs explained their work to me so clearly and introduced me to some inspiring people receiving treatment. One such person was a young man called Adam who suffered a stroke last year at the age of 32.

There are almost 100,000 strokes every year in UK and, while the majority of strokes happen to those over 70, a larger proportion are occurring in middle age adults (40-69 years) and some, like Adam, even younger.

Up to 70 per cent of strokes are preventable if hypertension, atrial fibrillation, diabetes, cholesterol and lifestyle factors were all detected and managed effectively. That is why, through my role in Government, I am so passionate about the prevention agenda and we're all working so hard to deliver integrated primary care at scale.

There has been major progress in stroke prevention, care and treatments as a result of the 10-year stroke strategy, which came to an end in December 2017 but I want to go further which is why we are working with the Stroke Association (among others) on a new National Plan for Stroke. It will be comprehensive and include aspects such as the "One You" adult health prevention programme designed to help people to live healthier lives but we've also relaunched the national Act F.A.S.T. stroke campaign to remind people of all ages to be aware of the symptoms and call 999 urgently at the first signs.

We know, and the young man I met is proof of this as much as he is the benefit of good rehab, that timely treatment can reduce the risk of disability and death so please Google 'Act FAST' and take just a moment to familiarise yourself with some basic information that could just save your life or that of someone you know.

Hobbs is a local success story and we're proud to have it here but it's also got national relevance and I'm grateful to them for showing me how rehab works and why rehab matters.

You can see more of my visit, view pictures, learn about ACT F.A.S.T and watch a short-film via [www.stevebrine.com/hobbsrehab](http://www.stevebrine.com/hobbsrehab)

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