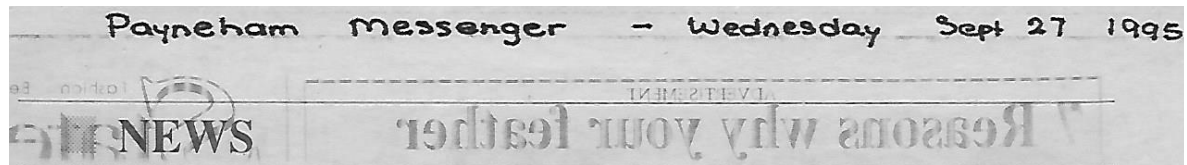


Overcoming a cruel stroke of fate

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Overcoming a cruel stroke of fate

By JOANNE PEGG

FOR Clive and Carol Fuller, the past four years have been a long haul.

When Clive was struck down with a stroke at age 50, their world was thrown into disarray.

Carol recalls the morning she woke up in bed to find Clive, panic-stricken, struggling to show her what was wrong.

"He was tapping his right arm . . . you could tell by his eyes there was something wrong," she says.

Doctors did not expect Clive to survive the attack and later said he would never walk again, but he and Carol refused to give up hope, and have been battling the odds ever since.

Clive's speech is returning, and he can now walk with the aid of a frame.

Carol says although the past four years have not been easy and the struggle is far from over, their experiences show what be achieved with the right rehabilitation and the right attitude.

"It's the easiest thing, to throw in the towel," she said. "Everything has to be relearnt, right from doing up shoelaces.

"When you're talking about rehabilitation and that it's going to be a long-term thing, to them long-term might be a couple of months, but it can be years, or a lifetime."

Their house is fitted out with wall bars for Clive to hold on to and kitchen utensils and household items have been modified so he can use them more easily. But Carol says there are rewards along the recovery path which make endless hours of therapy and battles with everyday tasks worthwhile.

"The first time I heard him say 'Carol' it was like winning first prize in the lottery, and to hear



Newton stroke patient Clive Fuller and his wife Carol. "It's the easiest thing, to throw in the towel."

him struggle with the sentence 'I love you' says it all," she recalls.

Speaking in the lead up to Stroke Awareness Week (October 3-7), Carol paid tribute to the pivotal role she said rehabilitation workers had had in Clive's progress, and encouraged all stroke patients fight on in the face of adversity.

She said Stroke SA had provided invaluable support, and said people should not give up if one form of rehabilitation did not bring quick results or ease pain.

"What suits one person and is successful may not always suit another."