

**Aphasia is a language difficulty resulting from damage to the language areas of the brain.** Most commonly, aphasia is caused by stroke but it can also be associated with brain tumours, brain infection or head injury. 30% of stroke victims have aphasia. The majority of people with aphasia also experience some degree of paralysis to one side of their body, generally the right side.

**People with aphasia have varying degrees of difficulty understanding words, writing, speaking, reading, spelling and using numbers.** A person with some paralysis in addition to Aphasia may be compromised by not being able to hold a pen for writing. For most people with Aphasia and for their friends and family, communication becomes hard work.

**Aphasia does not affect intelligence.** People with aphasia know what they want to say but have difficulty getting messages in and out.

**Most people with aphasia receive treatment from qualified Speech Language Therapists, primarily therapists employed by District Health Boards.** Despite this assistance, which generally ends after about a year, there is no “cure” for Aphasia and most people are left with some level of permanent disability. Research has shown that people with aphasia can continue to improve if they regularly work at enhancing their communication and language skills and their physical skills too.



## Facts about aphasia

- There are approximately 16,000 people with aphasia in NZ
- Approximately 1/3 of people who have strokes experience aphasia
- Every day in NZ there are approximately 6 new people with aphasia related to stroke
- Stroke is the major cause of aphasia
- Head injury is the next most common cause of aphasia

### Rodney Aphasia Group Inc.

was established in 2006 by four people with **aphasia**. The group is organised and run by and for people with **aphasia**, their families and friends.

**Rodney Aphasia Group** meets monthly to provide:

- updated information on living positively with **aphasia**
- support and friendship for people with **aphasia** and their families and friends
- new learning, therapy, and social opportunities
- **fun!**