

Press release: Quarter of people would not call 999 at the first signs of stroke

Public Health England (PHE) today (2 February 2017) launches its annual Act FAST campaign to remind people of the main symptoms of stroke and the importance of calling 999 immediately if they notice any single one of the symptoms in themselves or others.

Stroke kills over 40,000 people a year and leaves around two-thirds of stroke survivors with a disability.

Research shows that 24% of people would wait to call an ambulance because they wrongly believe that they need to see 2 or more symptoms of stroke to be sure. Other barriers to dialling 999 include feeling that they need permission to act on behalf of others.

As part of the campaign, new films will encourage everyone – whether they are a stranger in the street, a family member at home or the person themselves – not to hesitate and make the call immediately when they see any of the main stroke symptoms:

- Face – has their face fallen on one side? Can they smile?
- Arms – can they raise both their arms and keep them there?
- Speech – is their speech slurred?

Radio DJ Mark Goodier, who had a stroke last November, and TV presenter Anna Richardson, whose father had a stroke, tell their personal stories alongside people who have survived stroke – some who have recovered well and others who have been left with life-changing disabilities.

The stories show how disability can be greatly reduced if people react quickly to any of the signs of a stroke – urging people to act fast and call 999.

Professor Kevin Fenton, PHE's National Director for Health and Wellbeing, said:

Stroke is one of the leading causes of death in the country, and the faster someone experiencing a stroke gets emergency treatment, the more chance that person has of surviving and avoiding serious disability.

It is crucial to Act FAST when you see any single one of the symptoms of stroke, and do not delay making that all-important 999 call.

Dr Lasana Harris, Experimental and Social Psychologist, University College London, said:

We always look to make sense of a situation and even if someone appears to be having a stroke we may worry about causing offence or mutual embarrassment. If no one else acts, then we ourselves may not see it as an emergency.

However, the imagined consequences of action are minor compared to the consequences of inaction when someone is having a stroke. So act first and worry later.

Juliet Bouverie, Chief Executive, Stroke Association said:

We know people recognise the signs of stroke but they aren't taking the right action at the right time. A stroke is a brain attack and acting fast makes a huge difference.

You are more likely to survive a stroke and make a better recovery if you call 999 on spotting any one of the symptoms. The quicker you act the more of the person you save.

Background

1. Download the Act FAST campaign videos and pictures from [dropbox](#).
2. The Act FAST campaign will run nationally from 2 February to 31 March 2017. The campaign includes advertising on TV, radio, bus interior posters and digital, supporting PR and a social media drive. A separate strand of activity will specifically target BME audiences as African, African-Caribbean and South Asian communities have a higher incidence of stroke. Website: www.nhs.uk/actfast Twitter: [@ActFAST999](#), Facebook: www.facebook.com/ActFAST999.
3. The Act FAST campaign:
 - Face – has their face fallen on one side? Can they smile?
 - Arms – can they raise both their arms and keep them there?
 - Speech – is their speech slurred?
 - Time – to call 999 if you see any single one of these signs
4. Additional symptoms of stroke and mini stroke can include:
 - sudden loss of vision or blurred vision in one or both eyes
 - sudden weakness or numbness on one side of the body
 - sudden memory loss or confusion
 - sudden dizziness, unsteadiness or a sudden fall, especially with any of the other symptoms
5. Professor Tony Rudd, National Clinical Director for Stroke at NHS England, said “NHS stroke care and survival are now at record levels, stroke is very treatable but every minute counts. Knowing when to call 999 when you see any single one of the signs will make a significant difference to someone's recovery and rehabilitation.”
6. A stroke is a brain attack that happens when the blood supply to the

brain is cut off, caused by a clot or bleeding in the brain. There are around 100,000 strokes in the UK every year and it is the leading cause of severe adult disability. There are over 1.2 million people in the UK living with the effects of stroke. A mini stroke is also known as a transient ischaemic attack (TIA). It is caused by a temporary disruption in the blood supply to part of the brain.

7. [Public Health England](#) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. It does this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health. Follow us on Twitter: [@PHE_uk](#) and Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland](#).
8. "[Stroke Association](#) is a charity. We believe in life after stroke and together we can conquer stroke. We work directly with stroke survivors and their families and carers, with health and social care professionals and with scientists and researchers. We campaign to improve stroke care and support people to make the best recovery they can. We fund research to develop new treatments and ways of preventing stroke. The Stroke Helpline (0303 303 3100) provides information and support on stroke."

For further information, images or interviews please contact:

[Caroline Lucas: Vote tonight is a body blow in fight against extreme Brexit](#)



1 February 2017

***Lucas: "Watching so many Labour MPs troop through the yes lobby with the Tories was truly disheartening."**

Caroline Lucas, the Green Party co-leader, has responded to Parliament's vote in favour of triggering Article 50 tonight. In the vote on the second reading of the European Union (Notification of Withdrawal) Bill tonight, 498 MPs voted in favour of triggering Article 50 and 114 MPs voted against. [1]

Lucas said:

"Tonight's vote is a body blow for the fight against the Government's extreme Brexit, and has handed the Tories a massive advantage.

"Watching so many Labour MPs troop through the yes lobby with the Tories was truly disheartening. The Conservatives are set to benefit hugely from rushing through this vote with as little dissent as possible and it's given them far more opportunity to morph a narrow referendum result in favour of

leaving the EU into an overwhelming mandate to depart from the world's biggest trading zone, wrecking our social and environmental protections along the way.

"It's now down to MPs to work across party lines to amend this Bill and attempt to avoid the very real dangers of Britain falling off the Brexit cliff edge. As the co-leader of a party that stands for environmental, social and economic justice, I could not support a government offering no assurances to EU nationals living in Britain, threatening the funding of our public services, and planning to end our membership of the single market and customs union. In the coming weeks I'll be standing up to this Government's extreme Brexit plans at every stage – and doing all I can to protect our hard won environment and social protections."

Notes:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/blog/live/2017/feb/01/article-50-debate-vote-bill-pmq-theresa-may-jeremy-corbyn-ivan-rogers-to-give-evidence-to-mps-about-why-he-quit-as-uks-ambassador-to-eu-politics-live>

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[Press release: Minister for the Middle East statement on settlement units in the West Bank](#)

From:

First published:

1 February 2017

Part of:

Minister for the Middle East Tobias Ellwood statement on the Israeli Government's announcement to build 3,000 settlement units in the West Bank.

Minister for the Middle East Tobias Ellwood said:

The announcement of further settlement units in the West Bank is part of a growing trend which we condemn. We have consistently been

clear that settlements are illegal under international law, and not conducive to peace. This spike in settlement activity undermines trust and makes a two state solution – with an Israel that is safe from terrorism and a Palestinian state that is viable and sovereign – much harder to achieve.

Further information

News story: Kestrel close encounter

From:

First published:

1 February 2017

Part of:

A kestrel has taken a shine to a Highways England CCTV camera stand on junction 11a of the M5.

With their pointed wings and long tails, kestrels are a familiar sight along UK motorways and main roads as they use thermals from the road to hover while they look for prey.

Now one of them has discovered their perfect perch – on a Highways England CCTV camera stand.

[Kestrel video](#)

Our Traffic Officers Leigh Goodchild and Steve Dyas first spotted this cheeky kestrel while monitoring traffic flows in October 2016. Since then they have been treated to frequent sightings – and have grown fond of their new friend.

We have released this video to coincide with the RSPB's [Big School Bird Watch](#), which encourages pupils to get closer to nature by counting birds at set times.

Kestrels are on the RSPB amber list of protected species, with only around 46,000 breeding pairs estimated to be in the UK. They are most recognisable in their characteristic hovering hunting mode but also like to find a high perch where they can stay on the lookout for prey.

Our CCTV camera platform seems to fit the bill. Traffic Officer Leigh said:

On one occasion she returned with half a mouse, which she promptly

swallowed tail and all!

She's rather obsessed with her own image but her inquisitiveness has given us some good close-ups.

She's squawked and attacked the lens a few times as well. When that happens we discourage her from hurting herself by tilting the camera skywards.

Her visits certainly brighten up our day and make a change from the traffic.

Speech: "We must all come together to help more women shape a bright future for British nuclear energy", says Commercial Secretary

Good afternoon.

Let me start by thanking Jack [Gritt] the President of Women in Nuclear for inviting me to speak to you today. I'm pleased to be here because I shall be taking a deep professional interest in the work of Women in Nuclear in my [new job](#).

Because recently I was made a Minister of State at the Treasury – and I'm proud to say, its first ever female Commercial Secretary and its first ever female peer.

I have always wanted to work at the Treasury.

Ever since I studied politics, philosophy and economics, I have been clear that our national success depends on us spending our resources in the right way.

That's something I grew up caring about – when you are brought up on a family farm, you learn the importance of looking after the pennies from a young age!

Raising eyebrows in the Civil Service

In my present post I shall continue to take a deep personal interest in the work of Women in Nuclear. Because I've long held a strong conviction in the moral, practical and economic necessity of women getting the opportunities we deserve.

In fact, it's been something I've cared about since I first started out in my career.

After graduating from university, I found myself in the fortunate position of having 3 options to choose from – the Civil Service, Unilever, and the Bank of England.

One of the factors that really swung it for me, was the relatively positive attitude towards women that the Civil Service was already taking even then.

Of course it was still dominated by men at the top.

As I climbed up the ranks at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, it was mainly the men doing the hiring – and the higher up the ladder I rose, the more that was the case.

And I remember when I was helping to get the Food Safety Bill through Parliament back in 1989, all three of us leading the team were women – and even more shocking, all three of the Ministers in the Lords, where the Bill started, were women too.

This attracted widespread comment.

It's a sign of how far we've come that nowadays a team composed entirely of men would be just as likely to raise eyebrows.

A daily, a weekly, a monthly process

Because women's increasing role in the workplace is now something that's on the agenda of every single organisation, every single business, and every single industry.

I saw this first-hand when I was working as an executive director on the board at Tesco. It was one of my functions to head up its diversity council. And the attitude I took was always pragmatic. I don't believe in paying lip service to diversity. I believe in taking action. Which is why we tried a whole range of things to support our female staff – such as job sharing for store managers. Opportunities to work with mentors. Or making sure women were paid the same as their male counterparts – because I knew women could be slower to ask for pay rises.

It's initiatives like these that really start to make a difference.

Every little helps, as my old firm said.

Moving forward

Then as a minister in the Business department I worked closely with British companies to look at how we could get more women on boards.

Because I've had my own experience of being the only woman on a board – and it's tough!

Just having two or three more women alongside you changes the whole experience.

So I think it's great that in just the last 5 years, we've made real headway – the percentage of women on the FTSE 100 for example doubled from 13 to 26%.

And I'm pleased to see Sir Philip Hampton and Dame Helen Alexander leading this work forward.

I'm now excited to look at what more I can do in the Treasury.

Working, for example, with Jayne-Anne Gadhia, the CEO of Virgin Money, to [support women in the financial sector](#).

And encouraging more women to apply for our public appointments – something I'd recommend to anyone here too, by the way.

It is an excellent way to pick up new skills and set yourselves apart – and I'll tweet a link out to the website afterwards for you to investigate!

Our nuclear past...

But I want to talk about why we need more women in the UK's nuclear industry in 2017.

And to do so, let's rewind a few decades, to the 17th October, 1956. That was a milestone date in the history of British nuclear power. That was the day our present Queen made her way to the coast of the Irish Sea in Cumbria, to open the very first full-scale nuclear power plant in the world, welcoming, what she pronounced, "this new power...harnessed for the common good of our community."

That was a moment built on the work of many scientists, a good proportion of them British, who had pioneered the way forward.

Frederick Soddy's proof of atomic transmutation.

James Chadwick's discovery of the neutron.

John Douglas Cockroft splitting the atomic nucleus with Ernest Walton.

Our nuclear present...

But, sadly, we haven't kept pace in the 21st century.

Sizewell B in Suffolk was the last nuclear power station to be built in this country – I actually visited it during construction when I was a Non-Executive Director at John Laing. It was nearly a quarter of a century ago when it opened in 1995.

But that is something this government has resolved to change. We came to the conclusion that nuclear energy must play an important part in the diversity of this country's energy mix.

For security of supply.

For cost-effectiveness.

And for the contribution it can make to meeting our carbon reduction commitments. That's why we gave the green light to Hinkley Point C.

And that's why there are industry proposals to develop new nuclear power capacity across a total of five UK sites, such as Moorside and Wylfa. If these projects went ahead, they could generate thousands of new jobs. And it's not just in the UK that we're seeing a nuclear resurgence. Because as Dr Fatih Birol, the Director of the International Energy Agency says, if we are to meet the climate change commitments, we need nuclear to be a bigger part of the world energy mix. So there is a strong global movement towards nuclear, and British expertise should play its part in that.

And our nuclear future

Because this is an industry that clearly has an exciting future.

This is something Anne Lauvergeon – the former CEO at Areva, more often known in the industry as Atomic Anne – was speaking about at the Atlantic Council discussion on the future of nuclear just a few weeks ago.

And consider, too, the future of nuclear fusion – I've enjoyed many a fascinating conversation about this with my step daughter, who I'm proud to say is now a senior engineer at ITER.

This project is a fantastic example of international cooperation. 35 countries have joined together to build the world's largest tokamak fusion device, in the idyllic setting of rural Provence – indeed my step daughter tells me you can even hear the wild boar piglets squeaking outside the windows. This technology is clearly something with enormous long term potential – as anyone working at the Culham Centre for Fusion Energy near Oxford will be keen to tell you.

Pioneers of the past and future

So what does our proud nuclear past, our present nuclear renaissance, and our exciting nuclear future mean? Well, for those of you in the industry, it means great career prospects!

Because there is a huge demand for skills and knowledge – and on a global scale.

As Steven Cowley, the world fusion expert, and former CEO of the UK Atomic Energy Authority, said:

The way we will make energy in the future is not through resources, but through knowledge.

So we have to look at how we can build that knowledge, right here in the UK. Not only so we can forge a future of British nuclear, as bright as our past. But so we can make the most of the UK's incredible research base to make a pioneering contribution to the future of global energy too.

Fresh talent

But how can we develop the British talent that will lead us forward into the future?

Well, we've made a good start.

Top universities are beginning to adapt their engineering degrees to the new nuclear opportunity. And Government has also joined forces with the industry to set up a new National College for Nuclear, with two campuses in the South West and in our nuclear heartland in Cumbria.

Cumbria already employs thousands in this industry – the Sellafield site alone gives high quality jobs to over 10,000 people.

The College with its 2 campuses will play a big part by training the next generation of nuclear specialists. It will open its doors to students this coming September – aiming to train 7,000 people by 2020 alone.

The National Skills Academy for Nuclear (NSAN) is also running its flagship programme of training for people to work on nuclear sites – and has already had around 14,000 enrolments.

More widely, we also have bold ambitions to educate the British scientists of the future. Both through apprenticeships, and our work to boost the study of STEM subjects, especially maths where we lag behind internationally.

Because this kind of background can unlock all kinds of doors – whether you want to work in nuclear, in data, in cyber or in an investment bank.

Female talent

But another way I think we can really make a difference is to make the most of the full potential of British women in this industry.

And that's not just about filling the skills gap we face. It's also about building the strength of the industry itself.

There is much evidence that a diverse range of opinions, a diverse range of ideas, and a diverse range of backgrounds all mean greater success for any type of business or organisation.

And that's the reason why diversity is not just something women care about – but men too.

And it's noteworthy that Women in Nuclear is not an organisation confined to the UK, it's a chapter in an international story – with over 30 such organisations across the globe – from Brazil to Bulgaria, the UAE to the

Ukraine and Egypt to Indonesia.

And I know governments across continents will welcome their efforts with open arms.

I had the privilege to speak at the International Atomic Energy Agency Conference in Vienna last year, and my vision for women taking a major role in global nuclear and security was shared with over 130 countries. So the work of Women in Nuclear – and indeed similar organisations, such as the Women's Engineering Society, or Women in STEM – is immensely important. You combine a positive attitude to change, with a pragmatic one. And the many activities you undertake – whether events like this, or mentoring, or your industry charter – all of these are important contributions to change.

They help to break stereotypes, and bring down barriers.

To raise awareness, and encourage aspirations.

In short, to instil a sense that change is not only possible, but happening.

We should also take pride in how far we have come. If you think back to a 150 years ago, women were excluded from large parts of economic life.

The transformation we have seen since then has been incredible.

In this country alone, we've got almost 15 million women in work.

We've got a second female prime minister leading the country.

And we've got organisations like Women in Nuclear, holding events like this, to take us even further, in our positive pursuit of progress.

So let me end, by wishing all of you a fantastic conference, as well as every success in your careers in this industry.

Thank you.