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# Foreward

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## The Primary Authors

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Robert W. Teasell MD FRCPC is principal investigator, Professor and Chair/Chief of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, St. Joseph's Health Care London and the Schulich School of Medicine, University of Western Ontario. Dr. Teasell is also a clinical researcher at the Lawson Health Research Institute.

**Norine C. Foley MSc, RD (Epidemiology)** has been the Project Coordinator from the beginning and is a Research Associate at the Lawson Health Research Institute. She has worked on all 11 editions. Norine also teaches graduate nutrition studies at the University of Western Ontario.

**Katherine Salter BA** is now a co-Project Coordinator and is a Research Associate at Lawson Health Research Institute. Katherine is an

acknowledged expert in secondary prevention and stroke rehabilitation outcome measures.

**Sanjit K. Bhogal MSc PhD** (candidate) is now a student in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at McGill University, Montreal, Quebec. Ms. Bhogal worked on the project at its inception.

**Jeffrey Jutai PhD** is a Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa. He became an important advisor to the team partway through the editions.

**Mark R. Speechley PhD** is Associate Professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University of Western Ontario. Dr. Speechley was with the project from its inception.

## Other Contributing Authors

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**Nestor Bayona MSc (Neuroscience)** was a Research Assistant at Lawson Health Research Institute. Nestor worked on the earlier editions of the SREBR. He is now completing an Optometry degree at the University of Waterloo.

**Jamie Bitensky MSc OT** is an Occupational Therapist in Sudbury, Ontario. Jamie worked on the earlier editions of the SREBR.

**Timothy Doherty PhD MD FRCPC** is Associate Professor in the Departments of Clinical Neurological Sciences and Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, St. Joseph's Health Care London and the Schulich School

of Medicine, University of Western Ontario. Dr. Doherty was one of the original principal investigators.

**Elizabeth Kruger** is an undergraduate in general science at the University of Western Ontario, and hopes to become a physiotherapist. Elizabeth helped with several chapters, especially the young stroke chapter.

**Ross Graham BA MSc (candidate)** is a graduate student in Health & Rehabilitation Sciences at the University of Western Ontario. He was very helpful in preparing the young stroke and severe stroke chapters.

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Stroke Rehabilitation is a deceptively broad and diverse field of study. A wide variety of pharmacological and therapeutic interventions are available, some of which have been rigorously evaluated more than others. This review helps to synthesize the results from over a thousand studies evaluating the effectiveness of these treatments. Stroke rehabilitation was often referred to as a “black box” owing largely to the inability to explain the success of many of these complex treatments, using a reductionist approach. However, as we unravel the mechanisms through which many treatments work, we not only know that stroke rehabilitation can dramatically improve stroke patients’ recovery but we now have a greater appreciation of which elements are critical.

This review arose from a vision for integrated stroke care in Ontario and is a direct result of one of the recommendations of the Ontario Stroke Rehabilitation Consensus Panel. We are grateful to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care of Ontario (MOHLTC) and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario (HSFO) for their initial financial support; however, the project has been funded over its last 9 editions by the Canadian Stroke Network, a federally-funded Center of Research Excellence. Without their continued support, the SREBR would have been updated beyond 2003 or enjoyed the success that it has. Special thanks to Dr. Tony Hakim, Katie Lafferty, Kevin Willis, and Nicol Korner-Bitensky at the CSN for believing in this project.

This project has been the result of many individuals’ hard work. Since the first edition was completed in 2002, several individuals, including Sanjit Bhogal, Nestor Bayona, Chelsea Hellings and Jamie Bitensky have moved on to pursue graduate degrees and other opportunities. Norine Foley, the original project coordinator remains along with Katherine Salter who joined the team in 2004 and who has become a co-project coordinator. The SREBR has been primarily their work. Most recently Elizabeth Kruger, Andrew McClure and Ross Graham have helped with data abstraction and review. Dr. Mark Speechley has provided epidemiological expertise. Dr. Jeffrey Jutai was part of the project team until he took up a new position as Professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences within the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Ottawa. We are also grateful to Dr. Hussein Noorani, Becky Skidmore and the team at the Canadian Coordinating Office of Health Technology (CCHOTA) who were extremely helpful with the extensive initial literature search. Mrs. Patricia Pugh handled much of the paperwork and seemingly endless e-mails.

We would also like to thank the Parkwood Hospital Foundation, which is now the new St. Joseph’s Health Centre Foundation, who sponsored and assisted with the initial proposal for this project. We are also grateful to Parkwood Hospital, St. Joseph’s Health Care London and in particular the Lawson Health Research Institute for providing us with the space necessary to house the project. The SREBR has more recently become part of the Aging, Rehabilitation & Geriatric Care program of the Lawson Research Institute.

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## The following individuals served as contributors and reviewers of individual sections:

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- Steven Bagg MD, Queen's University, Kingston, Psychiatrist.
- Mark Bayley MD, University of Toronto and Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, Toronto, Psychiatrist.
- Sandra Black MD, Sunnybrook and Women's' College Hospital, Toronto, Neurologist.
- Lucie Brosseau PhD, University of Ottawa, Physical Therapist.
- Colleen Churchill MSc, Parkwood Hospital, London, Social Worker.
- Janis Dale BSc, Parkwood Hospital, London, Dietitian.
- Pamela Duncan PhD, Duke University, USA, Physical Therapist, Epidemiologist.
- Hillel Finestone MD, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Psychiatrist.
- James Fisher MSc, Parkwood Hospital, London, Speech-Language Pathologist.
- Jayne Garland PhD, University of Western Ontario, London, Physical Therapist.
- Maggie Gibson PhD, Parkwood Hospital, London Psychologist.
- Vladamir Hachinski MD, University of Western Ontario, London, Neurologist.
- John Heitzner, MD, University of Western Ontario, Psychiatrist
- Maria Huijbregts PhD, Baycrest Hospital, Toronto, Physical Therapist.
- Nicol Korner-Bitnesky PhD, McGill University, Occupational Therapist
- Rosemary Martno PhD, University of Toronto, Speech-Language Pathologist
- Nancy Mayo PhD, McGill University, Montreal, Physical Therapist, Epidemiologist.
- Aninta Menon PhD (candidate), University of Toronto, Occupational therapy
- J.B. Orange PhD, University of Western Ontario, London, Speech-Language Pathologist.
- David Spence MD, University of Western Ontario, London, Neurologist.
- Carol Richards PhD, Laval University, Quebec City, Physical Therapist.
- Sharon-Wood Dauphinee PhD, McGill University, Montreal, Physical Therapist.
- Rosemary Martino MSc-SLP(c), University Health Network, Toronto, Speech-Language Pathologist.

This 12th edition of the Stroke Rehabilitation Evidence-Based Review, like the other editions, can be copied at no cost, for clinical use or for teaching purposes, but the content is the property of the authors and the Canadian Stroke Network.

The goal of this project was to produce an up-to-date, but easily accessible evidence-based review of the stroke rehabilitation literature. We have made the process through which we arrive at our levels of evidence as transparent as possible. We are particularly excited about our new, case-based educational module, which is an attempt to reformat the information of the SREBR in a way that is more relevant and user-friendly to students and residents, who may

not fully appreciate what is involved in stroke rehabilitation. This has been an ongoing project, which has continued to evolve with new data and feedback from a variety of sources. The information is being continually modified as new data becomes available or as our interpretations are challenged. Stroke rehabilitation professionals are strongly encouraged to carefully critique their area of interest and send us any comments, care of Dr. Robert Teasell:  
robert.teasell@sjhc.london.on.ca

Hopefully you will find this information useful in your clinical and research practices. You can access the entire evidence-based review at:

[www.ebrsr.com](http://www.ebrsr.com)

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Robert Teasell, MD FRCPC  
Professor and Chair-Chief  
Department of Physical Medicine and  
Rehabilitation  
Schulich School of Medicine &  
Dentistry, University of Western  
Ontario and Parkwood Hospital, St.  
Joseph's Health Care London  
Clinical Researcher, Lawson Health  
Research Institute  
University of Western Ontario  
London, Ontario, Canada