This Workbook is designed to provide safe and effective guidelines of care in the acute care setting for you and your stroke survivor. The demonstrated methods of assessment and intervention (in video format) are taken from the hospital setting but can be used for stroke survivors in any setting.

The guidelines, illustrations and tips are suggestions for a treatment strategy organized in a progression of care beginning with assessment and continuing through intervention. These are only guidelines. It is extremely important that you consult with the medical team at your hospital and follow protocols and medical guidelines specific to your facility.

**The Stroke Team**
From the moment a person is admitted to the acute care hospital with a stroke, the acute care team is put into motion. Diagnostic tests are ordered and reviewed by physicians. The appropriate medical management is determined and carried out with the help of the nursing staff, and discharge plans begin. Social workers help the entire team by providing critical information related to family support and home conditions.

The average length of stay in the acute care hospital for the diagnosis of stroke is approximately 4-5 days. The plan of assessment and intervention is influenced by 3 distinct factors in the acute care setting:

- Medical Stability
- Urgent Discharge Planning
- Time Limitation
Most urgent is the patient’s medical management. The medical management of acute stroke focuses on diagnosing and minimizing the progression of the stroke, treating any secondary complications, and identifying the source for the purpose of preventing a recurrent stroke.

Therapists receive doctors’ orders and become key players on the acute care team. Attending physicians look to therapists for their opinions on the rehabilitation prognosis of a stroke survivor and recommendations related to their care. Therapists assess functional changes on an ongoing basis, providing physicians with critical information about responses to acute medical management and providing the team with critical information about discharge planning.

Trained and experienced therapists have excellent evaluation and prognostic abilities and provide critical insight into acute medical management and rehabilitation decisions. These insights are especially important when the acute care team is considering discharge plans.