

After Stroke Peer Support Toolkit



A Guide to Develop, Deliver and
Maintain Group-based Peer Support



SECTION **4**

Evaluate and Grow Your Group

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Disclaimer

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Conflict of Interest Declaration

The contributing members have no conflict of interest to declare.

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Quick Overview

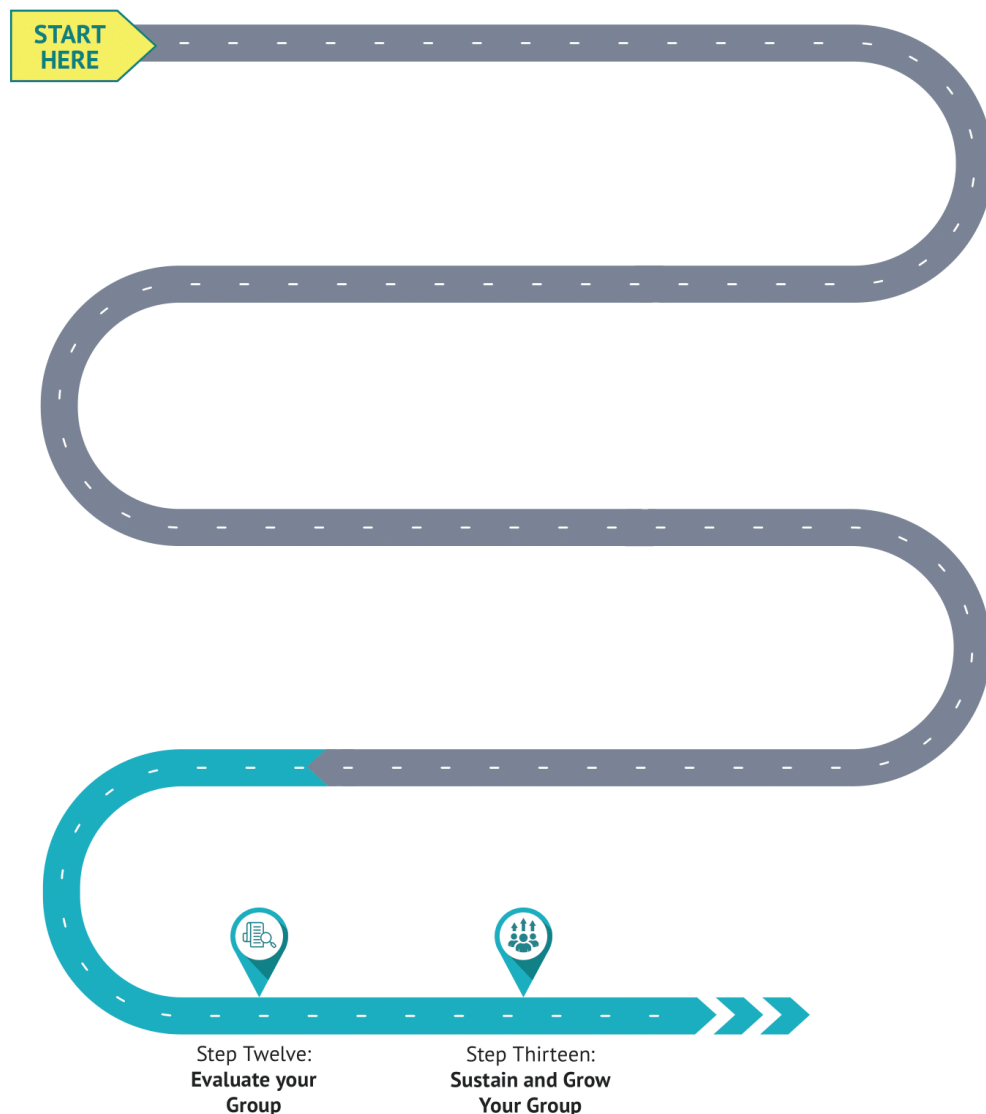
Check in to see if your program is helping the members and think of ways to grow your program so more people can benefit from it.

Peer Support Group Design & Implementation Roadmap



SECTION 4

Evaluate and Grow Your Group



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Step Twelve | Evaluate Your Group

Setting up a peer support group is only half of the goal. The other half is making sure that it is truly helping the group members and the community. Evaluating your group will help you understand what you are doing right and where you can improve.

There are two kinds of evaluations that groups should do.

- **Process Evaluation**, understanding if the group is running as planned.
- **Impact Evaluation**, understanding how the peer support group has impacted its members.



Tip: While listed at the end of this toolkit, evaluation is not a separate phase. You collect information on a regular basis and use it to understand if any changes are needed.

Process Evaluation

A simple process evaluation involves checking if the group has achieved its original goals and if its on track with ongoing goals. A process evaluation is a good way to document important decisions, and changes that have happened over time.

For new groups, engage in process evaluations soon after starting and in six months time to help identify and resolve challenges. Later, an annual process evaluation will be enough.

Template | Process Evaluation Worksheet

Below are some questions you can ask yourself about your goals, progress, and struggles.

You can use the templates on the following pages or treat it as inspiration to create your own.

Process Evaluation Worksheet

Group Name: _____

Evaluation Date: _____

People Involved: _____

What were the group's original goals?	
What was the outcome?	
If original goals were not achieved, what were the reasons?	
What were some key successes and how were they achieved?	
What were major challenges and how did you resolve them?	
What worked and what did not?	

	Item	Details
Resource Tracking	Spaces used for meetings	
	Meeting refreshments	
	Other materials	
	Number of volunteers involved	
	Volunteer titles and names	
	Number and reason for volunteer withdrawals	
Meeting Tracking	Number of sessions	
	Number of guest speakers	
	Number of special events	
	Type of special events	
Finances	Donor list	
	Donations received	
	In-kind received	
	Grants received	
	Funds raised (sources)	

	Item	Details
Partner Tracking	Organizational partner	
	Contribution of organizational partner	
	Local partners	
	Contribution of local partners	
Program Promotion	Current methods of program promotion	
	Methods that are working well	
	Methods that are not working well	
Membership Tracking	Total number of members to date	
	Average attendance	
	Number of withdrawals and reasons	
	Number of people on waitlists	

Impact Evaluation

An impact evaluation is used to understand the effects of participating in a peer support group on its members. The results can be important when applying for funds, grants or receiving donations.

The best way to find out member experiences with the group is to ask them. Ask them to fill out a survey or feedback form about what is working well and what can be improved.

Impact evaluations should be conducted regularly (every 6 or 12 months) to maintain the quality of support members receive.



Tip: Anonymous surveys (where names are not required) will help you get honest answers.



Template | Member Feedback Survey

The survey below can be used to collect feedback from members of your peer support group. You can use the template on the following pages or treat it as inspiration to create your own.

Member Feedback Survey

We would like to know how the peer support group has helped you, and ways to improve in the future. Please take a few minutes to give us some feedback. This survey is anonymous so be honest!

How long have you been a part of this peer support group? _____

On average, how many sessions do you attend in a month? _____

What do you like about this peer support group? _____

What do you not like about this peer support group? _____

What can we improve? _____

Do you have any feedback for the facilitators, and other volunteers who help run this group? _____

What other topics should we cover during our meetings? _____

Overall, are you satisfied with this peer support group?

- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied

For each of the following statements, choose one option.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel welcome in this group.					
I have found the help I need in this group.					
I feel more confident to live with my stroke because of this group.					
I feel more socially connected because of this group.					
I have noticed positive changes to my health/wellbeing because of this group.					
I am more informed about ways to manage my health because of this group.					
Having guest speakers has been helpful.					
I feel like I have provided support to other members in the group.					
The group facilitators are managing the discussions well.					

Do you have any general comments? _____

Date Completed: _____

Thank you!

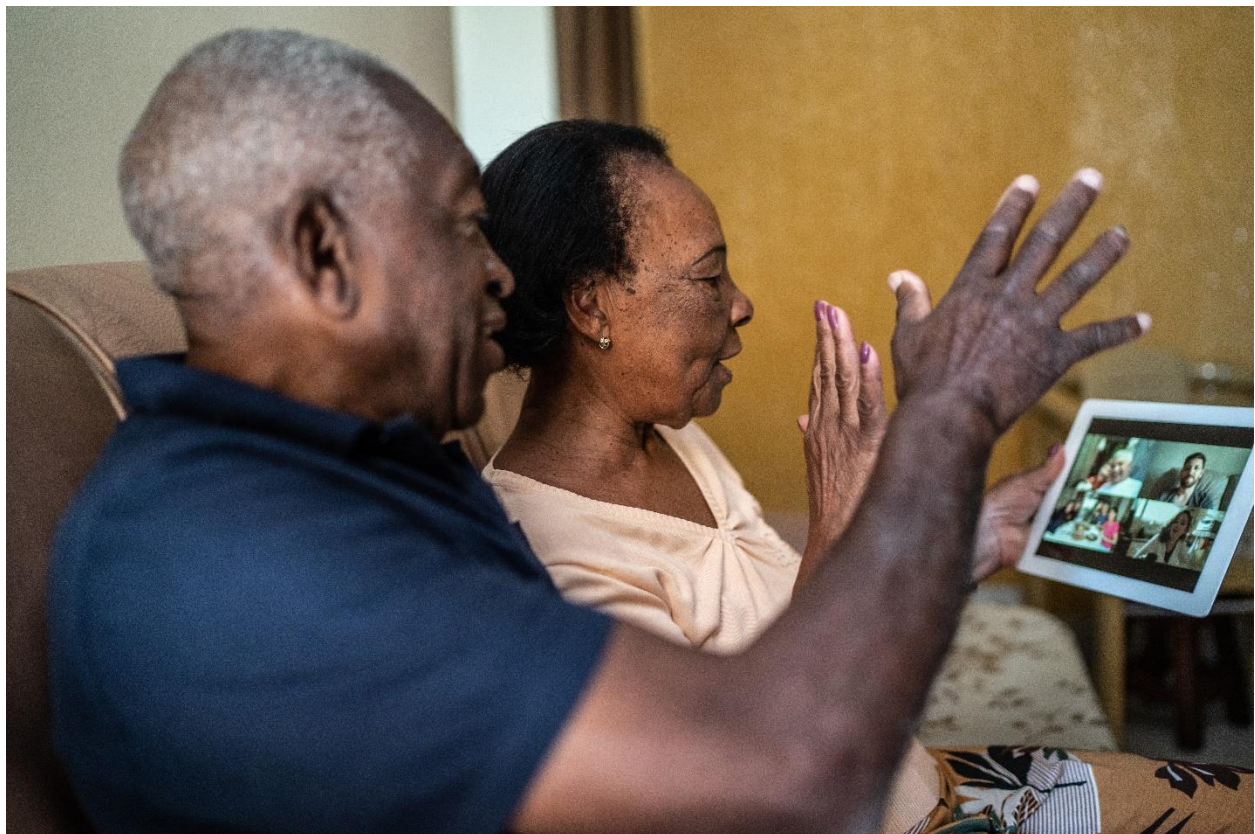
Redesigning Your Group Based on Feedback

Use the help of volunteers, or organizational partner to help you summarize the results of your process and impact evaluations.

As you go through the results, identify what seems to be working well (lots of positive comments), what is not working well (suggestions for improvement and changes), and what else you can do.

For things that work well... ↓ Keep doing them and monitor.	For this that are not working well... ↓ What changes can you make?	For things that you need to do... ↓ How can you start doing this?
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Thus, slowly the group adapts to the needs and preferences of its members, providing the support they need and value.



13 Step Thirteen | Sustain and Grow Your Group

Over time, the group will run like a well-oiled machine. It is a valuable part of the community and members rely on it to improve their lives. The group has strong relationships with local and organizational partners, and has figured out how to find new members, or raise funds.

At this time the focus will shift to making sure that the peer support group continues to run smoothly. This way new stroke survivors can access its services. This is known as program sustainability.

For a group to be sustainable, it must:

- Continue to provide health benefits to members.
- Change to meet the needs of the clients and partners.
- Be able to find and use resources it needs to run smoothly.

Template | Sustainability Checklist

Groups that sustain over time have a few common features. We have presented them as questions (see template below) so you can check how your group is doing.

Use the checklist below to see if there are any kinds of issues that should be addressed to make sure the group is sustainable.

Sustainability Checklist

As you answer these questions, think of how the group is doing now.

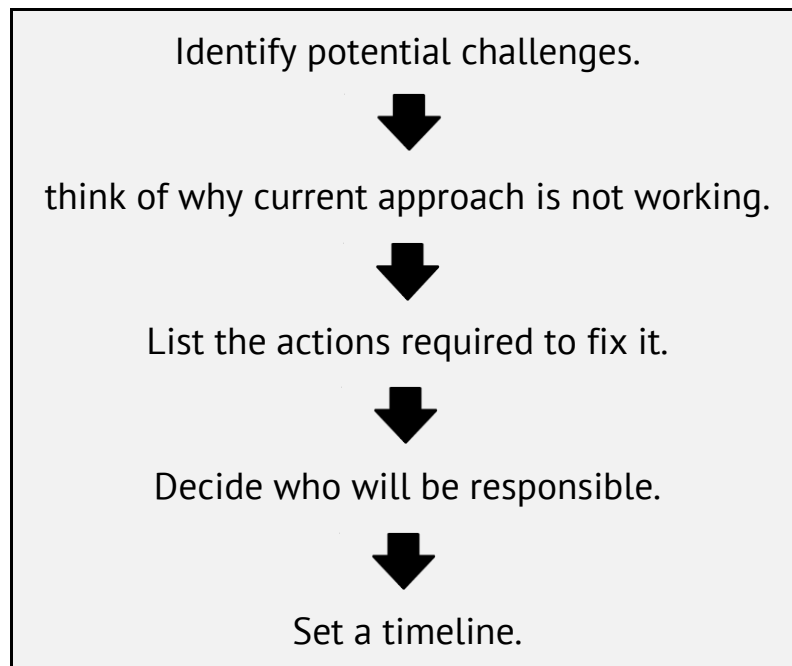
	Yes	Sometimes	No
Is there is match between what the community needs and what the group offers?			
Does the group have the support and active involvement of local partners?			
Does the group have a positive impact on participants, and community?			
Is the group regularly evaluated?			
Is the group changed based on results of the evaluation?			
Is the group being promoted/advertised in the community?			
Are sufficient funds available to manage group costs?			
Does the group have access to the resources it needs?			

If you have answered **sometimes** or **no** to any of these questions, they might be areas where you may have challenges going forward.

Addressing Challenges

Once you have found potential challenges, you can create a plan on how to address them. You can also include areas that are working well in your sustainability planning. This will ensure that they continue to work well.

The approach would be:



Template | Sustainability Planning Worksheet

Building on the questions above, fill out this form to help you understand if you are likely to have any challenges soon or in the future. If you find problems, you can discuss solutions with your partners.

You can use the templates on the following page or treat it as inspiration to create your own.



Tip: Have regular discussions about what issues the group is facing and how it can be resolved.

Sustainability Planning Worksheet

	Potential challenges	Issue with current approach	Potential solutions	Actions to fix it
Match between community need and group benefits				
Active involvement and support of local partners				
Positive group impact				
Regular evaluation				
Changes to group in response to evaluations				
Group promotion				
Availability of resources				

In-Depth Evaluation

If you are looking to do an in-depth sustainability evaluation you can use tools like The Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (<https://www.sustaintool.org/psat/>).

If Challenges Cannot be Resolved

Sometimes, it may not be possible to fix some problems. For example, group attendance is poor, and no new members are joining. Or there are no trained, experienced, and dedicated team members to run the group.

If you have tried different solutions and nothing is working, it may be necessary to terminate the program and inform your members about other groups they can join.



Grow Your Group

Once the group has been running for a while, the team can discuss opportunities and ways to grow the group.

Here are some ways the group can grow:

- Conduct an evaluation to find areas where the group can do better.
- Redesign the group to make it more formal and structured. Establish a governance structure, design policies and procedures, register your group as a not-for-profit group, etc.
- Join a network of peer support groups so you can learn from each other.
- Expand the services of your group by inviting more members, specific groups (caregivers, younger people living with stroke, etc.) or offering virtual and in-person groups.
- Expand your partnerships.



Tip: This is the exciting part! The group is doing great work and now can have even more positive impact on the community.