

To the Editor;

I am writing today to respond to a number of articles that have appeared in the paper recently in support of a stroke unit for PEI.

As far as I am concerned, it can't happen soon enough. Five years ago, my husband Clair had a stroke when he was only 66 years old. Unbelievably, several days after he was admitted to the Alberton hospital, he had another stroke - it was definitely "touch and go" for awhile.

After six weeks, Clair went to the Rehabilitation Unit at the QEH in Charlottetown where he received the treatment he needed to regain some of the physical abilities that the stroke had robbed him of. Without that six weeks of therapy, Clair and I can't imagine where he would be today. Although he is paralyzed on his right side and has some problems seeing, hearing and speaking, it could have been much worse. Doctors at the Rehab said he made a remarkable recovery, especially considering how severe his strokes were.

In our view, PEI does need a stroke unit badly. I understand that a stroke unit on PEI would attend right away to people like my husband when they have a stroke. After that they need follow up with rehab in the hospital and their community. This would ensure that they get the therapy they need. Therapy is extremely important and necessary to Clair. Right now, Clair depends on the gym - he knows if he doesn't get there regularly, he could lose what he gained back after having his stroke. That cannot be allowed to happen.

I really urge everyone in a position to have an influence on this, to continue to work toward a stroke unit for our province. Based on our personal experience, Clair and I feel sure that a stroke unit would not only save lives, but would also result in less disability in people who have had a stroke.

Sincerely,

Sheila Gallant
Alberton