**EMBARGOED 00:01 8 January 2019**

**Research shows that a Resolution Run can cut your stroke risk**

Training and taking part in a Resolution Run for the Stroke Association in Belfast could reduce your risk of stroke by one fifth (20%) according to Tom Robinson, a leading Professor of Stroke Medicine at the University of Leicester.

Professor Robinson, who is also the President of the British Association of Stroke Physicians, highlighted an overview of research studies that showed that moderate (walking) to intense (jogging, cycling) physical activity can significantly reduce your stroke risk. Importantly, activities should make you break into a sweat to qualify as (moderate to intense) physical activity.

Building on a very successful event in 2018, the much anticipated Stroke Association Resolution run Belfast 5K or 10K is happening on Sunday 24 February, Queens Sport, Upper Malone Road from 11am. The charity’s Resolution Run campaign is a series of walking or running events where participants can choose a distance and raise vital funds for the Stroke Association, all while improving their health and reducing their risk of stroke.

**Professor Robinson said**: “You don’t have to be an athlete to reduce your stroke risk, we can all do it as part of our daily routine. Simply taking part in at least 30 minutes of activity, which helps you break a sweat about three to four times a week will help. Remember, the more you do, the more you can reduce your risk.”

Professor Robinson also advises that being committed and having a training plan, are vital to achieving your goal. He continues: “The preparation for and taking part in a Resolution Run could reduce your stroke risk. However, it is equally important to remember that you need to maintain this level of exercise to keep your stroke risk low. If you start small, training in short bursts and build up you are more likely to succeed and keep going in the long term too.”

The Stroke Association has been working with Professor Robinson to produce guidance to help you get started at <https://www.resolutionrun.org.uk/>.

If you have any pre-existing health conditions or other concerns, it’s important to contact your GP before you begin training.

The charity has organised 34 runs across the UK from 17 February – 5 May 2019. The events are open to all ages and abilities, and participants can choose to run, jog or walk their way to the finish line.

**Graeme Ferguson, aged 48, from Banbridge** was inspired to sign up for the Belfast Resolution Run when his friend Scott had a stroke and heart attack in July 2018 aged just 42.

He says: “We thought we were going to lose him. We were told to prepare for the worst but thankfully he is recovering well. It’s spurred me on to give myself the best chance to stay healthy. I just really enjoy running now. I’m fitter, my mood is better. I’m glad to be running [Resolution Run] for a charity that supports local people like Scott recovering from stroke”.

**Barry Macaulay, Director, Stroke Association in Northern Ireland, said**: “Every five minutes across the UK, someone’s life is turned upside down by stroke. Here in Northern Ireland almost 37,000 people are living life after stroke but we can all take part in exercise that helps to reduce our risk. A Resolution Run is an ideal event for families and friends who want to do something fun together while getting more active in 2019. By signing up to a Resolution Run in Belfast each runner will not only reduce their stroke risk, they will also help ensure that we can continue to support stroke survivors and their families as they rebuild their lives.”

Physical activity is just one aspect of a healthy lifestyle that is required to reduce your risk of stroke. We should all avoid gaining excess body weight, smoking, excessive alcohol consumption and an unhealthy diet too.

Entry fee is just £16. All runners receive a technical running t-shirt and medal. To enter or for more information on the Belfast Resolution Run visit [www.resolutionrun.org.uk](http://www.resolutionrun.org.uk) email [resolution@stroke.org.uk](mailto:resolution@stroke.org.uk) or call 0300 330 0740. The money raised through your Resolution Run will help the Stroke Association to fund vital research and support people affected by stroke across the UK.

**Ends**

For more information or interview requests please contact Joe Kenny, Stroke Association NI

T:02890 508023

M:07392 083402

E:joe.kenny@stroke.org.uk

Notes to editors

**The Stroke Association**

* A stroke is a brain attack which 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, that’s almost 37,000 in Northern Ireland.
* The 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. More information can be found at [www.stroke.org.uk](http://www.stroke.org.uk)