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Title: Exploring perspectives of people with stroke living in the community about sedentary behaviour

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## Purpose:

People who have had a stroke often experience significant changes in their physical and cognitive abilities, which can lead to increased sedentary behaviour, which has detrimental health consequences. This study explores the views of people with stroke living in the community about sedentary behaviour, which is important for developing effective interventions to reduce or break their participation in this behaviour and improve overall health outcomes.

## Methods:

This study utilised an exploratory qualitative research design using a semi-structured interview to collect data from community-dwelling stroke survivors in the southeast of England. To be eligible, participants need to be adults at least 18 years and above, living in the community, and have a confirmed diagnosis of stroke. Depending on participant preference, the interviews were conducted either face-to-face or virtually in a 1:1 setting. The interviews lasted an average of 45 minutes. All interviews were recorded. An inductive thematic analysis based on Braun and Clarke's approach was utilised in this study.

## Results:

Twelve participants consented to participate in this study. Many participants expressed a desire to be more active but felt constrained by their post-stroke sequelae. Participants have a limited understanding of the term sedentary behaviour and its impact. All reported that the amount of time they spent in sedentary behaviour has increased, with those who have suddenly retired from work reporting boredom and a lack of motivation to do things. The main challenges to reducing or breaking up their participation in sedentary behaviour are physical limitations, including fatigue, reduced mobility due to muscle weakness and poor balance, environmental restrictions, insufficient support and psychological factors such as fear of falling and low self-efficacy. Most participants expressed that a tailored activity around their hobbies would be an enabler for them to break up or reduce the amount of time they spent sitting. Having a support system has the greatest positive influence on influencing participants' sedentary behaviour.

## Conclusions

This research emphasises the significant physical, psychological, and social barriers that stroke survivors face when attempting to reduce sedentary behaviour. Despite these barriers, participants expressed a strong desire to be more active, with a focus on tailored activities related to their hobbies and aspirations.

## Impact

The unique perspectives of stroke survivors highlight the need for tailored interventions that address facilitators of sedentary behaviour among people with stroke living in the community.

Future work should consider a longitudinal study that explores changes in sedentary behaviour and the impact of intervention over time.