First aid for stroke

A stroke occurs when an artery taking blood to the brain becomes blocked or bursts. As a result of a stroke, brain cells are damaged and functions controlled by that part of the brain become paralysed.

**Signs and symptoms**
- Sudden decrease in level of consciousness
- Weakness or paralysis, especially on one side of the body
- Feeling of numbness in face, arm or leg
- Difficulty speaking or understanding
- Unexplained dizziness
- Disturbed vision
- Loss of balance
- Confusion

**Management**

1. Follow DRSABCD action plan
   - **Danger** – check for Danger.
   - **Response** – check for Responsiveness.
   - **Send for help** – Send for help. Call triple zero ‘000’.
   - **Airway** – clear and open Airway.
   - **Breathing** – check for normal Breathing.
   - **CPR** – commence CPR if not breathing (30 chest compressions: 2 rescue breaths).
   - **Defibrillator** – apply Defibrillator if available and follow prompts.

2. Calm and reassure the casualty
   - **Conscious casualty**
     - Support head and shoulders on pillows
     - Loosen tight clothing
     - Maintain body temperature
     - Wipe away secretions from mouth
     - Ensure airway is clear and open.
   - **Unconscious casualty**
     - Place in recovery position.

3. Ensure call for an ambulance triple zero ‘000’ has been made.

**How do you know if someone’s having a stroke? Think…**

**F.A.S.T.**

1. **F**ace – check their face. Does it droop?
2. **A**rms – check their arms. Does it droop?
3. **S**peech – ask them to say a sentence. Does their speech slurring?
4. **T**ime – call 000 if any of these signs occur.

**In an emergency call triple zero ‘000’ for an ambulance**