The American Heart Association has always been committed to reducing death and disability due to stroke. This is visible through the support of activities of the Stroke Council, the International Stroke Conference, and the journal *Stroke*. However, this commitment has been elevated significantly within the past decade with the development of the American Stroke Association, a division of the American Heart Association, and with the integration of stroke-specific mission and goals into its strategic plan. The stroke-specific professional programs, products, and services developed by the American Heart Association target and benefit a wide range of medical specialists, including neurologists, neurosurgeons, and neuroradiologists.

Because nursing also plays a crucial role in stroke treatment, prevention, and education, the Council of Cardiovascular Nursing has established a new subcommittee: Stroke Nursing. The newly formed committee is currently being chaired by Barbara Fletcher of the University of North Florida and is represented by preeminent experts in the field of stroke nursing: Nanette H. Hock, Anne D. Leonard, Timothy J. Shephard, Judith Spilker, Debbie R. Summers, and Deidre Wentworth. Margaret Kelly-Hayes serves in an advisory capacity and as liaison to the Stroke Council. The immediate goals and objectives of the committee are the following:

1. To recommend more professional and informational plenary sessions and workshops at the International Stroke Conference with a view toward promoting collegial networking among nurses with a specialty in stroke;
2. To develop and nurture professional and advocacy partnerships with other stroke-related nursing organizations, such as the American Association of Neuroscience Nurses and the National Institute of Nursing Research;
3. To participate in the planning process of Scientific Sessions of the American Heart Association by suggesting potential topics of interest for cardiovascular and stroke seminars;
4. To submit proposals for scientific conferences addressing specific issues of interest to stroke nursing;
5. To develop patient education materials and packets of poststroke information in collaboration with the American Stroke Association;
6. To recognize outstanding clinical practice and novel research in stroke nursing with a Stroke Article of the Year award from the Council of Cardiovascular Nursing; and
7. To further promote advocacy efforts and issues of interest at a national level by participating in Research Lobby Day.

This is an exciting time, not only for the Council of Cardiovascular Nursing but also for those with an active interest in stroke. The American Heart Association continues to demonstrate its commitment and elevates the importance of stroke within its strategic mission and goals.

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Stroke Nursing Committee: Addressing a Special Need of the Council of Cardiovascular Nursing
Barbara J. Fletcher and Kathleen King

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