

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**SESSION 1997**

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**HOUSE BILL 1458\***

Short Title: Strike Out Stroke Project.

(Public)

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Sponsors: Representatives Justus; and Watson.

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Referred to: Appropriations.

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May 25, 1998

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED**

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2 **AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO CONTINUE THE STRIKE OUT STROKE**  
3 **PROJECT IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AS**  
4 **RECOMMENDED BY THE HEART DISEASE AND STROKE PREVENTION**  
5 **TASK FORCE.**

6       Whereas, stroke is the leading cause of disability and the third leading cause of  
7 death in North Carolina, and hypertension is the leading cause of stroke; and

8       Whereas, the estimated lifetime cost of a mild stroke in an older adult is  
9 \$100,000; the estimated lifetime cost of a severe stroke in a younger adult is \$500,000;  
10 and

11       Whereas, in North Carolina, stroke and heart disease are the leading causes of  
12 hospitalization expenditures; and

13       Whereas, the annual costs of cardiovascular disease to the health care system  
14 in the United States in 1996 were estimated to have been \$151 billion, - a 9% increase  
15 from the previous year; and

16       Whereas, experts in this area agree that early detection and control  
17 management of risk factors such as hypertension and cardiovascular disease, including  
18 but not limited to atrial fibrillation, are the most effective ways to reduce the incidence of  
19 stroke and other forms of cardiovascular disease; and

1           Whereas, new drug therapies show great promise in arresting or reversing the  
2 damage from a stroke if administered within hours of the occurrence of the stroke; and

3           Whereas, from 1992 to 1996, North Carolina hosted a federally funded pilot  
4 project called "Strike Out Stroke"; and

5           Whereas, the "Strike Out Stroke" project was an effective professional  
6 education, public education, and public awareness tool in the effort to reduce the  
7 incidence of stroke in North Carolina; Now, therefore,

8 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

9           Section 1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
10 Health and Human Services, Division of Community Health, the sum of one hundred  
11 seventy-five thousand dollars (\$175,000) for the 1998-99 fiscal year to implement the  
12 North Carolina Strike Out Stroke Project.

13           Section 2. (a) The purposes of this act are to:

14           (1) Build the capacity of health care providers to control hypertension and  
15 prevent and treat cardiovascular disease through increased professional  
16 education;

17           (2) Provide the appropriate standards for equipment, measurement of blood  
18 pressure, and screening for hypertension;

19           (3) Provide for the development and adoption of protocols for blood  
20 pressure measurement;

21           (4) Raise awareness among the general public, and specifically at-risk  
22 groups, about the importance of controlling high blood pressure;

23           (5) Provide lasting improvement in the health and physical well-being of  
24 North Carolinians with hypertension, thus providing the State's citizens  
25 with an improved quality of life and society with the reduction of health  
26 care costs;

27           (6) To improve professional education about strategies to prevent stroke by  
28 the appropriate treatment of heart disease;

29           (7) To increase professional awareness as to the emergency nature of stroke  
30 and new strategies to reverse or minimize the effects of a stroke; and

31           (8) To improve public education about the symptoms of stroke and the need  
32 for stroke patients to seek immediate care.

33           (b) There is established in the Department of Health and Human Services  
34 the North Carolina Strike Out Stroke Project. The purpose of the project is to build the  
35 capacity of health care providers to control hypertension and effectively treat  
36 cardiovascular disease, and to increase awareness among at-risk populations of the  
37 importance of controlling high blood pressure and other cardiovascular risk factors. The  
38 program shall consist of the following:

39           (1) Strategies for educating and training health professionals. The  
40 strategies shall include:

41           a. Implementation of training sessions on high blood pressure  
42 management and prevention that include advice concerning the

- 1 purchase and maintenance/calibration of blood pressure  
2 measurement equipment;
- 3 b. Development of protocols for blood pressure measurement that  
4 are consistent with the latest report of the Joint National  
5 Committee on Hypertension Control;
- 6 c. Provide and implement programs on the proper treatment of  
7 patients with heart disease to prevent stroke in this population;
- 8 d. To disseminate the American College of Chest Physicians'  
9 recommendations for stroke prevention;
- 10 e. Develop and disseminate protocols for treating stroke as a  
11 medical emergency, including recommendations for  
12 hospitalization and medical care of acute stroke patients; and
- 13 f. Provide information about blood pressure medications,  
14 medications for treatment of risk factors that contribute to heart  
15 disease and stroke, including the problems of polypharmacy and  
16 side effects.
- 17 (2) Strategies for educating and training patients and targeted communities.  
18 The strategies shall include:
- 19 a. Develop, market, and distribute resource and education materials  
20 on issues concerning hypertension and stroke prevention,  
21 including stroke symptoms and the need for emergency treatment  
22 for stroke symptoms;
- 23 b. Provide such materials to clinical sites through electronic means;  
24 and
- 25 c. Ensure that such materials are culturally sensitive and of  
26 appropriate literacy levels.
- 27 (3) Strategies for raising public awareness on the causes, nature, treatment,  
28 and prevention of hypertension and stroke. The strategies shall include:
- 29 a. Plan and implement a communication plan incorporating a  
30 variety of complementary media and marketing activities  
31 targeting medically underserved persons, at-risk populations, and  
32 low literacy groups;
- 33 b. Plan and implement a public awareness campaign that educates  
34 the public on the symptoms of stroke and TIA, and the need to  
35 seek emergency care if they experience such symptoms; and
- 36 c. Seek opportunities for public/private partnerships and for  
37 building hypertension and risk factor awareness into community  
38 events and existing programs, services, and activities.
- 39 (c) In implementing the project, the Division shall do the following:
- 40 (1) Provide sufficient staff to implement the Strike Out Stroke Project;
- 41 (2) Provide appropriate training for the staff of the Strike Out Stroke  
42 Project;

- 1           (3)    Develop and disseminate resource materials for professional and patient  
2           education and public awareness; and  
3           (4)    Provide training, support, and technical assistance to health care  
4           professionals in local health departments and clinical settings.  
5           Section 3. This act becomes effective July 1, 1998.