

Imprisoned in world without any words



Royal Rehabilitation Centre speech pathologist Julia Murphy with members of aphasia support group at Ryde Ex-Servicemen's Club.

Picture: BRAD HUNTER - FR320C

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IMAGINE not being able to say a word all day – this is the disconcerting reality that people with aphasia wake up to.

Aphasia is commonly caused by stroke or other damage to the brain, and affects people's ability to read, write, talk and understand what others are saying.

Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney's speech pathologist Julia Murphy said aphasia could turn everyday activities such as answering the phone, ordering lunch at a restaurant, reading a book or writing a shopping list into frustrating experiences.

"Social interaction can become a huge obstacle, often leading to relationship breakdowns, social isolation, loss of em-

ployment and depression," said Ms Murphy.

The Royal Rehabilitation Centre runs Talk Time support groups for people with aphasia and their family members at venues including Ryde Ex-Servicemen's Club.

Royal Rehabilitation community relations manager Jim Towers said that as a contribution to Stroke Awareness Week people could challenge themselves to hold a morning tea or other social function while not being allowed to talk.

"How do you communicate that you want tea, not coffee, how much sugar and whether you take milk," he said.

For information about Talk Time call Royal Rehabilitation on 9808 0538.