CHAPTER 6

6. CONCLUSION
The aim of this study was to establish functional levels at discharge and post discharge and factors that influence functional independence of patients who had a stroke. The main conclusions arising from this study are summarised as follows:

6.1 Stroke patients have limited functional independence at discharge from the hospital but improves post discharge

6.2 Age was found to have an influence on functional independence during the initial stages of rehabilitation, but does not seem to have an influence on functional independence in the long term for stroke patients younger than 75 years of age.

6.3 Being married was found to improve the chances of regaining functional independence depending on the role of the spouse.

6.4 Having bowel continence increased the chances of having functional independence.

6.5 Staying in hospital/rehabilitation unit for less than two weeks or more than six weeks increased the chances of regaining functional independence.

6.6 Participating in household and community activities increased chances of regaining functional independence.

6.7 Having a caregiver decreased chances of regaining functional independence, depending on the role of the caregiver.

6.8 Gender, education level, duration of stroke, side of stroke, the presence of other illnesses, shoulder and leg pain, urinary incontinence, financial role and depression were found not to have an influence on functional independence after having a stroke.