



# Hope in People with Aphasia: A Longitudinal Qualitative Study

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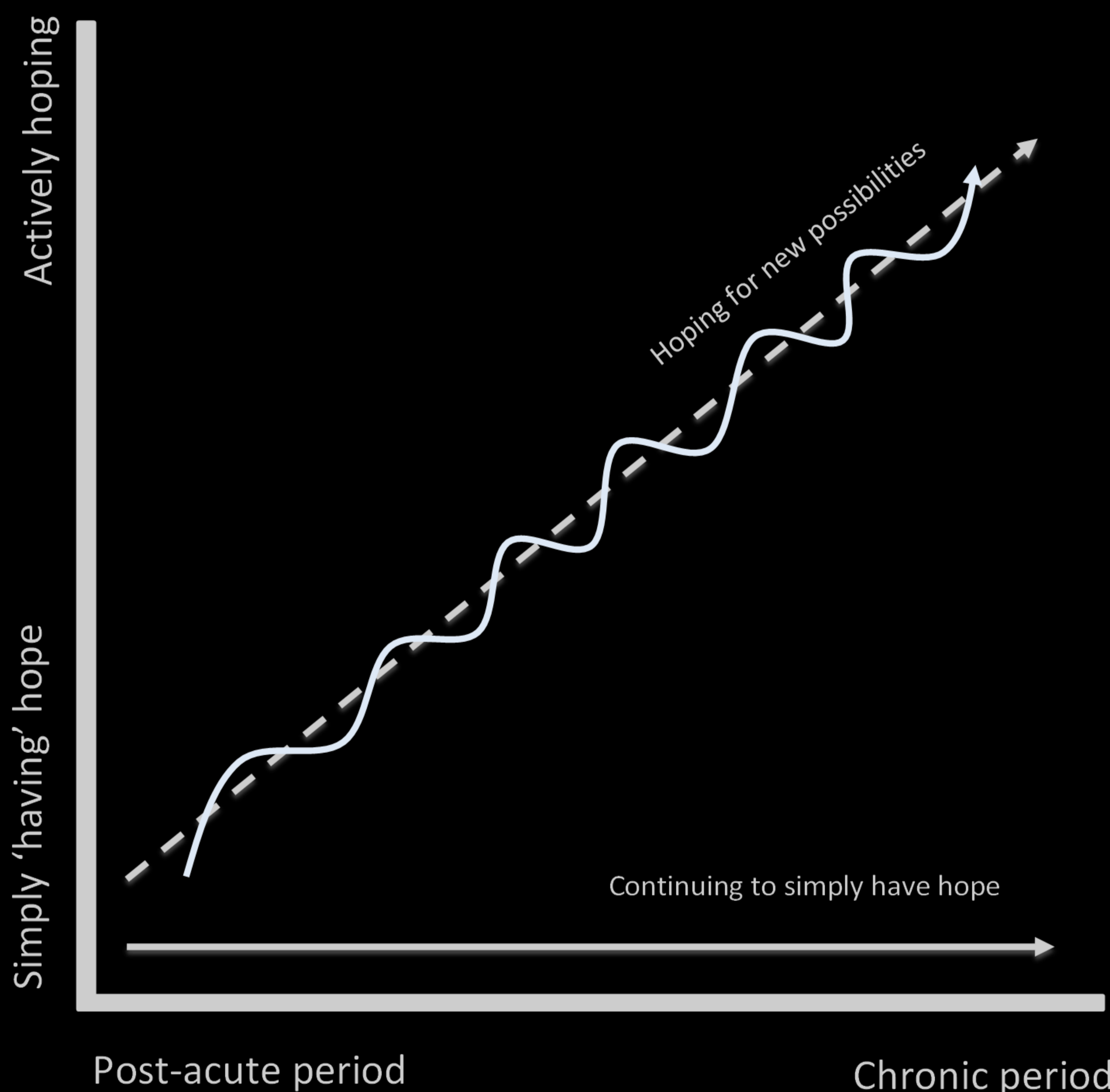
## BACKGROUND AND AIMS

Hope has been shown to be important for life after stroke<sup>1</sup>. People with aphasia have reported that having a sense of hope is essential for the post-acute recovery period<sup>2</sup>. This study aimed to explore hope at two time-points in recovery: the post-acute period (3-6 months post stroke) and the chronic period (~18 months post-stroke).

## METHODS

The study drew on an Interpretive Description methodology. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with five people with aphasia in the post-acute period and with four of these participants in the chronic period. Data were analysed using multiple techniques including coding, thematic analysis, diagramming and memoing.

## THE EXPERIENCE OF HOPE OVER TIME



In the post-acute period, the dominant form of hope for all participants appeared to be 'simply having hope', a broad sense of hope for the future<sup>2</sup>.

### HOPING FOR NEW POSSIBILITIES

Over time, some participants had an increased focus on active forms of hope and a sense of looking forward to the future and what could be.

These participants appeared to:

- Perceive on-going recovery and progress
- Have significant social supports
- Continue to link with rehabilitation and support services
- Had a sense of being "more comfortable in [their] own skin, with a stronger sense of identity.

### CONTINUING TO SIMPLY HAVE HOPE

In contrast, other participants appeared caught in the present, struggling to look to the future with little change over time. They had few hopes for the future, just a hope that the future would be good.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

A sense of hope appears to be important throughout recovery however several factors appear important for helping people develop active hopes for the future.

It may be beneficial for clinicians to be mindful of the role of social supports, progress and on-going access to rehabilitation and recovery services in facilitating an active form of hope. Explicitly addressing provision of long-term supports may help people to both: (a) develop an increasing sense of hope and possibility about the future and (b) take steps toward making these happen.

## REFERENCES

1. Bright, F.A.S., Kayes, N.K., McCann, C.M. & McPherson, K.M. (2011). Understanding hope after stroke: A systematic review of the literature using concept analysis. *Topics in Stroke Rehabilitation*. 18(5), 490-508
2. Bright, F.A.S., Kayes, N.K., McCann, C.M. & McPherson, K.M (2012). Hope in people with aphasia. *Aphasiology*. E-pub date 17 September, 2012. DOI:10.1080/02687038.2012.718069