

Organizational Update World Stroke Organization

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The World Stroke Organization (WSO) was formed in 2006 through a merger of the International Stroke Society and the World Stroke Federation. After 10 successful years, the organization conducted a strategic plan for the coming years. After 2 workshops held in Kuala Lumpur and Los Angeles, which were externally facilitated by an experienced management consultant, strategic priorities have emerged, including growing a robust organization, increase membership, strengthening our capacity to reduce the impact of stroke, and building awareness and knowledge of stroke. The Board has endorsed a vision for the WSO, A Life Free of Stroke. Our central mission statement remains, To reduce the global burden of stroke through prevention, treatment, and long-term care. The final plan was presented and approved at the European Stroke Organization Conference meeting in Barcelona in May 2016. We also agreed on several important changes of our bylaws, including the changes for the terms of presidency, the roles of President Elect, and Past President.

During the World Stroke Conference in Hyderabad, India, in October 2016, Prof Werner Hacke took over the presidency from Prof Stephen Davis for a 2-year term. In 2018, he will be followed by Prof Michael Brainin.

The World Stroke Congress in Hyderabad, India, attracted >2200 participants and was, according to the feedback of the participants, a major success.

We organized another highly successful World Stroke Day, October 29, 2016. The theme of the 2016 campaign was Stroke is Treatable, and in addition to printed tool kits and print resources (available in 18 languages), this year's campaign was also supported by a short online video developed to support social media engagement. A total of 94 events were registered on the World Stroke Congress website, with activity taking place in 47 countries—the largest number of participating countries to date.

Online news articles featuring World Stroke Day achieved a 600 million cumulative reach. The potential of social media was clearly demonstrated with the 2016 campaign. Engagement with World Stroke Congress via Facebook increased significantly on last year, with World Stroke Campaign posts reaching an audience of around 58 000 (the

likely reach taking into account member organization activity is likely to have been considerably higher). Twitter mentions of number of stroke were 5× than in 2015. While direct traffic to the World Stroke Campaign website was lower than in previous years, 3750 World Stroke Day resource downloads were recorded from the Campaign website.

We received a total of 46 submissions (approximately half the number of registered events) for World Stroke Campaign Awards. These applications came from 36 countries covering all geographical regions. Winning projects are in the High Income Countries Category, Neemann Stroke Survivors Campaign; in Low and Middle Income Countries Hospital Rehabilitasi Cherasi in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. MacDonald Oguike was the winner of the Individual Achievement Award for his innovative MasterStroke campaign in Nigeria.

The theme for the 2017 campaign will be Stroke is Preventable.

Global advocacy remains one of our key activities. We have been represented at major World Health Organization and United Nations meetings in Geneva in New York. Our proposal for an update on stroke treatment in Appendix 3 to Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases was accepted. It now includes thrombolytic therapy and care in stroke units. We also joined the Non-Communicable Diseases Alliance, working with partner organizations in the mission to reduce the global burden of stroke in line with the World Health Organization 25 by 25 noncommunicable disease targets and the UN noncommunicable disease-related Sustainable Development Goals. We have been liaising with the World Heart Federation, as witnessed by the recent Mexico Declaration on Circulatory Health, aimed at the prevention of heart attacks and stroke. We have endeavored to move stroke away from being bundled as a Cardiovascular Disease, which to us naturally means cardiac disease and excludes stroke. A lot of discussions have been going on regarding stroke in the *International Classification of Diseases-Eleventh Revision* classification. We have recently received confirmation from the World Health Organization Statistics and Informatics Department responsible for *International Classification of Diseases-Eleventh Revision* of their final decision that cerebrovascular diseases should be placed under Diseases of the Nervous System in the upcoming *International Classification of Diseases-Eleventh Revision*. The decision reverses the erroneous placement of cerebrovascular diseases in Diseases of the Circulatory System held for 62 years since 1955, long felt to be incorrect and of disadvantage for stroke. Bo Norrving has been a leading advocate in this important change.

In addition to our organizational global advocacy work, in 2016, we developed and user-tested resources to support the in-county advocacy work of our member organizations.

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The WSO Advocacy Toolkit is designed to support objective setting, coalition building, and evidence-based advocacy on stroke issues by our member Stroke Support Organizations.

Patty Lindsay and the Guidelines Committee produced the first global stroke guidelines, published late 2014. Under her leadership, we have finalized the WSO Roadmap for Quality Stroke Care. The Roadmap was launched in Hyderabad and provides a framework for the global implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of stroke services. It also provides standardization and consistency for the selection of evidence-based recommendations, approaches to implementation in clinical practice, and uses performance measures to enable continuous quality improvement.

To further promote stroke care in South America, the WSO is preparing the first WSO regional stroke conference, together with the ASA and the Ibero American Stroke society. The meeting will take place in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in June 2017 and is designed for participants from Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, and Southern Brazil. The event has struggled to gain industry support; WSO and American Stroke Association will be providing financial support to the meeting, which will combine activities dedicated to lay people, sessions focused on building broad stroke services, and scientific updates. The event will see the launch of the first Argentinian stroke support organization and is expected to contribute to the development of a regional strategy for stroke. The WSO considers this event the first in a growing number of regional conferences in different parts of the world, aiming to upskill stroke knowledge and services.

A key World Stroke Day event in 2017 will take place in Moscow, Russia. A World Stroke Day Conference will be attended by Russian Health minister, Prof Veronica Skvortsova, herself an eminent vascular neurologist.

We seek to increase both our individual as well as society membership. We have now achieved 4000 individual members, and our membership societies represent almost 50 000 individual members and lay people worldwide. We are now in the process of trying to expand our society membership in related fields, such as Critical Care Neurology, Vascular Neurosurgery, Neuroradiology, and Interventional Neurology/Neuroradiology, to broaden the scope of the field we represent. Closer collaboration is also planned with the noncommunicable disease Alliance and in the field of stroke and dementia

because these major health problems seem to be more closely related than we ever thought.

Educational and research activities are still central to our mission. In 2017, we are planning regional educational meetings in Vietnam, the Philippines, China, and Sub-Saharan Africa. Under the leadership of Michael Brainin, the World Stroke Academy is now completely revamped with regular updates, video and podcasts, and interactive webinars provided via the new Multilearning platform. There is now continual upload of new material to this eLearning platform, with an increasing number of users and time spent on educational activities. We invite you to register and visit the revamped World Stroke Academy website, which provides stroke information for healthcare professionals on a dynamic and award-winning e-learning platform. <http://world-stroke-academy.org/>.

Our WSO research committee, chaired by Ralph Sacco, has published a set of global research recommendations, in line with our mission for stroke treatment, prevention, and recovery. Key themes include establishment of stroke centers and trials networks, establishing a global chronic disease prevention initiative, standardizing the practice of poststroke rehabilitation, and evaluating the best ways to improve life after stroke. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/ijis.12625/epdf>. A new section dedicated to research has also been added to the WSO website.

We moved to SAGE Publishing in 2016 for the International Journal of Stroke, our flagship research journal, edited by Geoffrey Donnan.

Under the leadership of Robert Hart, Mike Sharma, Natan Bornstein, and Werner Hacke, preparations are proceeding well for the 11th World Stroke Congress being to be held in Montreal, Canada, in October 2018. This will be another outstanding scientific, educational, and cultural experience.

We warmly invite you to seek further updates about this congress at <http://wsc.kenes.com/>.

Finally, preparations are just starting for a big event in 2020: The WSO and the leadership of the European Stroke Organization have agreed to hold the 2020 World Stroke Congress and European Stroke Organization Conference as a joint meeting in Vienna. With both conferences growing rapidly, this will be one of the largest stroke events of all times.

Disclosures

None.

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