



World Stroke  
Organization



*One voice*  
Annual  
Report  
2024

WORLD STROKE ORGANIZATION

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[www.world-stroke.org](http://www.world-stroke.org)

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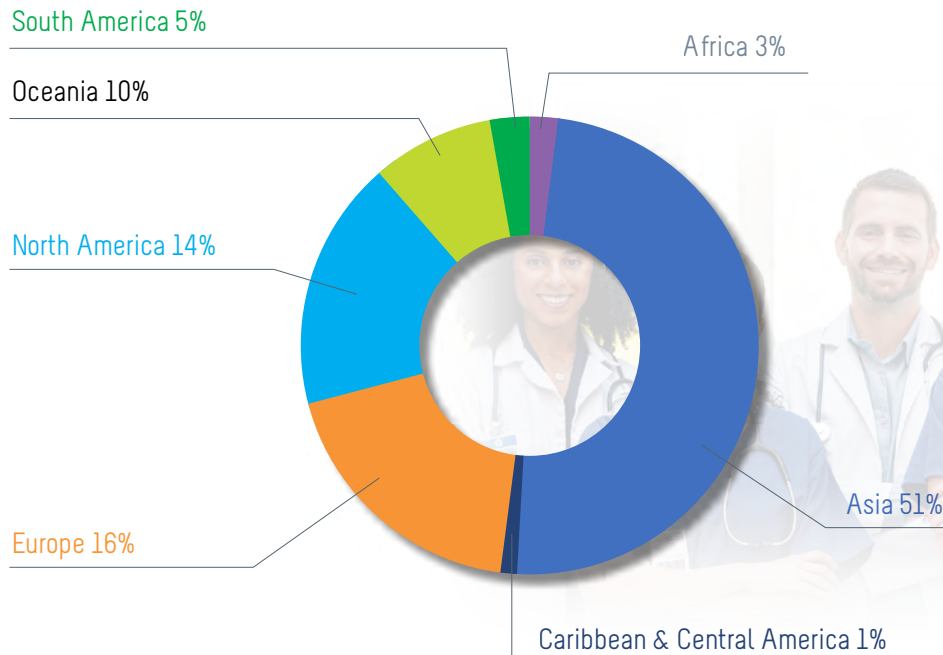


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# WSO IN 2024

## GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF WSO MEMBERS – 2024



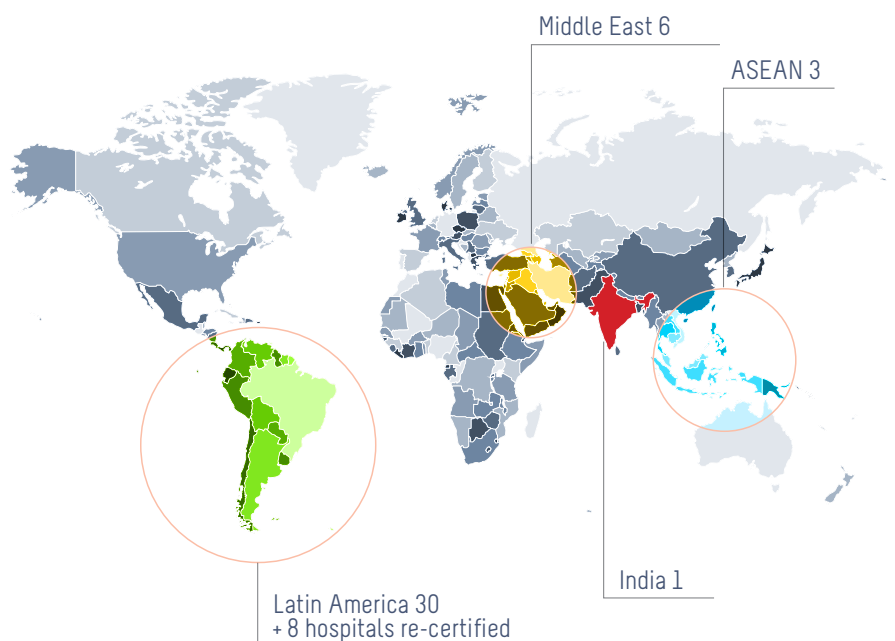
**3,566**  
**INDIVIDUAL**  
**MEMBERS**

**96** SOCIETY  
MEMBERS

**11** ENDORSED  
EVENTS

**WSO CERTIFICATION OF  
STROKE CENTERS**  
CLOSE TO 100 HOSPITALS  
AROUND THE WORLD SINCE  
THE PROGRAM STARTED

## WSO CERTIFICATION 2024



# WSO IN 2024



**2,800+**

ATTENDEES  
GATHERED BOTH  
IN-PERSON AND  
ONLINE



**4.2**  
BILLION  
REACH



**11**

LIVE WEBINARS  
HOSTED

**800+**

AVERAGE  
PARTICIPANTS &  
GLOBAL REACH

## GLOBAL STROKE ALLIANCE 2024

**700+**

PARTICIPANTS

**23** MINISTERIAL  
REPRESENTATIVE  
FROMS

**20 COUNTRIES**

BOGOTA (COLOMBIA)



ISTANBUL (TURKEY)



FUTURE STROKE  
LEADERS PROGRAM

**28**

GLOBAL STROKE  
LEADERS IN  
TRAINING FROM

**20+**

COUNTRIES

**97K+**  
FOLLOWERS  
ON GLOBAL  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
PLATFORMS



WSO STRATEGIC  
PRIORITIES  
(2023-2026)





# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

## Sheila Martins, President from October 2022 until October 2024



*As I conclude my tenure as WSO President, I am filled with deep appreciation and respect for all that we have accomplished together. It has been a year full of tremendous progress, shared commitment, and global impact.*

As I conclude my tenure as WSO President, I am filled with deep appreciation and respect for all that we have accomplished together. It has been a year full of tremendous progress, shared commitment, and global impact.


These past years have been among the most meaningful of my professional life. I have had the privilege of witnessing the transformative impact of collaboration, compassion and determination in driving crucial change. From shaping global policy and launching new initiatives to sharing knowledge across borders, your collective efforts have been a constant source of inspiration and a testament to the strength and unity of our global stroke community.

Serving as the first female President of the World Stroke Organization has been a profound honor. This milestone reflects not only a personal achievement, but also the growing recognition of the vital contributions of women and underrepresented voices in stroke care, research, and leadership. Our continued dedication to innovation and excellence is shaping a more inclusive and impactful future for our field.

WSO has continued to be a strong **voice for stroke** on the world stage. We've taken part in key high-level events, including the 77th World Health Assembly, the UNGA79 side event, the 11th Neuroscience20 Summit, and the first International Conference on the PEN-Plus Regional Strategy to Address Severe NCDs. We also hosted global policy webinars that brought our community together to discuss urgent issues and solutions.

With the dedication of our committees and members, we have achieved meaningful progress across several key areas. In Sub-Saharan Africa, we supported the implementation of **acute stroke services**, contributing to the development of sustainable and regionally adapted models of care. Our **Certification Programs** for Stroke and Rehabilitation Centers expanded significantly, with the official launch of the certification pathway for stroke rehabilitation centers - marking a critical step toward ensuring quality post-stroke care globally.

We launched the WSO **Educational Program for Stroke Centers**, now available in both English and Spanish, to support capacity-building and knowledge transfer across diverse regions. In addition, we developed a structured fellowship program for neurointerventionalists, offering specialized training through workshops and hands-on learning opportunities.



Our organization also updated the **Global Stroke Guidelines** and issued a **Policy Statement** on Climate Change and Stroke, reinforcing our commitment to evidence-based practice and global health priorities. We contributed to the development of the WHO Framework for Acute Cardiovascular and Stroke Care and continued our active support of the **WHO HEARTS Program** - aligning stroke prevention and care with broader non-communicable disease strategies.

Two inspiring **Global Stroke Alliance** meetings also took place this year. In Istanbul, 184 participants from 44 countries, including representatives from 11 ministries of health, gathered to explore strategies for high-quality stroke care across the Middle East and Central Asia. The energy, openness, and collaboration at that event were truly uplifting.

In Bogotá, Colombia, nearly 600 delegates from across Latin America gathered, joined by representatives from 12 national ministries. A milestone was achieved with the first certification of the Acute Stroke Network awarded to the Subred North of Bogotá. The WSO Angels Awards ceremony honored 272 hospitals and 37 emergency medical service teams for their outstanding commitment to stroke care - an inspiring moment of well-earned recognition. A key outcome of this meeting was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Colombian Ministry of Health, marking our joint commitment to implement and certify more than 20 Acute Stroke Centers and 20 Rehabilitation Stroke Centers by 2025.

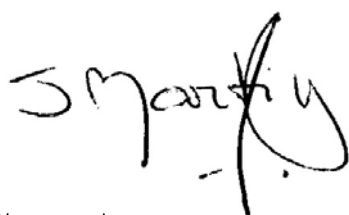
We were also proud to welcome 28 early-career clinicians and researchers from 21 countries into Cohort 3 of our **Future Stroke Leaders program** - chosen with attention to both gender balance and diverse specializations. Their passion gives me great confidence in the future.

A personal highlight for many of us was the **World Stroke Congress in Abu Dhabi**, where 2,800 participants from over 110 countries joined 220 speakers in sharing science, experience, and practical knowledge. The atmosphere of learning, connection, and friendship made it an unforgettable event.

As I conclude my term as President, I am filled with gratitude for the opportunity to serve this remarkable organization. I am confident that the momentum we have built will continue under the capable leadership of Jeyaraj Pandian, to whom I offer my full support.

Thank you for your commitment, collaboration, and passion. This community is what makes everything possible.

Warm regards,



Warm regards,  
**Sheila Martins**



## Jeyaraj Pandian, President from October 2024

My journey with the World Stroke Organization began in 2008, when I joined the first WSO Board as a representative of the Asia Oceania region. Since then, I've had the honor of serving the organization in various roles, each deepening my commitment to its mission and global community.

First and foremost, I would like to sincerely acknowledge the outstanding leadership of Sheila Martins. Her tireless efforts have elevated WSO's global presence and established it as a leading force in advancing stroke care and advocacy worldwide.

As the first WSO President from Asia, I am particularly aware of the growing burden of stroke in low- and middle-income countries. My presidency will focus on strengthening stroke care systems across Asia and Africa, where the need is most urgent. Within the stroke care continuum, prehospital care, rehabilitation, and prevention remain the most underdeveloped components. Addressing these will be a top priority.

I aim to expand access to prehospital stroke services by working closely with the WSO Prehospital Task Force, support the certification and capacity-building of rehabilitation centers globally, and advocate for integrated approaches to stroke prevention—combining service development with population-level prevention strategies.

In addition, I am committed to scaling up WSO's flagship initiatives, including the Global Stroke Alliance and the Stroke Center Certification Program. Through my ongoing collaboration with the World Health Organization's South-East Asia Regional Office (WHO SEARO) and in my role as a WHO Collaborating Center for Stroke, I will work to extend these efforts to other WHO regions as well.

I look forward to partnering with the WSO Executive Committee, Board of Directors, members, and our dedicated secretariat as we continue to make meaningful progress in stroke prevention, treatment, and recovery worldwide. Together, we can build a stronger, more equitable future for stroke care.

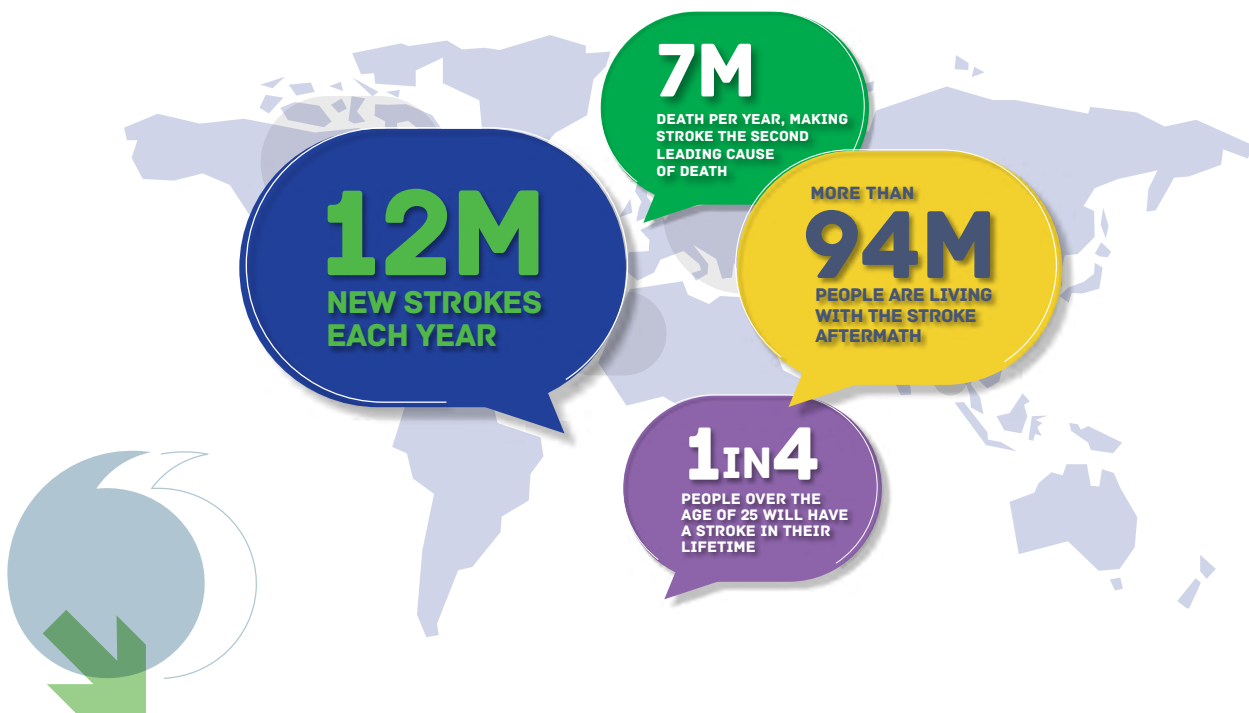
Kind regards,  
Dr Jeyaraj Pandian

*I look forward to partnering with the WSO Executive Committee, Board of Directors, members, and our dedicated secretariat as we continue to make meaningful progress in stroke prevention, treatment, and recovery worldwide. Together, we can build a stronger, more equitable future for stroke care.*

## 2. VISION, MISSION & STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The World Stroke Organization (WSO) is the only global body solely focused on stroke. Established in October 2006 from the merger of the International Stroke Society and the World Stroke Federation, WSO is recognized by the World Health Organization as the leading authority on stroke prevention, care, and advocacy worldwide.

Stroke continues to leave a devastating impact worldwide. Every year, over 12 million people suffer a stroke; 7 million lose their lives, making it the second leading cause of death globally. More than 94 million people live with the long-term consequences of stroke, and 1 in 4 individuals will experience a stroke in their lifetime. These numbers reflect not only a global health emergency but a call to action.



### OUR VISION

**A WORLD FREE FROM STROKE**

### OUR MISSION

**TO REDUCE THE GLOBAL BURDEN OF STROKE THROUGH PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND CONTINUITY OF CARE**

### OUR VALUES

**Equity:** Everyone has the right to preventive measures and access to high quality stroke care.

**Integrity:** We are trustworthy.

**Diversity and Inclusion:** We reflect and are inclusive of the diverse communities we serve.

**Excellence:** We are evidence informed and outcome focused.

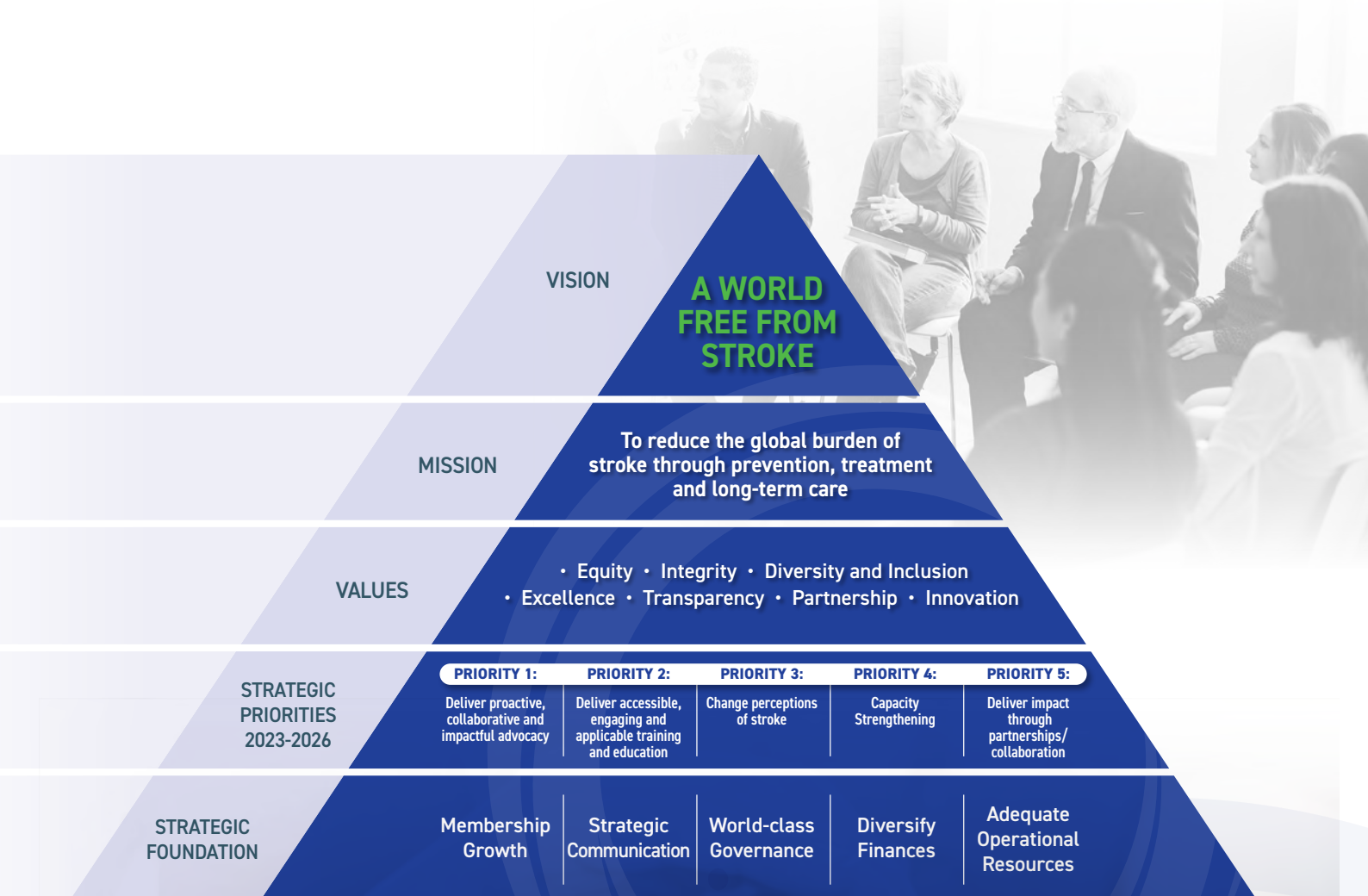
**Transparency:** We are open in decision-making and feedback.

**Partnership:** We develop collaborations built on trust

**Innovation:** We strive for continuous improvement in our work and in the delivery of stroke care

In 2023, the World Stroke Organization launched an ambitious four-year strategic plan, outlining five cross-cutting priorities designed to guide and strengthen our global efforts to achieve our mission. We are pleased to report that we remain firmly on track to meet our strategic goals by 2026.

Our vision, mission, values, strategic priorities, and foundational pillars are summarized in the pyramid below.



*one voice*

# 3. A GLOBAL VOICE FOR STROKE – AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY

## DEVELOPING GLOBAL POLICY

### Influencing Change through Advocacy and Awareness

The global impact of stroke has nearly doubled in the past three decades, and the numbers continue to rise. If urgent action is not taken, the situation will only worsen by 2050.

While stroke affects individuals across the globe, it is in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) where the burden is most acute. As the number of stroke cases escalates, the disparity will widen, with projections indicating that by 2050, LMICs will account for 91% of all fatal strokes and 92% of disability-adjusted life years lost.

With world leaders set to gather for the 4th United Nations High-Level Meeting on Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) in September 2025, the time to act on stroke is now. In response to this critical need, the WSO significantly scaled up its stroke advocacy activities in 2024. Key milestones included the organization of two high-level events and the establishment of the Global Stroke Action Coalition, further strengthening our commitment to driving meaningful policy change on the global stage.



...by 2050, LMICs will account for **91%** of all fatal strokes and **92%** of disability-adjusted life years lost.

### Our Voice in Global and Regional Policy

#### *First International Conference on the PEN Plus Regional Strategy to Address Severe NCDs, April - Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania*

Mia Grupper represented the WSO at the 1st International Conference on the PEN Plus Regional Strategy to Address Severe NCDs in Africa held in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania from April 23-25. This significant event, co-organized by the WHO, NCD Poverty Network, and the Hemsley Foundation, attracted around 600 attendees, with an equal split between onsite and online participants. Diverse stakeholders such as health policymakers, WHO representatives, advocates, funders, and scientists specializing in NCD prevention and management converged to address pressing health challenges.



Speakers in the roundtable discussion on stroke and hypertension at the 1st International Conference on the PEN-Plus Regional Strategy to Address Severe NCD's in Africa

The conference primarily focused on raising awareness about NCDs, particularly highlighting the PEN Plus initiative which addresses rheumatic heart disease, diabetes, and sickle cell disease. It served as a platform for sharing best practices, advocating for investments, and identifying opportunities to enhance NCD management within African health systems.

Mia Grupper had the privilege of contributing to a WHO panel discussion, where she highlighted the impactful work of the WSO across Africa, notably in raising awareness of stroke and improving acute stroke care in Ethiopia and Tanzania. The central message underscored the urgent need to intensify efforts in combating stroke, a largely preventable and treatable disease.

### **77<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly, May – Geneva, Switzerland**

In 2024, the 77th World Health Assembly (WHA) welcomed a congregation of global health decision-makers and stakeholders to Geneva for a five-day program of policy discussions, civil society statements and side events with the theme 'All for Health-Health for All'. WSO was represented at the meeting ensuring that stroke was visible in key discussions, engaging with our policy advocacy partners and networking to strengthen our advocacy efforts. Three joint statements were given as part of the negotiations on resolutions on climate change, pandemic preparedness and Universal Health Coverage.

During the WHA, WSO held its first stand-alone policy event to bring increased visibility and engagement in stroke at global policy level. The event, delivered with support from Philips, set out to:

- Raise awareness on the global burden of stroke
- Shine a light on breakthrough developments in acute stroke care
- Explore the health and economic opportunities these advances bring
- Advocate the role of stroke care in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3.4 and Health for All.

The event was attended by around 50 delegates and speakers, including representatives from the WHO, policy decision makers, and the patient, clinical, public and private sectors. Moderated by Bo Norrving, the first panel welcomed representatives from academic and global health institutions and created space to explore the global policy landscape, the pathway for gold standard stroke care, and the role and potential of groundbreaking advances, including mechanical thrombectomy.



WSO side event at the 77th World Health Assembly

The second panel brought together ministers of health from Jamaica and Costa Rica, and a high-level health representative from Indonesia. Moving from global to local, it created an important opportunity to understand more about the challenges and opportunities countries face in adapting and implementing global policy changes, and some of the innovations and solutions to close the gap in stroke care services.

### **UNGA79 side event, September - New York**



UNGA79 side event, NY



Sheila Martins, Atul Gupta and Signe Haughton at stroke policy roundtable in New York

WSO contributed to a key policy roundtable in collaboration with the Business Council for International Understanding, Philips and Medtronic on the fringe of UNGA79 in New York on September 25th. The event aimed to advance policy maker awareness and commitment to improving access to quality acute stroke care as part of the global policy agenda and was attended by ministry of health representatives from 7 Member States.

WSO Past-President Sheila Martins provided an overview of the interventions that WSO is leading to advance improved and more equitable outcomes for stroke patients. Sheila Martins also moderated the roundtable discussion with ministries of health, supported by key contributions from Atul Gupta (Philips), Signe Haughton (Medtronic), and WHO/Pan American Health Organization. Evidence shared by participants served to highlight the postcode lottery of stroke care access and the huge treatment gap that exists in relation to acute stroke treatment, particularly thrombectomy. The potential economic, healthcare and social returns that would be secured through investment in effective stroke care systems were impressed upon policy makers in attendance. The urgency and the opportunity to advance improved stroke outcomes were clear, as was the strong commitment to show action.



## GLOBAL STROKE ACTION COALITION

### *Launch of the Global Coalition to Drive Action on Stroke Care*

As governments and global NCD stakeholders step up their preparations for September's UN High-Level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), the WSO-convened Global Stroke Action Coalition is busy pushing ahead with an ambitious agenda that seeks to drive awareness and action on stroke at global policy level.

Stroke has long been overlooked in global and national health policy, both in terms of perceived social and economic impact. The result has been that investment and implementation of prevention, care and rehabilitation, which could stem the stroke tsunami and transform outcomes for patients, have lagged behind other NCDs. The Global Stroke Action Coalition is a multisectoral collaboration between scientific societies, stroke support organizations and industry, who have set out to address this lack of attention. The coalition aims to accelerate action that will reduce the impact of stroke for everyone, everywhere by driving urgent commitment, investment, and action on stroke prevention, treatment and continuing care.

Coalition partner working groups will establish a collaborative work program that aims to leverage key opportunities in this year's advocacy calendar to increase visibility and understanding of stroke among key policy stakeholders and to set out a strong call for action across the care pathway.

The stroke advocacy campaign was launched in April 2025.

### *11<sup>th</sup> Neuroscience20 Summit, November - Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*

Sheila Martins and Mia Grupper proudly represented the WSO at the recent Neuroscience20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, held alongside the G20 meeting. They showcased the impactful work being done on behalf of the WSO to advance stroke prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation on a global scale.



Sheila Martins and Maria Grupper at the Neuroscience20 Summit



The Neuroscience20 Summit aimed to contribute to former US President Obama’s BRAIN initiative and to expand action on the current and upcoming initiatives across the G20 nations. The summit brought together policymakers, scientists, physicians, and engineers to explore groundbreaking advancements in the treatment of neurological disorders. This high-level gathering served as a vital platform for multidisciplinary collaboration, focusing on innovative and actionable solutions to address neurological disorders which cost the world economy hundreds of billions of dollars annually.

A key outcome of the summit was the development of a declaration containing clear policy recommendations. This declaration will be presented to G20 nations, reinforcing the importance of prioritizing neurological health—including stroke—on the global health agenda.



Neuroscience20 Summit, Brazil

### Global Policy webinars

In addition to these global engagements, WSO’s Global Policy Committee, chaired by Valery Feigin and Sheila Martins, hosted webinars focusing on collaborative action in stroke treatment, research, and policy advancement.



#### Social determinants of health and stroke care and outcomes

**Chair:** Gary Ford

**Speakers:** Anjail Z. Sharif, Ivy Sebastian and Gisele Sampaio Silva

#### How does climate change affect stroke risk?

**Chair:** Anna Ranta

**Moderator:** Conrado J. Estol

## BUILDING PUBLIC AWARENESS

### World Stroke Campaign 2024

#### *Taking action to be #GreaterThan Stroke*

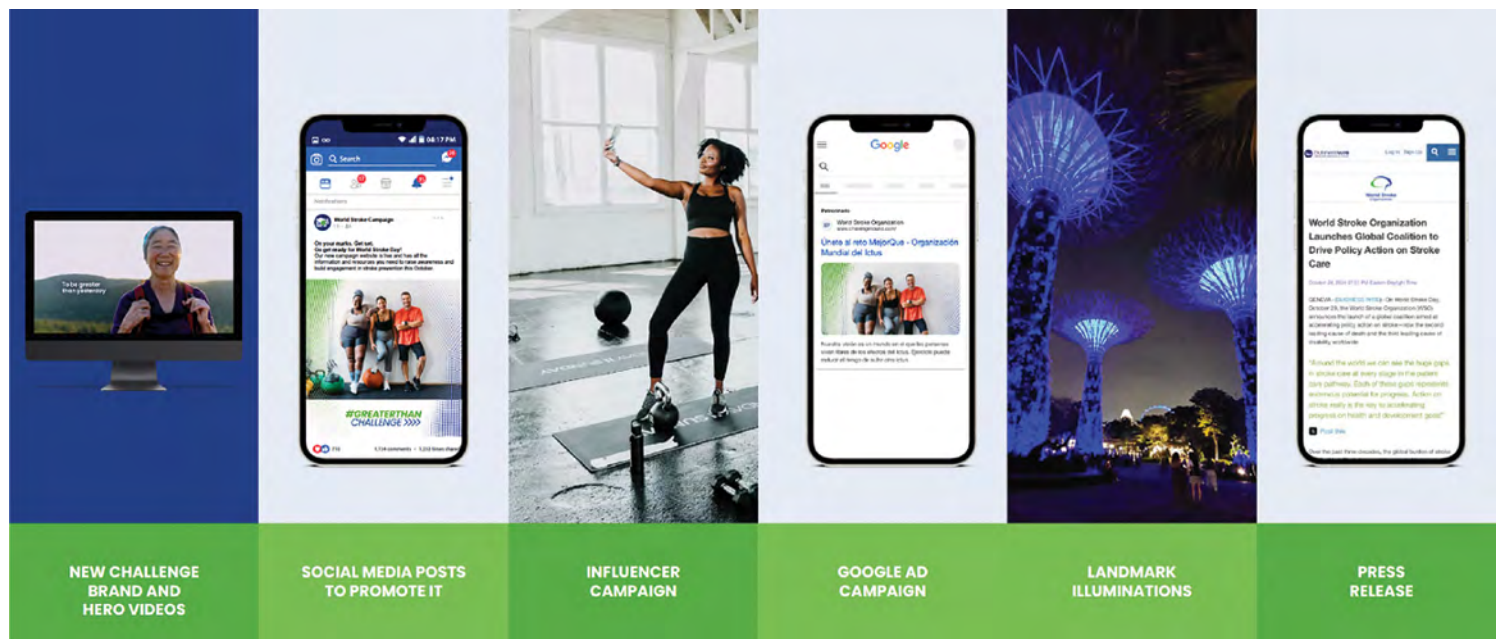
World Stroke Day on October 29th provides an annual focal point for stroke awareness that reaches a massive global audience, online and on the streets of our communities around the world. Continuing with our prevention theme, the 2024 #GreaterThan campaign built on the strong foundations established in 2023, with a campaign that continued to highlight stroke risks and prevention, but also provided a global call to, quite literally, take active steps to reduce stroke risk.

Leveraging the connecting and preventive power of physical activity to raise awareness and drive action on stroke prevention around the world, our members engaged sports teams, influencers and the public to increase visibility of stroke and to help reach new communities with stroke awareness messages.



*World Stroke Day on October 29th provides an annual focal point for stroke awareness that reaches a massive global audience, online and on the streets of our communities around the world.*

#### *#GreaterThan Campaign Activations 2024*



NEW CHALLENGE  
BRAND AND  
HERO VIDEOS

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS  
TO PROMOTE IT

INFLUENCER  
CAMPAIGN

GOOGLE AD  
CAMPAIGN

LANDMARK  
ILLUMINATIONS

PRESS  
RELEASE

To support engagement, WSO launched a campaign branded online challenge account on the Challenge Hound app. WSO members, partners and the public used the app to be part of a global community, moving together towards a collective global goal of stroke prevention. Over 2,000 individuals signed up to the #GreaterThan Challenge and committed to exercising as much as possible throughout October – while raising awareness on stroke prevention.

#### **#GreaterThan Challenge Winner!**

Johana Mazariegos from Guatemala topped the global leaderboard with the greatest number of exercise minutes.

## World Stroke Day Impact

The 2024 campaign surpassed previous years' social media performance, with higher visibility and engagement on the main campaign hashtags #WorldStrokeDay, #GreaterThanStroke, #MejorQue, #MelhorQue and, reflecting our continued focus on stroke symptom awareness - #PreciousTime.

Our new commitment to regional outreach and engagement saw the number of countries engaged in stroke awareness work grow. This year saw a big jump in participation with activity taking place in 78 countries and 170 community events to support increased global visibility and drive engagement.

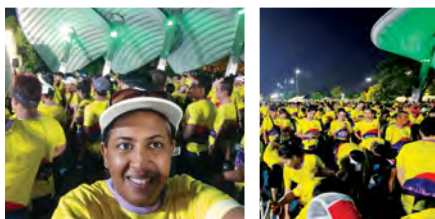


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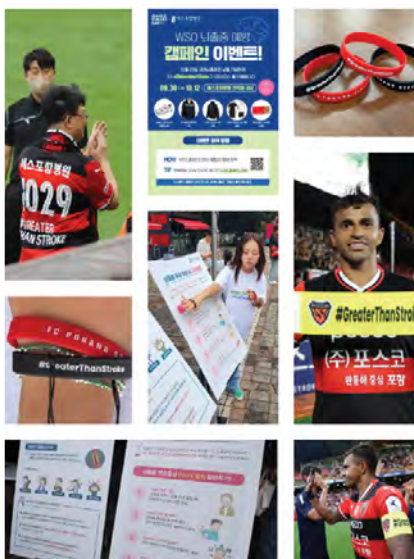
**78**  
COUNTRIES AND  
**170**

COMMUNITY EVENTS  
to support increased  
global visibility and  
drive engagement.

Thailand



UAE



Morocco



### WORLD STROKE DAY 2024 IN NUMBERS



Events



Visits to campaign website



Campaign reach



WSD news release views



Downloads

2024	<b>170</b> IN 78 COUNTRIES	<b>180,242*</b> <small>* Campaign digital promotions directed to Challenge website</small>	<b>4.2 BILLION*</b> <small>* Social, digital and media</small>	<b>2,120 PARTICIPANTS</b> <small>15,331 activities</small>	<b>18,222</b>
2023	<b>286</b> IN 42 COUNTRIES	<b>464,326</b>	<b>2 BILLION</b>	-	<b>9,000</b>
2022	<b>93</b> IN 31 COUNTRIES	<b>150,637</b>	<b>3.1 BILLION</b>	-	<b>8,570</b>



## Celebrating Campaigning Commitment and Achievement

### WORLD STROKE DAY CAMPAIGN AWARD WINNERS 2024

#### *Best Campaign in a High-Income Country*



##### **WINNER Pohang Stroke and Spine Hospital & Pohang Steelers (South Korea)**

Leveraging the World Stroke Day focus on stroke prevention awareness through sporting partnerships, the Pohang Stroke and Spine Hospital and local K1 soccer team the Pohang Steelers, collaborated to drive home a win. With the #GreaterThan stroke video on stadium screens, captains sporting the campaign logo and public participation in identifying and prioritizing their individual stroke risks and prevention priorities, the Pohang campaign provided a great example of how reaching beyond our usual partners and communities can help us engage new audiences for stroke awareness and action.



##### **Highly Commended Singapore National Stroke Association (SNSA) and Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) (Singapore)**

The SNSA and SIT Stroktober campaign used the concept of sporting achievement to take on stereotypes about stroke survivors and to promote accessible exercise opportunities for stroke survivors. The campaign's empowering message highlighted the individuality and resilience of people with lived experience of stroke who were actively engaged in sport, to challenge and change public perceptions of stroke and the importance of stroke for well-being of those with lived experience.

#### *Best Campaign in a Low-Income Country*



##### **WINNER Cameroon Health Promoters (CHEAP) (Cameroon)**

A week-long awareness raising campaign with a prevention focus in Cameroon used a variety of media and live and online events to educate the local population in both urban and rural areas. With a focus on the importance of actions to reduce the risk of stroke, the campaign impressed the WSO Campaign Committee. The campaign team secured a national radio spot to focus on stroke and highlighted the types of strokes, risk factors, signs and symptoms to over 20,000 listeners. Awareness-raising activities in rural communities, including health screenings, reached over 2,000 more, while activities in secondary schools during school assemblies and educational posters reached over 7,000 students and teachers in 15 schools. Sensitization activities on the streets, markets, churches, and other public places involved distributing stroke flyers and educational materials and talking to passersby on stroke. These activities were supported by online communication, sharing digital flyers on social media, reaching thousands more people.



##### **Highly Commended Jaffna and Northern Stroke Center, (Sri Lanka)**

Around World Stroke Day, Jaffna saw a month-long "Fiesta" of basketball events, uniting participants of all ages from the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka. The WSO Campaign Committee recognized this as a creative and engaging way to raise awareness about stroke prevention, detection, and treatment and was impressed by the incorporation of cultural activities and the sports theme of World Stroke Day in this local campaign.



##### **Individual Achievement Award Professor Abdul Malik, (Pakistan)**

Professor Malik was nominated by the WSO Campaign Committee for an award in recognition of his long-standing efforts to improve public awareness of stroke prevention and signs of stroke in Pakistan. Professor Malik has worked diligently for well over a decade, bringing World Stroke Campaign messages to the public in Pakistan, translating materials and advancing awareness of stroke risks and prevention.

## Quarterly campaign activities

In 2024 the Campaign Committee instituted a quarterly campaign to support awareness and engagement in stroke issues across the care continuum.

### LIFE AFTER STROKE

- Sharing testimonials, blogs and a public newsletter highlighting key issues and needs of stroke survivors.
- Highlighting the priorities and needs of people with lived experience of stroke as expressed in the Global Stroke Bill of Rights.
- Attending and sharing updates from the European Life After Stroke Forum.

### ACCESS TO QUALITY STROKE CARE

- Highlighting key issues in access to quality acute stroke care from people with lived experience in a campaign video.
- Sharing key messages on equitable access to acute stroke treatment around the WSO World Health Assembly side event in Geneva.
- Updating the World Stroke Campaign website with key information on acute stroke treatments.

### STROKE SYMPTOM AWARENESS

- Updated and translated #PreciousTime leaflet in collaboration with SSQ members and WSO Future Leaders.
- Promotion of #PreciousTime video and key messages on campaign social media channels
- Supporting FAST Heroes annual awards program

## Regional Implementation Project: Africa

### Addressing the Rising Burden of Stroke in Nigeria and Tanzania

Stroke remains a leading cause of disability and mortality worldwide, with low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) bearing a disproportionate burden. Recognizing this urgent challenge, the WSO and Merz Therapeutics have joined forces to expand acute stroke and rehabilitation services in Nigeria and Tanzania.

This collaboration aims to bridge critical gaps in stroke care by establishing a network of acute stroke and rehabilitation centers, ensuring that underserved communities gain better access to lifesaving interventions.

The initiative focuses on two core objectives:

- Enhancing stroke care services in Tanzania, equipping healthcare providers with tools to deliver patient-centered treatment in low-resource settings.
- Strengthening post-stroke rehabilitation in Nigeria, by educating neurologists and expanding the capacity of healthcare professionals (HCPs) to provide effective long-term care.

TANZANIA

NIGERIA



World Stroke Organization and Merz Therapeutics Project Announcement, Abu Dhabi, UAE, October 2024

### **Pilot Programs in Nigeria and Tanzania**

In Nigeria, the initiative aims to strengthen stroke care capacity by enhancing the education and training of neurologists and HCPs. This includes developing comprehensive educational modules to improve post-stroke rehabilitation programs, ensuring that healthcare providers are equipped with the latest knowledge and skills. The goal is to expand the workforce's ability to deliver advanced stroke management and rehabilitation.

In Tanzania, the focus is on improving patient access to stroke care services. Building on ongoing efforts led by WSO, Merz Therapeutics will provide strategic support to further develop stroke care infrastructure, specifically by strengthening stroke units in hospitals.

A key component of this collaboration is the African Educational Initiative, a structured training program designed to transform stroke care in Nigeria and Tanzania. The program follows a four-phase approach, ensuring a sustainable and impactful improvement in stroke care delivery:

- Conduct a pre-education survey to assess current knowledge gaps and develop strategies to address them.
- 4-day online training for stroke specialists and healthcare providers.
- 4-month self-learning initiative, allowing participants to deepen their knowledge and refine practical skills.
- Final knowledge assessment, ensuring participants have gained the competencies needed to drive change in their respective healthcare settings.

### **Building a Sustainable Stroke Care Network**

This initiative is made possible through an unrestricted educational grant from Merz Therapeutics, reflecting a shared commitment to:

- Expanding healthcare capacity in LMICs.
- Increasing awareness of stroke prevention and early intervention.
- Empowering HCPs with the tools to improve patient outcomes.

By investing in education, capacity-building, and infrastructure development, WSO and Merz Therapeutics are laying the foundation for a lasting impact on stroke care in Africa.



Rehabilitation program Tanzania

# BUILDING HEALTHCARE CAPACITY TO TACKLE STROKE

## THE GLOBAL STROKE COMMUNITY REUNITED FOR THE 16TH WORLD STROKE CONGRESS

### 2,800+

OVER 2,800  
PARTICIPANTS  
FROM MORE THAN  
110 COUNTRIES

### 1,300+

SUBMITTED ABSTRACTS

### 220+

EXPERT SPEAKERS

With an impressive turnout of **over 2,800 participants from more than 110 countries**, the **2024 World Stroke Congress (WSC)** in Abu Dhabi (October 23–26) proved a remarkable milestone for the international stroke community, both on-site and online. The WSC 2024 contributed significantly to the WSO's mission to reduce the global burden of stroke.

The Congress showcased cutting-edge scientific research, transformative clinical insights, and dynamic discussions spanning stroke prevention, acute treatment, and recovery, encompassing a diverse range of topics shaping the future of stroke care. **Over 1,300 submitted abstracts** spotlighted the latest breakthroughs, while **220+ expert speakers** shared innovative strategies to improve patient outcomes and reduce stroke incidence worldwide.

Beyond the scientific program, attendees engaged in interactive workshops, poster sessions, and networking events that fostered meaningful global collaborations. Participants left inspired and equipped with new knowledge, reinforcing a united commitment to advancing stroke services and research.

Though WSC 2024 has concluded, the insights and partnerships forged in Abu Dhabi will continue to **drive progress - building on our shared goal of improving stroke prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation** for communities around the world.

We look forward to welcoming the global stroke community to Barcelona, Spain, from 22–24 October 2025.



*More than just a scientific conference, the World Stroke Congress is a vibrant and engaged global community that fosters collaboration, networking, and knowledge exchange. It is an unparalleled opportunity to connect with peers, form lasting alliances, and work together to improve stroke care worldwide.*

Sheila Martins,  
Immediate-Past President



WSO Board of Directors, World Stroke Congress, October 2024

## Global Stroke Alliance



### WSO Global Stroke Alliance

Stroke without frontiers

Global Ministerial Meeting

17 – 19 October • Maslak Hilton Hotel  
Istanbul / Türkiye

The Global Stroke Alliance (GSA) is a highly impactful implementation meeting organized by the WSO since 2020. The aim of these meetings is to unite healthcare decision-makers, administrators, stroke experts, industry leaders, and patient advocates from the region to discuss the implementation of stroke care. Through interactive workshops, delegates share knowledge and expertise, aiming to develop effective national plans for stroke prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation. A key element of the GSA is the Ministerial Meeting, where ministers of health and ministry representatives collaborate with stroke experts to examine stroke care in their countries, identify gaps, and explore opportunities to enhance patient outcomes within their national healthcare systems.

### WSO Global Stroke Alliance - Istanbul, Turkey

The inaugural GSA event in Istanbul took place in collaboration with iCure Stroke and regional societies. This pivotal initiative aimed to accelerate the implementation of high-quality stroke care throughout the Middle East region. The event saw a total of 184 participants, including 156 attendees at the implementation meeting and 25 at the mechanical thrombectomy workshop. The event was supported by Medtronic, ALLM, Penumbra, Microvention, Siemens, and Boehringer Ingelheim. The GSA brought together experts from 44 countries and 11 ministries of health in the Middle East and Central Asia, alongside a neurointervention workshop that featured an intensive and comprehensive educational program. Undoubtedly, this event has brought great progress to the region!

ISTANBUL (TURKEY)



Global Stroke Alliance, Istanbul 2024



Neurointerventionalist workshop at the GSA, Istanbul



## The WSO Global Stroke Alliance – Bogota, Colombia

The 4th WSO Global Stroke Alliance (GSA)-Latin America conference, in collaboration with the Ibero-American society of cerebrovascular disease and the Ibero-American Stroke Organization, brought together 600 delegates, representatives from 12 ministries of health, including 3 ministers from Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Guatemala, and 3 deputy ministers, alongside leading regional and global stroke experts. The event served as a platform to review progress and establish priorities for implementing quality stroke care across the region.

During the event, participating countries shared updates on their national stroke care programs, including advancements in prevention, acute stroke care, rehabilitation, and the contributions of stroke support organizations. A highlight of the conference was the presentation of Colombia's newly launched National Stroke Plan, which demonstrated the transformative potential of commitment and collaboration in healthcare.

The conference also celebrated outstanding contributions to stroke care:

Sheila Martins received the Angels Honorary Award for her exceptional leadership and transformative impact on global stroke care.

Octavio Marques Pontes-Neto, World Stroke Academy Editor-in-Chief, received the Angels Spirit of Excellence Award for his invaluable work in advancing stroke care in Brazil and across Latin America.

Additionally, the WSO Angels Awards Ceremony honored the achievements of 272 hospitals and 37 emergency medical services teams worldwide for their excellence in stroke care.

The WSO GSA in Bogotá reaffirmed the power of collaboration and innovation in addressing stroke care challenges. The event laid a strong foundation for continued progress in the prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation of stroke across Latin America.

### BOGOTA (COLOMBIA)



Global Stroke Alliance opening, Bogota



Global Stroke Alliance, Bogota, November 2024

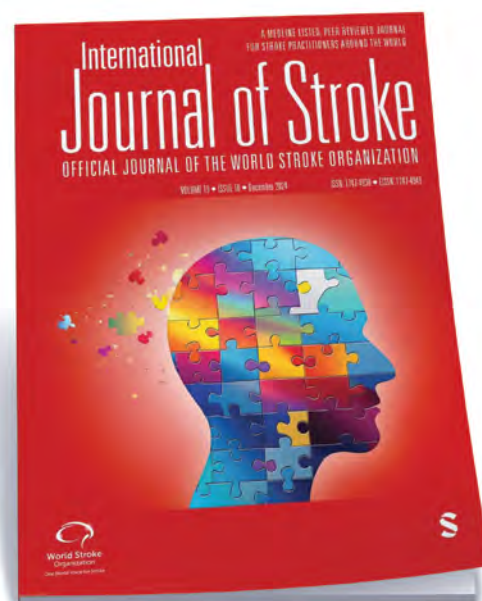


Sheila Martins presenting at the Global Stroke Alliance, Bogota

## International Journal of Stroke

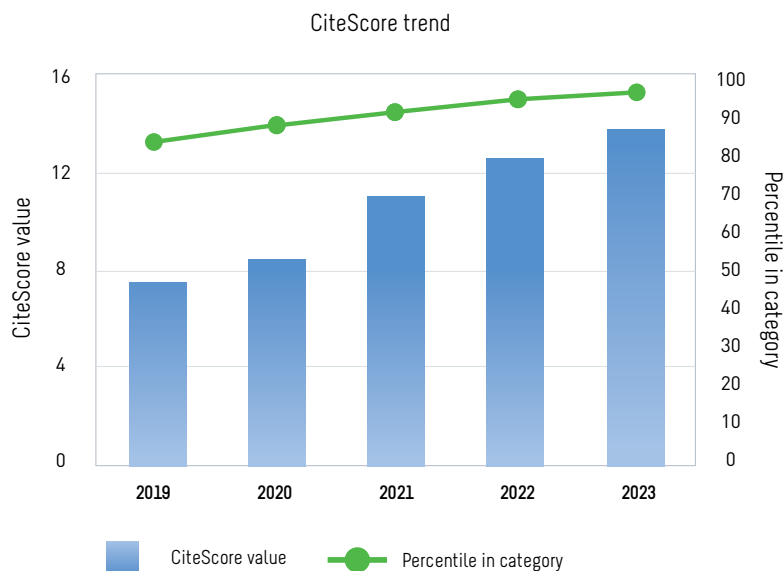
The International Journal of Stroke, now in its 19th year, is the flagship journal of the World Stroke Organization, with free access offered as a major benefit for WSO members. The Journal publishes reviews, original research, consensus statements and guidelines, and study protocols. We also have a very successful social media program with X, formerly known as Twitter, and a newly revitalized blog serving to engage our worldwide clinical and research audience.

Hugh Markus has been editor-in-chief since 2020. He is joined by 4 associate editors from throughout the world, including and Thomas Leung, Hong Kong, Craig Anderson Australia and China, Ynte Ruigrok from Netherlands, and Frank-Erik de Leeuw from Netherlands.



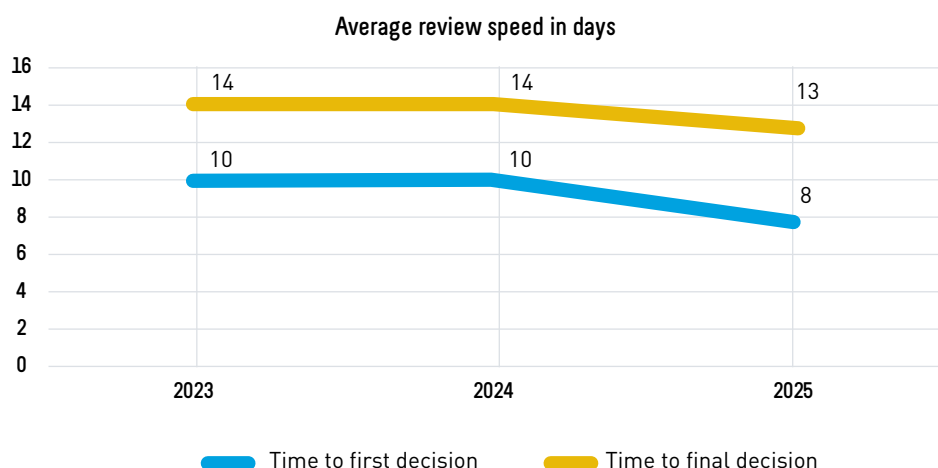
### Impact factors

The IJS impact factor has risen from 3.04 in 2015 to 6.3 in the latest 2022 figures; corresponding to this we have risen in the clinical Neurology section from the 79.7 centile in 2020 to the 92.6 centile in 2023. We have seen a similar rise in the more recent CiteScore metric where we now are on 13.9, having risen from 8.1 in 2020, and our ranking in clinical neurology has risen to 16/400, above both Stroke Journal and Neurology. This positions IJS as one of the premier stroke journals.



### Reducing time to publication

We want to bring the latest, high-quality, exciting research to our readers as quickly as possible and have made it a priority to reduce the time to publication. We have markedly reduced the time to first decision from 32 days in 2019, to 8 in 2024. We have also significantly reduced the time to final decision from 43 days in 2019 to 13 days in 2024. We are very grateful to all our reviewers, and the excellent editorial office team led by Annette Butler, for helping us achieve this. This year we instituted a prize, presented at the World Stroke Congress, for our top reviewer and we were pleased to present it to Xinyi Leng from Hong Kong.



We have markedly reduced the time to first decision from **32** days in 2019, to **8** in 2024.

All papers are now published as PDFs immediately after acceptance and therefore are available on PubMed shortly after acceptance. Our efforts have been rewarded with an increase in submissions to the IJS from 794 submissions in 2022 to 1360 submissions in 2023, although this does mean we can now only accept 9% of all submissions.

### ***Increasing worldwide coverage through blogs***

As the WSO journal, our remit is to cover stroke throughout the world. Therefore, we are keen to advertise clinical and research advances not only from well-resourced countries but also from countries that have lower access to resources and funding. To aid this goal we established new IJS blogs in 2020 and in 2023/4 published exciting blogs from Brazil, Nigeria, Latin America, Qatar, Nepal, Malaysia, Tanzania. *Please visit our IJS blogs page to see more.* We are very grateful to Amy Jolly, our social media coordinator who is based in our Cambridge Office, for her exceptional work setting this up.

### ***Working with our IJS partners to increase impact***

We have established strong collaborative partnerships with various committees within the WSO to enhance our influence on stroke care globally. Specifically, we have co-published with the Guideline committee a highly cited systematic review and synthesis of global stroke guidelines to contribute to this effort. Additionally, we are actively engaged with the World Stroke Academy (WSA) and have highlighted their significant contributions through a special paper publication.

Furthermore, the WSA has selected impactful papers from the International Journal of Stroke (IJS) as topics for their educational webinars, further demonstrating our collaborative efforts to advance stroke education and awareness.

### ***Developing the next generation of stroke leaders***

We have been working hard with our WSO Future leaders to educate future stroke leaders in publishing stroke. Many have become active reviewers and six are now IJS Editorial board members.

## World Stroke Academy

### Advancing Stroke Education Globally

The World Stroke Academy (WSA), continues to expand its role as a leading provider of stroke education, ensuring that healthcare professionals worldwide have access to high-quality, evidence-based training. Our mission remains clear: to deliver accessible, engaging, and applicable learning experiences that translate into better stroke prevention, treatment, and patient care. Our commitment to high-quality learning has resulted in over 1,500 newly registered WSA learners.



World Stroke Academy Portfolio

### Accessible Learning for a Global Audience

Through our free and open-access webinars, e-learning modules, and expert-led discussions, we provide learning opportunities tailored to different experience levels and specialties. We strengthened our multilingual offerings and expanded our partnerships to bring stroke education closer to those who need it most, ensuring that resources are available in more languages and formats. We recognize that learning must be dynamic and interactive to have a lasting impact.

### Applicable Knowledge for Better Patient Outcomes

The WSA has integrated cutting-edge tools such as case-based learning, expert panels, and real-world applications to keep content relevant and engaging. Our webinar series has grown to feature even more leading stroke experts, addressing the latest research and advancements in the field.

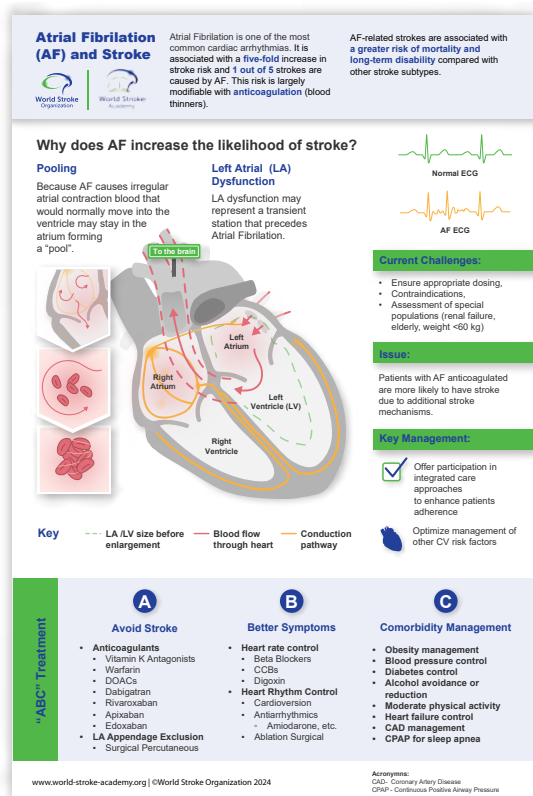


World Stroke Academy Portfolio

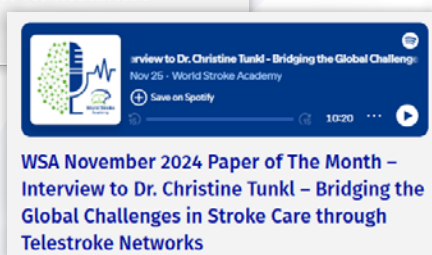
**11**  
**LIVE WEBINARS**  
**HOSTED**  
**GEOGRAPHICALLY**  
**AND GENDER DIVERSE**  
**PANELS**  
**800+**  
**AVERAGE PARTICIPANTS**  
**AND GLOBAL REACH (+33%**  
**FROM 2023)**  
**HIGH ENGAGEMENT WITH ACTIVE**  
**Q&A SESSIONS**  
**INTERACTIVE POLLS**  
**AND FEEDBACK-DRIVEN**  
**CONTENT**

2024  
Webinar  
Overview

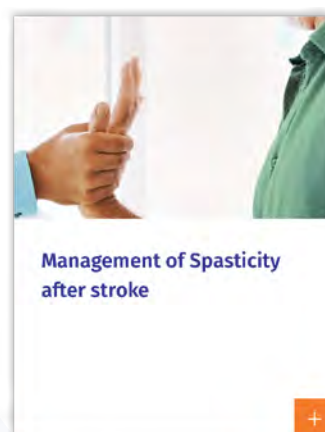
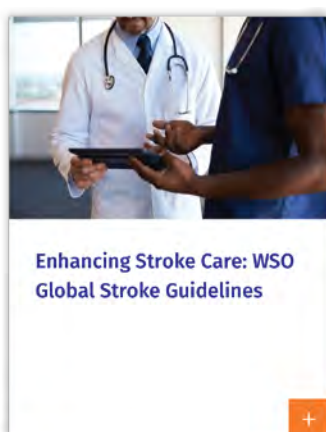
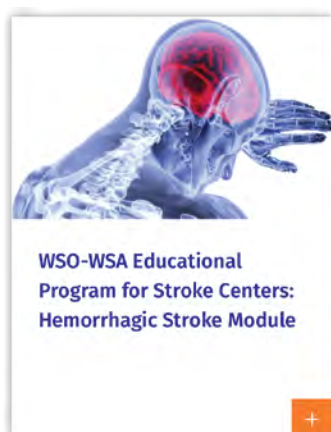
The launch of new **e-learning modules** and an expansion of our interactive **podcasts** and visually engaging **infographics** further enriched our educational ecosystem.



World Stroke Academy Infographic



World Stroke Academy Podcasts



World Stroke Academy e-Learning modules

Our **Paper of the Month** initiative further supports knowledge-sharing by highlighting key stroke research published in leading journals. By offering expert summaries, critical insights, and exclusive interviews with the main authors, we help healthcare professionals stay informed about the latest advancements in stroke care.



### Expanding Our Digital Reach

With an increasing focus on digital engagement, we have significantly grown our social media presence and website traffic. By sharing expert insights, key takeaways from webinars, and research highlights, we have fostered a more active online community of stroke professionals. The WSA social media channels and site have experienced substantial growth from 2023, reflecting greater engagement, wider reach, and a stronger global impact in stroke education.



**2.5K** REGISTERED  
WSA LEARNERS  
(+150%)

**122K**  
YEARLY SITE VIEWS  
(+20%)

**22K** ACTIVE & ENGAGED  
FOLLOWERS (+47%)

*As we move forward, the World Stroke Academy remains dedicated to innovation, inclusivity, and excellence in stroke education. By leveraging technology, fostering collaboration, and continuously evolving our content, we aim for healthcare professionals worldwide to have access to the knowledge and the skills necessary to reduce the global burden of stroke.*

Prof. Octavio Pontes Neto,  
WSA Editor-in-Chief



VISIT US: [WWW.WORLD-STROKE-ACADEMY.ORG](http://WWW.WORLD-STROKE-ACADEMY.ORG)

CONTACT US: [EDUCATION@WORLD-STROKE.ORG](mailto:EDUCATION@WORLD-STROKE.ORG)

## Future Stroke Leaders

The Future Stroke Leaders Program (FSLP) is an initiative launched by the WSO aimed at nurturing and empowering the next generation of stroke professionals. This comprehensive 2-year program is designed to enhance participants' technical, research and leadership skills through a combination of online sessions, case studies, simulations, group work, journal publishing opportunities, face-to-face workshops, funded projects development, and participation in the World Stroke Congress.

### Cohort 2 (2022-2024 Intake)

The FSLP Cohort 2 comprised 32 early-career clinicians and researchers from 23 countries, representing a diverse mix of geographic regions, disciplines, and gender balance.

In 2024, the program featured 12 online sessions, interactive group work, and case studies, culminating in a graduation workshop held alongside the World Stroke Congress in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

The World Stroke Congress 2024 was a key moment for Cohort 2 participants. The congress provided them with a global stage to present the outcomes of their funded projects, sharing groundbreaking research and innovations with the wider stroke community.

Beyond presenting their work, participants actively contributed to the congress as speakers and moderators, engaging in thought-provoking discussions and leading critical conversations on the future of stroke prevention, treatment, and policy.

For the group, the congress was not just the end of their program but a stepping stone toward making a real impact in stroke care worldwide.



Future Leaders, Cohort 2 Graduation Ceremony, Abu Dhabi, October 2024



WSO FSLP, Cohort 2, End of the program workshop 2024, Cleveland Clinic, Abu Dhabi, UAE



As part of the program's closing activities, participants attended a final workshop at the Cleveland Clinic in Abu Dhabi, where they explored cutting-edge stroke care innovations and toured the clinic's world-class facilities. During this workshop, participants explored key topics, such as international leadership, project funding, research publication strategies, the neuroscience of leadership, and stroke care debates. These discussions and hands-on sessions helped them develop practical skills and a strong global network, preparing them to make a meaningful impact in stroke care and research.

### Cohort 3 (2024 – 2026 intake)

In January 2024, WSO opened applications for the FSLP Cohort 3, seeking individuals with the potential to drive transformation in stroke prevention, treatment, and support at national, regional, and global levels. The high volume of applications - over 100 - reflects the global stroke community's strong commitment to advancing stroke prevention, treatment, and research.

The recruitment process followed three stages:

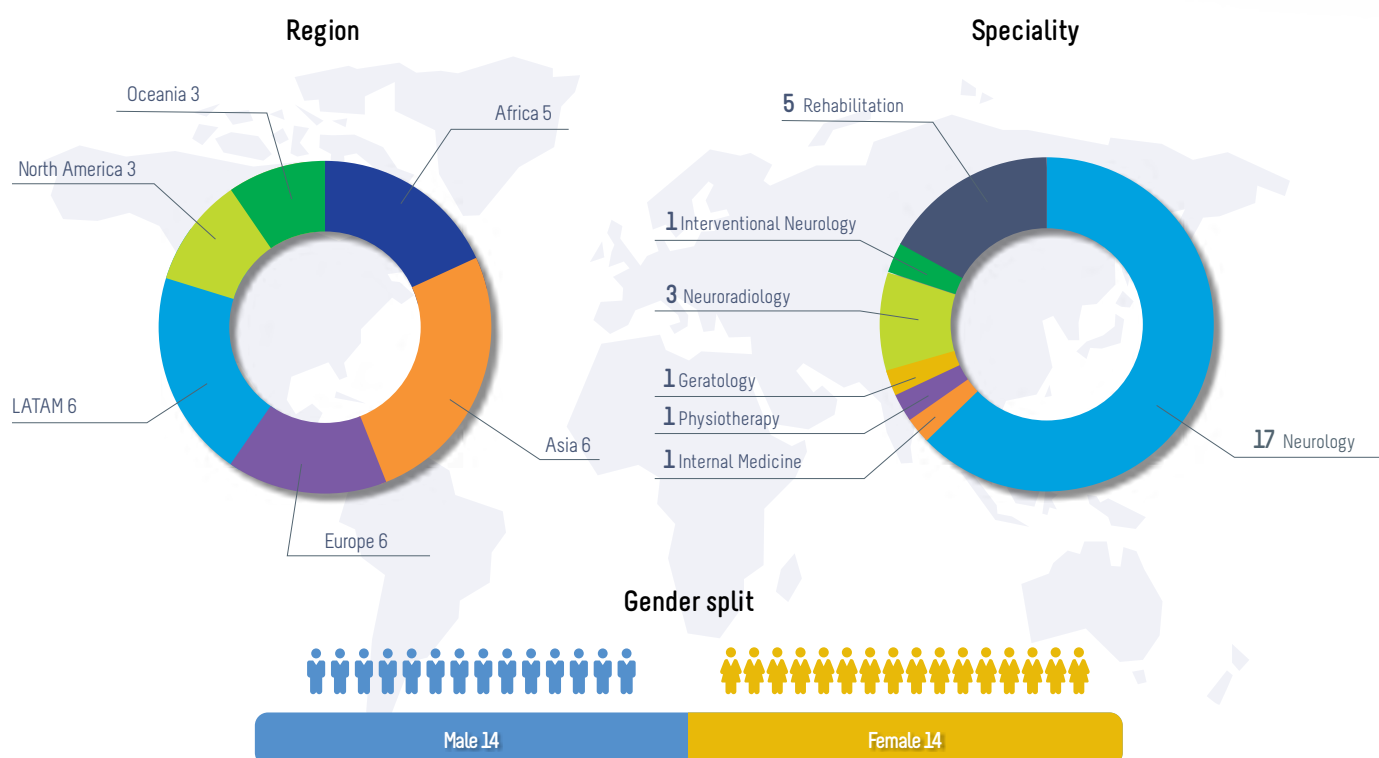


Ultimately, 28 early-career clinicians and researchers from 21 countries were selected for Cohort 3 (2024–2026). This diverse group is evenly balanced by gender and geography, reflecting WSO's commitment to inclusivity in stroke leadership.

The first virtual meeting between participants and mentors took place in November 2024, setting the stage for an engaging learning experience. The program's in-person conference is scheduled for March 31 – April 4, 2025, in Perugia, Italy. In 2025, seed-funded practical projects—supported by WSO mentors—will begin, with findings to be presented at the World Stroke Congress 2026.



Recruitment Phase

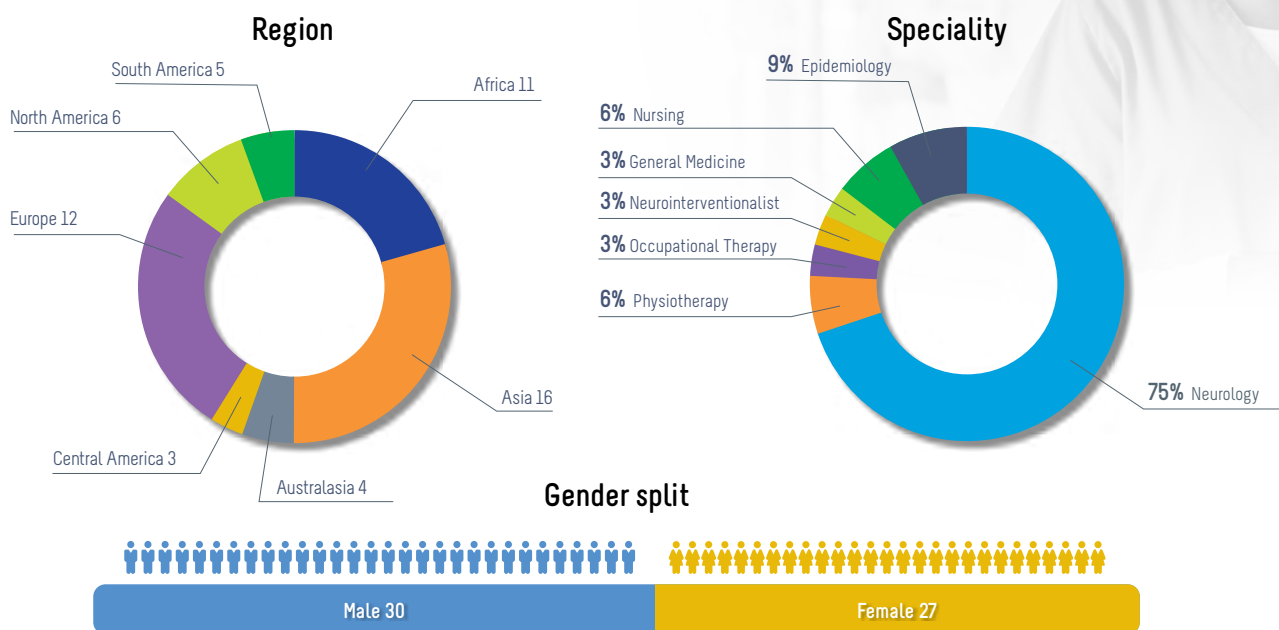


## WSO Future Stroke Leaders: Global Impact

The WSO FSLP has demonstrated a significant global impact on stroke care. With 57 participants recruited worldwide in Cohort 1 and 2, the program has driven fundamental improvements in stroke care through:



WSO FSLP Cohorts 1 & 2 overview: 57 professionals representing over 40 countries and diverse backgrounds



This initiative has been successfully replicated in other regions and adopted by several medical organizations, further extending its influence. Additionally, it has strengthened WSO's succession planning by integrating young talent into the WSO Board, committees, and task forces.

By fostering a strong global network of stroke care professionals, this program will continue to drive sustainable improvements in stroke care worldwide for years to come.



### GLOBAL:

Publications, cross-disciplinary collaborations, educational activities



### NATIONAL:

LMIC projects: Africa, India, Brazil, Egypt, Honduras, etc



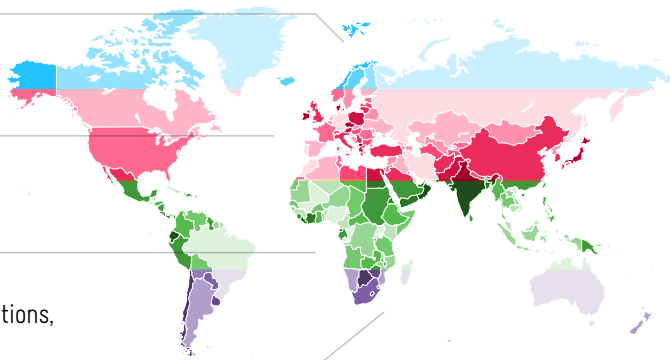
### ORGANIZATIONAL:

WSO engagements, hospitals and stroke associations improvements



### PERSONAL:

knowledge transfer, international collaborations, supportive network, friendships

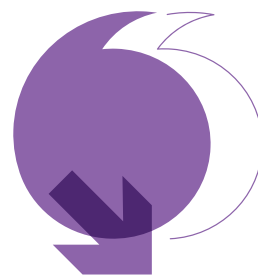


## Establishment of Research Priorities

In 2024, the WSO Research Committee continued to lead activities of education, advocacy and support for stroke research, in line with the WSO strategy.

The Stroke Research Funding Versus Burden of Disease project (STARBUD) aimed to compare world-wide research spending on stroke, heart and cancer. The project was led by former Committee Chair Julie Bernhardt. Data collection from 24 countries was completed. Funding for cancer was 6 times greater than for stroke; for heart disease, 3 times greater. Rita Krishnamurty and Shabnam Jalili are spearheading the paper.

The Research Committee continued its initiative to foster “Big Data” research in stroke. An e-learning course with speakers from different continents was launched on the WSA website in 2024 and was completed by more than 700 viewers.



*In 2024, the WSO Research Committee continued to lead activities of education, advocacy and support for stroke research, in line with the WSO strategy.*



Reports from the 4 projects funded in the first round of pilot research grants (2021) were received. Highlights from this key initiative are:

- The MAPSTROKE project applied computational strategies to determine optimal locations for new acute stroke centers and built a pilot application in nine Latin American regions.
- The MaMoRS project developed a mobile-based application that improved adherence to medication after stroke in Kerala, India.

The results of both projects were published in the International Journal of Stroke. The manuscripts acknowledged WSO support.

Five projects were selected from 75 applications in the second round of pilot research grants in 2023. Priority was given to research projects led by researchers in the early stage of their career and/or being conducted in LMICs. Interim reports are expected to be submitted in April/May 2025.

The Committee also collaborated with the Global Alliance of Independent Stroke Networks (GAINS) and relaunched the Early Career Clinical Trial workshop, held one day before the World Stroke Congress 2024 in Abu Dhabi.

# PROMOTING BEST PRACTICES

## Stroke Certification

In 2024, the WSO's Certification of Stroke Centers program significantly expanded its global reach, with 40 hospitals receiving certification for the first time. This marks a major milestone in our efforts to standardize and elevate stroke care worldwide.



**Certification  
Stroke Centers  
in MENA-SINO**



Of the newly certified hospitals, 30 are located in Latin America, 6 in the Middle East, 3 in the ASEAN region, and 1 in India, where we are proud to collaborate with the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals (NABH) in supporting certification efforts.

In addition to these first-time certifications, 8 hospitals in Latin America successfully received re-certification, further strengthening the region's commitment to quality stroke care.

The co-branded Stroke Center Certification between the Australian Stroke Coalition, co-chaired by Stroke Foundation, the Australia and New Zealand Stroke Organization and WSO was formally initiated, with visits to the Royal Adelaide Hospital (Advanced), the Royal Melbourne Hospital (Advanced), and Box Hill (Essential) in Melbourne.

WSO also started a pilot program for certification of stroke rehabilitation centers in November 2024.



*In 2024, the WSO's Certification of Stroke Centers program significantly expanded its global reach, with 40 hospitals receiving certification for the first time.*



First site visit for the rehab certification pilot in Colombia



Implementation of acute stroke services in Tanzania

## Global Guidelines and Tools

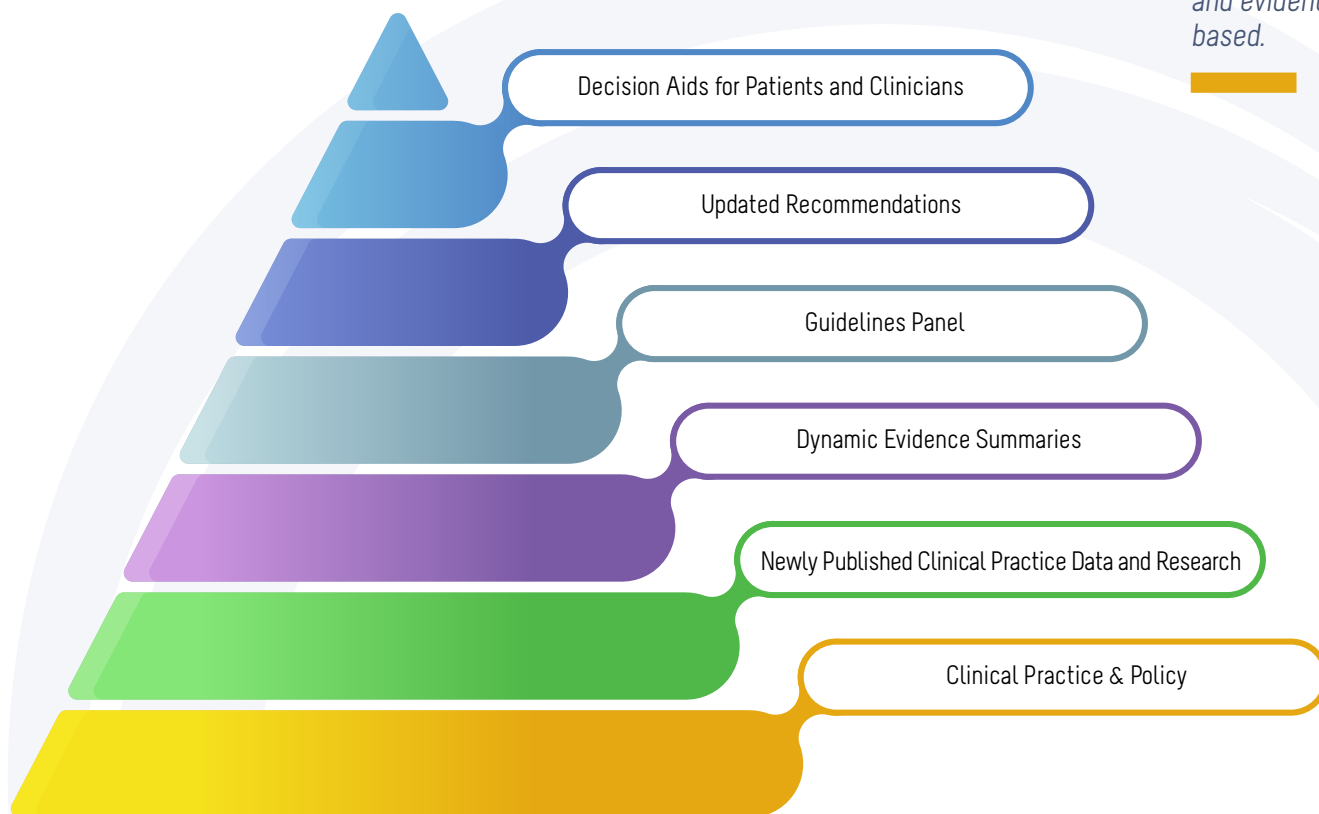
The WSO Guideline Committee has made significant strides in updating stroke guidelines, ensuring they remain dynamic, and evidence based. The committee is now developing Online Guidelines. These guidelines will provide a continuously updated resource for healthcare professionals worldwide.

The first comprehensive literature review for the Online Guidelines has been completed, with intracerebral hemorrhage (ICH) as the initial focus. This initiative underscores the WSO's commitment to reducing redundancy in guidelines while maintaining accessibility and relevance across different healthcare settings. The Future Stroke Leaders Program has been instrumental in supporting guideline updates.

The transition to Online Guidelines represents a major step forward in WSO's mission to provide up-to-date, evidence-based stroke care recommendations.



*The WSO Guideline Committee has made significant strides in updating stroke guidelines, ensuring they remain dynamic, and evidence based.*



*one voice*

## WSO Angels Awards

The WSO Angels Awards serve as a platform to cultivate a culture of ongoing evaluation and to recognize outstanding contributions to stroke care. These awards honor teams that demonstrate exceptional dedication and commitment to providing exemplary care for their patients, going above and beyond in their efforts to improve stroke outcomes.

During the Angels Awards Ceremony at the Global Stroke Alliance in Bogota, WSO honored the achievements of **272** hospitals and **37** emergency medical services teams worldwide for their excellence in stroke care.

WSO HONORED THE  
ACHIEVEMENTS OF

**272**  
**HOSPITALS &**  
**37**

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL  
SERVICES TEAMS  
WORLDWIDE**  
FOR THEIR EXCELLENCE  
IN STROKE CARE



### WSO Awards 2024

**366**  
DIAMOND

**303**  
PLATINUM

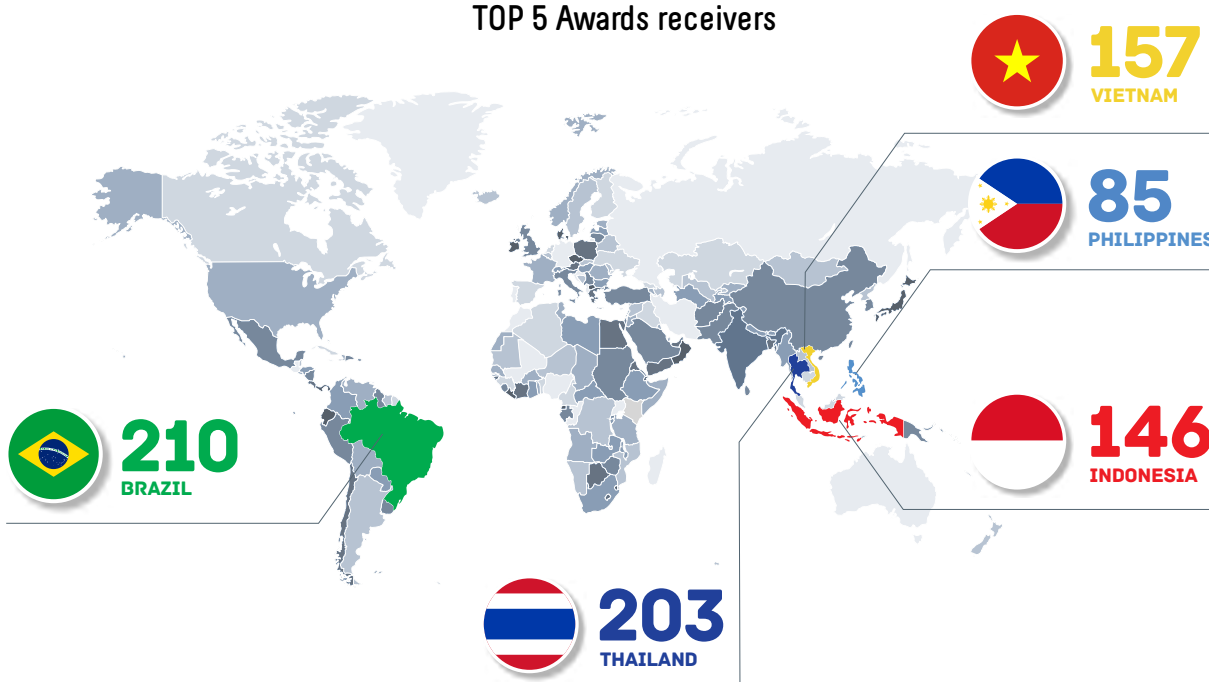
**611**  
GOLD

**TOTAL**  
**1,280**

### Overall number of Awards granted per year from 2018-2024

YEAR	GOLD	PLATINUM	DIAMOND	TOTAL
2018	3	3	11	17
2019	27	32	91	150
2020	72	117	222	411
2021	130	168	324	622
2022	131	137	299	567
2023	257	203	451	911
2024	366	303	611	1280

### TOP 5 Awards receivers



# INCREASING ENGAGEMENT WITH STROKE SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

## Strengthening Capacity

In 2024, WSO developed resources to assist stroke support organizations to manage their organization and continue to deliver stroke services, awareness raising and advocacy.

We updated the Stroke Support Organization Toolkit with input from our members. This toolkit is the 'core' resource offering guidance on developing and growing a stroke support organization. **SSO Toolkit 2024:** [https://www.world-stroke.org/assets/downloads/WSO\\_Toolkit\\_2024\\_FINAL\\_July\\_2024\\_1.pdf](https://www.world-stroke.org/assets/downloads/WSO_Toolkit_2024_FINAL_July_2024_1.pdf)

We will follow this core resource with a suite of guides that delve deeper into topics including advocacy and life after stroke issues.

The first of these guides is Preventing another stroke. This guide provides a lay summary of clinical evidence for managing the risk of stroke. It is intended to assist stroke support organizations in their non-medical interventions to help support survivors of stroke to manage risk of a further stroke. **Preventing another stroke – Topic Guide:** [https://www.world-stroke.org/assets/images/resources/WSO\\_Secondary\\_Prevention\\_2024\\_Final.pdf](https://www.world-stroke.org/assets/images/resources/WSO_Secondary_Prevention_2024_Final.pdf)

Following the publication of the WSO - Lancet Neurology Commission Pragmatic solutions to reduce the global burden of stroke, a lay summary was produced to guide the advocacy work of stroke support organizations. **Lay Summary:** [https://www.world-stroke.org/assets/downloads/Pragmatic\\_solutions\\_to\\_reduce\\_stroke\\_July\\_2024\\_-\\_Lay\\_Summary.pdf](https://www.world-stroke.org/assets/downloads/Pragmatic_solutions_to_reduce_stroke_July_2024_-_Lay_Summary.pdf)

## Involvement of People with Lived Experience

In 2024, WSO collaborated with survivors of stroke and allied health professionals to establish **WSO CARES** (Committee for Advocating Real Experiences of Stroke). The purpose of this group is to build a global community of people with lived experience, to engage the collective, personal and direct experiences of stroke and to drive advocacy and influence stroke care policy.

At the World Stroke Congress in Abu Dhabi, three sessions involved speakers with lived experience. These sessions highlighted inequities in stroke care, mental health and well-being after stroke, and digitally enabled services and support.



**WSO  
CARES**



## Stroke Support Organizations around the world

In 2024, stroke support organizations continued to drive improvements in stroke awareness, care and support around the world.



*The Stroke Foundation's national hotline in Australia, StrokeLine, is staffed by a team of health professionals and provides information and advice on stroke prevention, treatment and recovery. Since 2021, there has been an almost three-fold increase in the number of complex calls to StrokeLine.*



*The Fundación Dominicana de Accidente Cerebral (Fundace) is the registered stroke support organization in the Dominican Republic. One of its key activities is to facilitate self-help groups for stroke survivors, their families and caregivers.*



*Stroke Foundation Uganda is a stroke support organization established in 2014. The foundation has recently introduced a crafts activity aimed at providing stroke survivors with a therapeutic and empowering experience.*



*The Middle East North Africa Stroke Organization (MENA Stroke) is the active voice for stroke management in the region. Alongside its other committees, including research, media and education, a stroke survivors' community has now been launched.*



# 7. UNITING THE STROKE COMMUNITY

## Membership

**In 2024, WSO recorded 3,662 members!** This includes 3,566 individual members and 96 society members from 95 countries.

Throughout 2024, WSO has continued to welcome new members while deepening engagement with our existing community. Notably, several organizations joined WSO for the first time, highlighting our growing global influence and relevance.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our members for their continued support. Together, we look forward to building on this strong foundation of trust and collaboration in the years to come.

**3,566**  
INDIVIDUAL  
MEMBERS

**96** SOCIETY  
MEMBERS

South America 5%

Oceania 10%

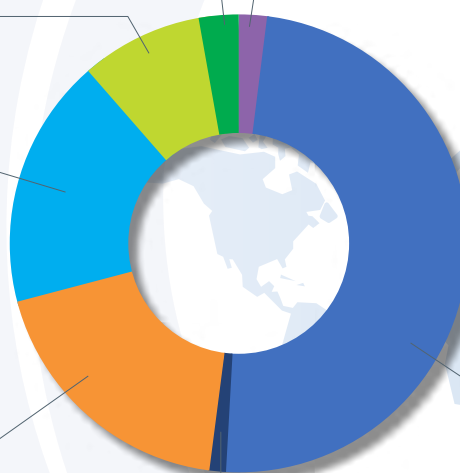
North America 14%

Europe 16%

Africa 3%

Asia 51%

Caribbean & Central America 1%



## Stroke Support Organizations:

A.L.I.Ce. Italia ODV, *Italy*  
 Acao AVC Association, *Brazil*  
 Acha Memorial Foundation, *Nigeria*  
 Ageless Bicyclists Ltd, *Singapore*  
 Asociacion Nacional Contra el Infarto Cerebral, *Mexico*  
 Association for fight against stroke, *North Macedonia*  
 Association for Stroke and Aphasia, *Bulgaria*  
 Association for the Rehabilitation of the Brain Injured, *Canada*  
 Azur Vigilance Cameroun, *Cameroon*  
 Bangalore Stroke Support Group, *India*  
 Bangladesh Stroke Association, *Bangladesh*  
 Barbados Heart and Stroke Foundation, *Barbados*  
 Brain Heart Foundation, *India*  
 Counterstroke, *Fiji*  
 Croí, the West of Ireland Cardiac & Stroke Foundation, *Ireland*  
 Cyprus Stroke Association, *Cyprus*  
 Dr Bindu Menon Foundation, *India*  
 Finnish Brain Association, *Finland*  
 Fundacion Dominicana de Accidente Cerebral, *Dominican Republic*  
 Fundación Punto Seguido ACV, *Chile*  
 Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, *Canada*  
 IFI Foundation, *India*  
 Israeli Heart Association, *Israel*  
 Japan Stroke Association, *Japan*  
 March of Dimes, *Canada*  
 Michael and Francisca Foundation, *Nigeria*  
 Monaco AVC Association, *Monaco*  
 National Stroke Aid, *Zambia*  
 National Stroke Association, *Malaysia*  
 National Stroke Association, *Sri Lanka*  
 Neeman Association for Stroke Survivors, *Israel*  
 Nepal Stroke Association, *Nepal*  
 Neurology Awareness & Research Foundation, *Pakistan*  
 Red Bracelet Volunteers Corps, *China*  
 Sakina Stroke Saviours Group, *Tanzania*  
 Singapore National Stroke Association, *Singapore*  
 Slovenian Stroke Support Organization, *Slovenia*  
 Spot Stroke Fast Foundation, *Ghana*  
 Stroke Action, *Nigeria*  
 Stroke Action, *Rwanda*  
 Stroke Alliance for Europe, *Belgium*  
 Stroke and Diabetes Education and Aid Foundation, *United Kingdom*  
 Stroke Aotearoa New Zealand, *New Zealand*  
 Stroke Association, *United Kingdom*  
 Stroke Association of Kenya, *Kenya*  
 Stroke Association Sierra Leone, *Sierra Leone*  
 Stroke Association Support Network, *Ghana*  
 Stroke Care International, *United Kingdom*  
 Stroke Foundation, *Uganda*  
 Stroke Foundation of Bengal, *India*  
 Stroke Free India Trust, *India*

Stroke Organisation, *Zimbabwe*  
 Stroke Rehabilitation Center/ Stroke Foundation, *Uganda*  
 Stroke Support Group Pretoria, *South Africa*  
 Stroke Support India (Nav Anubhuti Welfare Society), *India*  
 Stroke Support Organization, *Malawi*  
 Stroke Support Organization for Sri Lankans, *Sri Lanka*  
 Stroke Support Organization- East Azerbaijan, *Iran*  
 Stroke Support Station, *Singapore*  
 StrokeOT, Inc., *United States*  
 Survivors 4 Survivors, *United States*  
 Tanzania Heart Club, *Tanzania*  
 The Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa, *South Africa*

## Scientific Organizations

American Stroke Association, *United States*  
 Asia Pacific Stroke Organization, *China*  
 Association of Neurovascular Clinicians, *United States*  
 Australian & New Zealand Stroke Organisation, *Australia*  
 Belgian Stroke Council, *Belgium*  
 Brazilian Stroke Network, *Brazil*  
 Brazilian Stroke Society, *Brazil*  
 Bulgarian Stroke Organisation, *Bulgaria*  
 Canadian Stroke Consortium, *Canada*  
 Central and Eastern European Stroke Society, *Croatia*  
 CHU Caen Normandie, *France*  
 Danish Stroke Society, *Denmark*  
 European Society of Neuroradiology - Diagnostic and Interventional, *Switzerland*  
 European Stroke Organization, *Switzerland*  
 Hellenic Society of Cerebrovascular Diseases, *Greece*  
 Huashan Hospital, Fudan University, *China*  
 Iberoamerican Stroke Organization, *Mexico*  
 Indian Stroke Association, *India*  
 Kariya Toyota General Hospital, *Japan*  
 Korean Stroke Society, *South Korea*  
 Society of NeuroInterventional Surgery, *United States*  
 Spanish Society of Neurology (SEN)-GEECV, *Spain*  
 Stroke Program, University of Toronto, *Canada*  
 Stroke Society of The Philippines, *Philippines*  
 Swiss Stroke Society SHG, *Switzerland*  
 Taiwan Stroke Society, *Taiwan*  
 The British and Irish Association of Stroke Physicians, *United Kingdom*  
 The Danish Stroke Society, *Denmark*  
 The Japan Stroke Society, *Japan*  
 Turkish Cerebrovascular Disease Society, *Turkey*  
 University Of British Colombia, *Canada*  
 World Heart Federation, *Switzerland*  
 World Hypertension League, *United States*

## Working in Partnership for a World Free from Stroke

The vision of a world free from stroke is one that the WSO cannot accomplish alone. We are dedicated to building a broad, multi-sectoral partnership network and collaborating with external partners, members, and industry leaders to exchange knowledge, and develop and implement programs that enhance stroke outcomes worldwide. Our partnerships bring together expertise and experience from across the diverse stroke and cardiovascular disease community and are strengthened by our engaged membership base. These collaborations help identify opportunities, drive change, and scale evidence-based programs to ensure better access to quality stroke care for everyone.



### **United Nations**

WSO is the sole global stroke organization with official consultative status with the United Nations. This status enables us to participate in key global policy events and submit official statements on behalf of our members, with the goal of influencing global stroke and NCD policies. Our partnership with the UN ensures that the needs and priorities of the global stroke community are represented to national governments and supports our members in holding their governments accountable for their global policy commitments.



### **World Health Organization**

WSO is an official implementing partner of the WHO and collaborates closely with both the Department for NCD Management and Brain Health Unit. We provide technical stroke expertise to its global and regional technical advisory groups and input to consultations as part of the NCD response. Our members contribute to WHO programs, policy, and guideline development, working together to promote equitable access to quality stroke care. We support our members in implementing the HEARTS technical package in collaboration with Ministries of Health to enhance the management of cardiovascular risk factors for stroke in primary healthcare settings. Additionally, WSO contributes to evaluating evidence for the inclusion of stroke treatments and technologies in the WHO Essential Medicines List.



### **NCD Alliance**

As members of the NCD Alliance, we are part of a global network that collectively advocates to ensure governments fulfil their global policy commitments regarding NCDs. As an organization focused on stroke, WSO ensures that the unique needs of stroke patients and caregivers are emphasized, and alongside our clinical expertise we bring the perspectives of people with lived experience to the forefront. We are actively collaborating with the NCD Alliance and its members to raise awareness of NCDs and stroke.



### **Global Coalition for Circulatory Health**

WSO is a member of the leadership group of the Global Coalition for Circulatory Health, collaborating with other members including the World Heart Federation, the World Hypertension League, the International Diabetes Federation, and the International Society of Nephrology to drive action on stroke risk factors. Together, we submit evidence-based contributions to UN Committee discussions on NCDs, universal healthcare access, and disability, advocating to ensure that the leading cause of preventable death is given the priority it deserves.

## Partnership with Industry

WSO collaborates with industry stakeholders to develop and expand projects that align with our strategic objectives. These partnerships enable us to enhance knowledge sharing and foster innovation aimed at improving stroke outcomes for patients. Our work with industry is guided by our policy on industry engagement, which ensures our independence and preserves our ability to advocate for and promote equitable, evidence-based stroke care.

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# 8. FINANCIAL REPORT

WSO concluded the year on a strong financial position, achieving a surplus of USD 97'972. This result safeguarded our reserve levels and enabled the organization to effectively deliver on its programmatic and project commitments.

Both income and expenditures saw significant growth. Key sources of income included congress activities and generous contributions from our valued partners. On the expenditure side, the most significant investments were directed toward the Future Leaders Program, Advocacy & Awareness efforts, the World Stroke Academy, Stroke Center certification, and the Global Stroke Alliance.

In April 2025, Fiduciaries Chavaz SA audited the 2024 financial results of WSO, affirming that the financial statements were presented accurately and in compliance with Swiss accounting standards. The audit report will be submitted for approval at the upcoming General Assembly in October.

For a detailed account of WSO's financial performance and activities, please refer to the financial report below.

## World Stroke Organization Income and Expenses for the Year Ended December 31, 2024 (in United States Dollars)

		Total	
		2024	2023
Cash & Other Assets		2,975,336	3,194,064
Liabilities		487,821	804,521
<b>Reserves</b>		<b>2,487,515</b>	<b>2,389,543</b>
<b>Income</b>			
	Membership dues	184,492	166,580
	Donations & Corporate grants	766,481	797,247
	Income on congress	329,072	398,886
	Bank interest	112,204	63,384
	Sale of investments	18,879	0
	Journal royalties	105,240	85,860
	Contribution IJS Editorial Office	110,077	102,176
	Global Stroke Alliance Istanbul	15,448	0
	Other income	40,525	23,712
<b>Total of Income</b>		<b>1,682,419</b>	<b>1,637,844</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
	Operational costs	445,053	366,105
	WS Academy	127,005	107,082
	Global Stroke Alliance	0	252,056
	Congress expenses	67,881	82,980
	Awareness & Advocacy	301,870	215,890
	Capacity building (SSO)	66,982	68,855
	IJS Editorial office	108,873	102,684
	Journal subscriptions	27,586	31,413
	Future Leaders	128,741	208,458
	WSO projects	228,049	113,045
	EU Grant	18,196	61,654
	Global Stroke Action Coalition	44,469	0
	Bank investments cost	19,744	0
<b>Total of Expenses</b>		<b>1,584,447</b>	<b>1,610,221</b>
<b>Result for the year</b>		<b>97,972</b>	<b>27,623</b>
	<b>Reserves brought forward</b>	<b>2,389,543</b>	<b>2,361,920</b>
	<b>Reserves carried forward</b>	<b>2,487,514</b>	<b>2,389,543</b>

# 9.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Membership

In October 2024, during the World Stroke Congress in Abu Dhabi, Jeyaraj Pandian succeeded Sheila Martins as President of WSO.

This year, WSO also conducted its regular elections for the Board of Directors and Executive Committee, which will serve for the 2024–2028 term.

The Executive Committee and Board of Directors comprise exceptional and dedicated individuals from around the globe, representing all aspects of stroke prevention, care, and rehabilitation.

Below is the 2024–2028 Executive Committee and Board of Directors.



WSO Executive Committee at the World Stroke Congress 2024

### WSO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**President** – Jeyaraj Pandian, India  
**President-Elect** – Craig Anderson, Australia  
**Vice President**  
**Vice President for SSOs** – Michelle Nelson, Canada  
**Immediate Past President** – Sheila Martins, Brazil  
**Treasurer** – Valeria Caso, Italy  
**Secretary** – Deidre De Silva, Singapore  
**Member at Large** – Gustavo Saposnik, Canada  
**Member at Large SSO** – Bruce Ovbiagele, USA  
**Member at Large** – Gisele Sampaio, Brazil  
**Ex-officio Member** – Marc Fisher, USA  
**Ex-officio Member** – Hugh Marcus, Editor of IJS, UK

### WSO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### Individual members

**Sub-Sahara Africa, Middle East/East Mediterranean**  
 Farah Al Eisa, Saudi Arabia  
 Caleb Ademola Gbiri, Nigeria  
 Maria Khan Junaidi, Pakistan  
 Ossama Mansour, Egypt  
 Mayowa Ojo Owolabi, Nigeria

#### Americas

Cheryl Bushnell, USA  
 Renyu Liu, USA  
 Luciano Sposato, Canada  
 Ana Claudia de Souza, Brazil

#### Europe

Christine Kremer, Sweden  
 Atte Meretoja, Finland  
 Mirjam Heldner, Switzerland  
 Francesca Pezzella, Italy  
 Stefan Schwab, Germany

#### Asia/Oceania

Epifania Collantes, Philippines  
 Candice Delcourt, Australia  
 Ivy Sebastian, India  
 Keun-Sik Hong, South Korea  
 Kazuo Kitagawa, Japan  
 Liping Liu, China  
 M V Padma Srivastava, India  
 Rita Krishnamurthi, New Zealand  
 PN Sylaja, India

#### Scientific Societies

Hee-Joon Bae - Korean Stroke Society  
 Hrvoje Budincevic - Central and Eastern European Stroke Society  
 Teruyuki Hirano - Japan Stroke Society  
 Michael Hill - Canadian Stroke Consortium and Heart & Stroke Foundation Canada  
 Timothy Kleinig - Stroke Society of Australasia  
 Thabele Leslie-Mazwi - American Stroke Association  
 Nijasri C. Suwanwela - Asia Pacific Stroke Organization  
 Thorsten Steiner - European Stroke Organization

#### Stroke Support Societies

Anita Arsovska - Macedonian organization for a fight against stroke  
 Anna Ranta - Stroke Aotearoa New Zealand  
 Arvind Sharma - Brain - Heart Foundation  
 Bindu Menon - Dr Bindu Menon Foundation  
 Maeva May - Stroke Association UK  
 Rita Melifonwu - Stroke Action Nigeria  
 Yusuke Yakushiji - The Japan Stroke Association  
 Arlene Wilkie - Stroke Alliance for Europe

# Join us

AND DELIVER A WORLD FREE FROM STROKE

# ACT TODAY!

By making a donation on:

<https://www.world-stroke.org/about-wso/make-a-donation>

By using the WSO advocacy Toolkit to support your local Stroke Advocacy Events:

<https://www.world-stroke.org/world-stroke-day-campaign/world-stroke-campaign/advocacy-toolkit>

By using the Global Stroke Guidelines and Action Plan to establish and implement stroke systems of care globally:

[https://www.world-stroke.org/assets/downloads/Global\\_Stroke\\_Guidelines\\_and\\_Action\\_Plan\\_All\\_in\\_one.pdf](https://www.world-stroke.org/assets/downloads/Global_Stroke_Guidelines_and_Action_Plan_All_in_one.pdf)

By becoming our members and joining our global team to fight against stroke:

<https://members.world-stroke.org/page/RegSocIndividual>

By learning and promoting the Global Stroke Bill of Rights to stroke care providers and governments:

<https://www.world-stroke.org/world-stroke-day-campaign/world-stroke-campaign/global-stroke-bill-of-rights-campaign>

By marking your dates for the World Stroke Congress 2025 in Barcelona:

<https://worldstrokecongress.org>



GLOBAL  
**STROKE ACTION**  
COALITION

[www.strokeactioncoalition.org](http://www.strokeactioncoalition.org)



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@WorldStrokeEd  
@intjstroke



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**ADD US ON  
FACEBOOK**  
World Stroke  
Campaign



**FOLLOW US  
ON LINKEDIN**



**FOLLOW US  
ON YOUTUBE**



**CHECK  
OUT OUR  
WEBSITE**  
(and sign up for  
updates)



**CONTACT US**  
[admin@world-stroke.org](mailto:admin@world-stroke.org)

# *one voice*

One World Voice for Stroke



**World Stroke  
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