

EVERY MINUTE COUNTS. A CALL TO PRIORITIZE STROKE ACTION NOW.



POLICY BRIEF FOR GOVERNMENT MINISTERS

STROKE IS A LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AND DISABILITY GLOBALLY – BUT IT OFTEN GOES UNSEEN.

Every year an estimated 12 million people experience a stroke. More than half will die, with two thirds of survivors affected by long-term disabilities. Many of these are young, active members of the global workforce, with the total cost of stroke – including direct care and lost productivity – coming in at US\$891 in 2017. If we do not act, by 2050 this annual cost will rise to US\$1.6 trillion.



YOU HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE THIS

The last three decades have seen major advances at every stage of stroke care. As we look forward to the future, we do so with the knowledge that:

- Many strokes can be **prevented**
With 80% of strokes linked to modifiable risk factors, primary-level interventions could cut the overall stroke burden in half and yield a 1:10 return on investment.
- Even the most serious strokes can be **treated**
Expanding access to clot busting (thrombolysis, IVT) and clot removal (mechanical thrombectomy, MT) treatments in high, middle and low-income countries will substantially reduce disabilities and deaths.
- Rehabilitation improves long-term **recovery**
20–40% of healthcare systems lack basic rehabilitation services. Closing this gap will reduce the risk of long-term disabilities and improve people's quality of life.

AHEAD OF THE UN HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, WE CALL ON GOVERNMENT LEADERS TO COMMIT TO:

- 1. Making stroke a priority part of national NCD strategies**
- 2. Developing dedicated National Stroke Action Plans**
- 3. Funding stroke action and investigating innovative new finance mechanisms**
- 4. Implementing robust stroke monitoring systems**
- 5. Including stroke survivors and care givers in policy development**

Such actions don't just change lives. Preventing, treating and supporting life after stroke creates long-term healthcare savings, and boosts overall workforce productivity. It is also key to achieving national and global goals to reduce NCDs and support universal health coverage.

NOW IS THE TIME

The Global Stroke Action Coalition is the first-ever global advocacy movement dedicated to reducing the burden of stroke for everyone, everywhere. Bringing public and private sector partners together, we are working to drive urgent commitment, investment and action on stroke prevention, treatment and continuing care.



BECOME A COALITION CHAMPION

Coalition Champions are government representatives that publicly endorse the Coalition's call to action and commit to prioritizing – or continuing to prioritize – stroke action now.

AS A CHAMPION, WE COUNT ON YOU TO:

- **Spread the word:** share your commitment to improving stroke care globally
- **Engage & collaborate:** join stroke initiatives, events and advocacy campaigns
- **Advocate & support:** call for stroke action in national and international forums

Coalition Champions can tap into a global network of government, industry, academic and other partners. Additional benefits include:

Technical assistance

To support the development of evidence-based National Stroke Action Plans.

Knowledge sharing

Access learning and tools to support stroke surveillance, treatment and care.

Certification and training

Support for stroke care certification programs and workforce training.

Guidance and support

Including frameworks to engage people with lived experience of stroke.

WE HAVE THE TOOLS. FAST ACTION ON STROKE WILL SAVE MILLIONS OF LIVES AND PROTECT THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR COUNTLESS MORE – ALL WHILE COMBATting NCDS AND PAVING THE WAY FOR HEALTH FOR ALL.

WWW.STROKEACTIONCOALITION.ORG

Sources: **The Lancet Neurology Commissions (2023).** Pragmatic solutions to reduce the global burden of stroke: a World Stroke Organization-Lancet Neurology Commission, *The Lancet Neurology*, 22(12). DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1474-4422\(23\)00277-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1474-4422(23)00277-6), **Feigin, V. et al. (2025).** World Stroke Organization: Global Stroke Fact Sheet 2025, *International Journal of Stroke*, 20(2). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/17474930241308142>

The Global Stroke Action Coalition is convened by the World Stroke Organization. Members include: American Stroke Association, Asia Pacific Stroke Organization, Bayer, Boehringer Ingelheim, European Stroke Organisation, Heart & Stroke Foundation South Africa, Ipsen, March of Dimes Canada, Medtronic, Philips, Stroke Association UK and the Society of Vascular and Interventional Neurology.