

May 2021

SIGNING THE DECLARATION FOR ACTION ON STROKE

KYIV, UKRAINE

In Ukraine, medical professionals, government officials and public authorities gathered to show their support to the joint ESO and SAFE initiative aimed at reducing the burden of stroke in Europe. A National press conference was held on the occasion of the signing by the Ministry of Health, National Health Service and the Ukrainian Anti-Stroke Association of the **Declaration** on the Implementation of the European Stroke Action Plan (SAP-E) in Ukraine. From 2020, acute stroke care has been recognized as a priority and, according to the Medical Guarantees Program is reimbursed at a higher rate. However, stroke mortality in Ukraine is still higher than in most European countries:

- It is estimated that up to 130,000 strokes occur in Ukraine each year.
- Stroke mortality in Ukraine is several times as high as in Western Europe.
- 30-40% of people who have a stroke die within the first month from the onset.
- About 70% of stroke survivors have persistent neurological deficits that affect their lives.
- One third of stroke patients in our country are people of working age.

In Ukraine, high-quality stroke care is not widely available, and a network of specialized facilities ready to treat acute stroke and having everything necessary, including multidisciplinary teams and modern equipment, yet to be established. However, high-quality stroke management is beneficial to patients, their families and the society as well as very cost-effective, as it helps to avoid huge costs in the future.

Dr. IRYNA SADOVIK, First Deputy Minister of Health of Ukraine:

"We consider fight against stroke a high priority in health care in Ukraine and are currently working to prepare and get approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine a Concept for Stroke Care Development in Ukraine. This Concept is to be based on the European Stroke Action Plan and will contain clear goals and targets that will significantly improve the whole continuum of stroke care, from prevention and acute treatment to rehabilitation.

Taking into account the experience of other European countries, such as Poland or the Czech Republic, setting up a network of specialized stroke facilities in Ukraine, development of the pathways, and implementation of the best practices is going to take us up to 5 years. A lot of time will be needed for staffing all the facilities and training multidisciplinary teams so they provide quality acute stroke care.

Therefore, the development and implementation of the Concept will address the unmet needs and help reduce the burden of cardiovascular disease and stroke in Ukraine. The Ministry of Health of Ukraine supports **Declaration** on the Implementation European Stroke Action Plan and reaffirms our commitment to achieving its goals".

Dr. FRANCESCA ROMANA PEZZELLA, Co-Chair, SAP-E Steering Committee:

“Distinguished representatives of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, representative of National Health Service of Ukraine, dear colleagues of the Stroke and Neurological Organization, Dear friends and colleagues, ladies and gentleman. I am Francesca Romana Pezzella, Co-chair of the Stroke Action Plan for Europe, also known as SAP-E, a pan-European program that aims to reduce the burden of stroke and drive improvements for patients, stroke survivors and their caregivers by setting targets for the development of stroke care.

I wish to welcome the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, the representative of National Health Service of Ukraine, Dr Yuriy Flomin, National Coordinator of the SAP-E in Ukraine, as well all those who are involved in the SAP-E and who are participating in this event. We are here today to announce the signing of the **Declaration** by the Ukrainian Ministry of Health.

This is a fundamental milestone in the implementation of the Stroke Action Plan in Ukraine, and an important achievement towards the plan’s progress in Europe. Ukraine is, in fact, the first among the countries participating in the SAP-E to have officially endorsed the **Declaration**.

We hereby acknowledge the support this document received from the authorities that have signed it, and the successful efforts of the Ukrainian Anti-Stroke Association in raising the awareness about our objectives, networking and communicating tirelessly with all interested parties, promoting the importance of the **Declaration** and setting a challenging example for the other national teams, committed to the same result”.

Dr. ANDRIY VILENSKY, Head of the National Health Service of Ukraine:

“In the Program of Medical Guarantees-2021, medical assistance to stroke patients remains a high priority. National Health Service has signed contracts with more than 230 hospitals for the treatment of acute stroke and assigned more than UAH 961M to stroke care. We pay for this service at a higher rate, but have also put in effect higher requirements to make sure that the facilities are capable of providing the full amount of care, including CT or MRI around the clock and immediate start of appropriate treatment.

After all, timely and effective medical care increases the chances of a full recovery of the patients and can save their lives. In particular, according to the eHealth data, we have found that in 2020 in the contracted facilities the in-hospital stroke case-fatality rate fell by 6%. We strongly believe, the main reason for this was that these patients were admitted to hospitals that had an opportunity to provide quality care. These are good results of the first months of implementing a new approach to the organization and payment for medical services in acute stroke in Ukraine. And we will keep on moving in this direction”.

Dr. YURIY FLOMIN, Neurologist, SAP-E National Coordinator, member of the Ministry of Health and National Health Service of Ukraine Working Groups on Stroke:

“The Action Plan for Stroke in Europe 2018-2030 was prepared by the European Stroke Organisation (ESO) in cooperation with the Stroke Alliance for Europe (SAFE) and published back in 2018. It covers all key areas of stroke care: from primary prevention, organization of stroke care and acute stroke management to quality assessment, rehabilitation and life after

stroke. Ukrainian authorities along with professional associations and the stroke support organization 'Ukrainians against Stroke' have fully supported this document and are currently working on a Concept for Stroke Care Development in Ukraine. Like our European counterparts, we have set up a National Steering Committee in Ukraine to ensure that everything is in place to implement the SAP-E and translate it into an ongoing improvement of stroke care in Ukraine”.

Prof. MYKOLA POLISHCHUK, Neurosurgeon, President of the Non-Governmental Organisation "Ukrainian Anti-Stroke Association":

"The chain of stroke survival consists of the following parts: timely recognition of stroke signs and immediate call to the Ambulance, Emergency Medical Service, which should take the patient to a Stroke Unit or an Acute Stroke-ready Hospital, fast and complete work-up, including brain imaging, evidence-based care, early start of secondary prevention and interdisciplinary rehabilitation.

If all the links work together, the chain can we save a significant proportion of patients from death or disability. In order to set up an effective system of stroke care in Ukraine, we will have to implement significant changes in each of the main areas: prevention, acute care, surveillance, and rehabilitation.

The first steps in right direction have been made - the Ministry of Health has endorsed and is leading the preparation of the Concept for the Development of Stroke Care in Ukraine, a number of hospitals have committed to enhancing stroke treatment and signed contracts with the National Health Service, acute stroke care is reimbursed at higher rates, we have established ties with the medical community and provide various educational activities to both professionals and lay people. The Ukrainian Anti-Stroke Association strongly supports the SAP-E prepared by European colleagues and will continue to join efforts with all stakeholders to have it fully implemented in Ukraine".



Leaders of the Ukrainian Anti-Stroke Association (right-to-left): Prof Mykola Polishchuk, President, Dr Maryna Gulyayeva, Executive Director, and Dr Yuriy Flomin, Board Member

Press-conference video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCDqCIfSBk8>

Ukrainian media coverage:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MO-4pKnDNM>
- <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-presshall/3231375-plan-dij-borotbi-z-insultom-v-ukraini-cas-dij.html>
- <https://www.facebook.com/svidok.nten/videos/224032099161082>
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- <https://dyvys.info/2021/05/21/shhorichni-vtraty-ekonomiky-ukrayiny-cherez-insulty-syagayut-100-milyardiv/>

- <https://med.oboz.ua/ukr/cardiology/ponad-30-ukrainsyam-starshim-za-25-rokiv-zagrozhue-insult.htm>
- <https://health.fakty.ua/376376-v-ukraine-podschitali-ekonomicheskij-ucsherb-ot-insultov-cifra-vpechatlyaet>
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- <https://golosgromadu.info/ponad-30-meshkantsiv-kirovogradshhyny-vikom-bilshe-25-rokiv-zagrozhuje-insult/>
- https://health.nv.ua/ukr/medicine/desyat-oznak-insultu-50161175.html?fbclid=IwAR2dOlyiHfc-42X-hac3DA4tkGmxwwCrJtJedzRC5yLUi44Mcq_UWKcpFZk
- <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/3248740-ukraina-priednalasa-do-evropejskogo-planu-borotbi-z-insultom.html>
- <https://www.epravda.com.ua/news/2021/05/20/674058/>

Dr. ANDRIY VILENSKY, Head of the National Health Service of Ukraine

