

## **CEREBRUM – Association of People with Acquired Brain Damage**

# Summary Report on International Activities for 2025

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The year 2025 was a period of significant strengthening of international cooperation for our organization. We continue to be members of **SAFE (Stroke Alliance for Europe)** and **WPA**, which allows us to be part of European and global initiatives aimed at supporting patients after stroke and other neurological diseases. Thanks to these connections, we were able to engage in professional discussions, share experiences, and draw inspiration from partner organizations. International cooperation has brought us new insights and strategic ideas that strengthen our work in the areas of advocacy, awareness, and support for patients and their families.

From **January 20 to 22**, the director of Cerebrum, along with 78 other delegates from 39 countries, participated in the **SAP-E National Coordinators Workshop** in Sofia. The program provided an opportunity to share progress and challenges related to the implementation of the Stroke Action Plan in individual countries and included expert lectures, interactive sessions, and group discussions. It also included a presentation of national activities in stroke care. Our participation allowed us to gain new contacts and inspiration, and strengthen international cooperation aimed at improving stroke care.



The **Stroke Action Plan for Europe (SAP-E)** is a pan-European strategy for 2018–2030 that sets specific goals and recommendations for stroke prevention, care organization, rehabilitation, and support after a stroke. The document was developed in collaboration between the European Stroke Organisation (ESO) and the Stroke Alliance for Europe (SAFE) and represents the largest European project aimed at improving care for stroke patients. The Czech Republic signed the SAP-E Declaration in November 2023, becoming the 13th country to officially commit to its implementation.



The key event of the year was the **ELASF – European Life After Stroke Forum** conference, which took place on March 10–11 in Prague. It emphasized the active involvement of people who have experienced stroke, and brought together patients, experts, and support organizations. The program was enriched by a new category of abstracts for people with personal experience, an extensive poster section, and the participation of many international professional societies. The conference provided a space for sharing examples of good practice, discussing systemic changes that can inspire others, and comparing situations across Europe. Ultimately, the information gained can lead to improvements in the lives of people after a stroke. A total of 287 delegates from 44 countries attended the conference, underscoring its importance as one of the largest European platforms dedicated to life after stroke.

As representatives of the host country, we played a significant role in preparation and implementation of the conference in cooperation with the SAFE team. Cerebrum provided volunteers, a side program, and a press conference for Czech media. Dr. Dagmar Součková, Vice-Chair of the Cerebrum Board of Directors, was actively involved in the organizing committee. Together with Director Magdalena Pohnanová, she spoke at the press conference and participated in professional and media activities.

The press conference focused on the current state of care for stroke patients in the Czech Republic. It highlighted the excellent results of acute care, but also the need to strengthen follow-up rehabilitation, long-term monitoring, and community support. The goals of the European Action Plan for Stroke until 2030 were presented, and the need to improve secondary prevention and public awareness of stroke symptoms was emphasized. The program included a contribution from the Cerebrum organization, which presented its services, educational activities, and a new publication supporting the rehabilitation of stroke patients. The importance of supporting people after acquired brain injury and the importance of international cooperation in the field of prevention and follow-up care after stroke were highlighted.

Cerebrum also provided an information and prevention stand, which was available to participants throughout the conference. Visitors could have their blood pressure measured, which is one of the key risk factors for stroke. At the same time, the organization's staff went through a questionnaire assessing the risk of stroke and provided information on prevention options and Cerebrum's services. The stand attracted a lot of interest and enabled us to establish a number of new contacts with experts and representatives of patient organizations from all over Europe.

An exhibition of works by Cerebrum clients was also installed in the foyer of the main conference hall, enriching the overall program of the event. The exhibition presented the work of people who had suffered brain damage and offered participants a personal insight into their life stories, creativity, and rehabilitation process. The exhibition was very well received and became a natural space for informal meetings and sharing experiences.

Participation in the ELASF conference was extremely beneficial for Cerebrum. We gained valuable insights into the activities of partner organizations, new contacts, and inspiration for the further development of our services. Our involvement in the international SAFE platform allows us to actively

contribute to the European discussion on supporting people after a stroke and, at the same time, bring current trends and best practices to the Czech Republic.



The conference in Prague marked the start of **Brain Awareness Week** (March 10–16), during which attention is always focused on promoting awareness of how the brain works, neurological diseases, and the importance of research in this area. SAFE presented six EU-funded projects focused on stroke research in which it is involved and which bring new, innovative approaches to improving care for stroke patients. These projects show how international cooperation can advance prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation. Cerebrum translated the information into Czech and presented it on its website and social networks to make it available to the Czech public and raise awareness of this issue.

In addition to professional cooperation, our membership in SAFE also allows us to actively participate in the general meeting, which is the association's key decision-making body. At the meeting on June 20, we gained an overview of the results for 2024, the approved budget for 2025, changes in management, and amendments to the statutes. The meeting also included formal items concerning the management of the organization and planned activities. Thanks to our participation, we have up-to-date information on SAFE's strategic direction and can directly participate in decision-making processes, which strengthens our role as an active member.



In the fall, on the occasion of World Stroke Day, we once again actively participated in awareness-raising activities and presented SAFE's research projects that contribute to the development of innovations and the improvement of care for people after a stroke.

In 2025, we also participated in two virtual meetings of the **Collaborative Space** open platform, where organizations supporting people after a stroke can share experiences, discuss current topics, and establish international cooperation. The main topics for 2025 included life after stroke, support for professional staff, and strengthening cooperation between organizations.

The first meeting on May 14 was dedicated to caregivers, their needs, and ways in which organizations can provide them with more effective support. Participants were invited to reflect on how their organizations support caregivers, how they identify their real needs, and how they evaluate the impact of the services provided.

The second meeting, held on September 24, focused on measuring and evaluating the impact of organizations' work on the lives of patients and caregivers, how to collect relevant data, and what tools or procedures have proven effective in different countries. The program also included short presentations of examples of good practice from the United Kingdom and Singapore, which demonstrated specific approaches to monitoring the results of support services.

Membership in the **World Patient Alliance (WPA)** allowed us to take advantage of selected educational opportunities in 2025. Although we did not participate fully in other activities this year, membership provides us with valuable access to international resources and an opportunity for further cooperation.

From a wide range of educational events, we chose the webinar "Change Through Collaboration," which focused primarily on strengthening mental health. The webinar provided valuable insights, particularly the emphasis on empathetic communication, active listening, and the use of simple screening tools for the early identification of mental health issues. The examples of linking health and social care, which lead to better outcomes for clients, were also inspiring. We can apply these insights in our advocacy work, client education, and the development of partner networks.



Cerebrum – Asociace osob po získaném poškození mozku, z.s.

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International cooperation in 2025 was a significant source of inspiration, expertise, and practical experience for us. Participation in conferences, workshops, and webinars allowed us to better understand current trends in stroke care, strengthen our advocacy activities, and develop better support for patients and caregivers. Our involvement in SAFE and other international platforms also opened up new opportunities for sharing best practices and establishing closer contacts with organizations across Europe. These insights enable us to implement new approaches and adjust our procedures to further improve patient care and support in our region.

In Prague on December 22, 2025

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Úřad vlády České republiky



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