

## The World Federation of Neurology World Brain Day 2023

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In 2022, WHO released the first position paper on optimising brain health across life<sup>1</sup> and launched its Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders (IGAP).<sup>2</sup> This unprecedented prioritisation of brain health provides a global platform for advocacy and should remind policy makers that brain health can be optimised. IGAP is also a call for all stakeholders to prioritise equity, universal health care, and rehabilitation for people with neurological-related disability.

Disabled people should not have to depend on charity, but must be able to assert their rights.<sup>3</sup> Neurological disorders are the leading cause of disability-adjusted life-years (DALYs) worldwide,<sup>4</sup> and disability affects not only the individual with neurological disease but also their family, caregivers, and societies at large. To disabled people, the current nomenclature—burden—which is based on economic factors (eg, DALYs and quality-adjusted life-years), might have a negative connotation, enhance the nocebo effect, and negatively influence outcomes.<sup>5</sup>

Structural and functional changes in the nervous system can produce acute, reversible, chronic, or progressive disability, affecting functions of the motor, sensory, autonomic, and cognitive systems. Several disabling conditions (eg, migraine and neuropathic pain) are often not considered substantially disabling among health-care providers, research funders, policy makers, and even clinicians.

The prevention of disability and the rehabilitation of people with disability due to neurological disorders are achievable priorities. CNS rehabilitation is gaining interest, and neuroplasticity is now an area of active research.<sup>6</sup> However, not all

disabilities can be ameliorated, and some are inexorably progressive, requiring care and sustained efforts to maintain function, quality of life, and a purposeful and dignified life. In this regard, palliative care for people with neurodegenerative diseases should be universally available. Additionally, stigma, an element of disability that impacts many people with neurological disorders, must be extinguished.

With more than one billion people impacted by a neurological disorder worldwide, equitable and universal access to health care and rehabilitation services is a global priority.

The World Federation of Neurology has established an annual World Brain Day to educate, raise awareness, and reinforce the importance of brain health. The 2023 World Brain Day will be supported by the World Federation for Neurorehabilitation and our six regional societies. This powerful partnership symbolises the collaborative global effort required to meet the achievable mandates set forth in WHO's IGAP. These global efforts will only be effective with local action. Therefore, all continents and member societies will need to be united and work together on behalf of all people with neurological disability to achieve success.

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Foundation, American Migraine Foundation, ONE Neurology, Precon Health Foundation, International Headache Society Global Patient Advocacy Coalition, Atria Health Collaborative, Arizona Brain Injury Alliance, and Domestic Violence HOPE Foundation/Panfla; research support from the Department of Defense, National Institutes of Health, Henry Jackson Foundation, Sperling Foundation, American Migraine Foundation, Henry Jackson Foundation, and the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute; has stock options with Aural Analytics, ExSano, Palion, Man and Science, Healtint, Theranica, Second Opinion/Mobile Health, Epien, Nocira, King-Devick Technologies, EigenLyfe, AYYA Biosciences, Cephalgia Group, and Atria Health; is a shareholder with Axon Therapeutics, Matterhorn, and Ontologics; is on the board of directors for Axon Therapeutics, King-Devick Technologies, and Cephalgia Group; has patent 17189376.1-1466.v (title: Onabotulinum Toxin Dosage Regimen for Chronic Migraine Prophylaxis; non-royalty bearing); and has a patent application submitted for Synaquell (Precon Health). All other authors declare no competing interests.

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