

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE AGAINST EPILEPSY

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May 7, 2019

Doc. MD. Andrea Kalavská, PhD
Minister of Health
Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic
Limbova 2
837 52 Bratislava
Slovak Republic

Dear Minister Kalavská:

It is with great pleasure that I write to inform you that the Slovak League Against Epilepsy has recently celebrated its 80th anniversary, an anniversary that was recently recognized by the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE). This year marks the 110th anniversary of the ILAE, which is the leading international medical organization for epilepsy with chapters in 119 countries since its founding in 1909. The Slovak chapter of the ILAE is one of the longest serving national organizations dedicated to improving the lives of people with epilepsy. Professor Vladimír Donáth of the F.D. Roosevelt University Hospital, the current President of the Slovak chapter, is an internationally recognized expert in epilepsy and epilepsy surgery.

Since the founding of the chapter over 80 years ago the Slovak League (originally the Czechoslovakian League) has established an outstanding reputation in epilepsy care and Professor Vladimír Donáth has presented regularly at international congresses, and devoted much of his professional life to the cause of epilepsy.

Epilepsy is one of the most common chronic neurological disorders that affects tens of thousands of Slovak citizens and is more common than Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis. It costs society about the same as breast cancer and is responsible for as many deaths every year. Epilepsy prevents many of its sufferers and their families from leading normal lives, Yet it remains invisible to society because those who suffer from it wish to keep their affliction hidden so that they are not subject to the stigma that societies often place on people with this terrible disease. Because of these often recognized consequences of epilepsy, in 2015 the World Health Assembly enacted a resolution on epilepsy in which all member nations agreed to improve epilepsy care. Furthermore, a side event on epilepsy will take place during the 72nd World Health Assembly in Geneva.

We greatly appreciate the support that the Slovak Republic has given to epilepsy. There are outstanding clinicians and scientists in the country, and we hope that the Slovak Republic will continue to support the considerable national epilepsy expertise and leadership. Please congratulate our Slovak colleagues and begin a dialog with them about how we can prevent epilepsy from destroying so many lives of the tens of thousands of Slovak citizens. We hope that you will contact Professor Donáth, the Chapter President, to begin the discussion on how to continue your country's impressive efforts to relieve the terrible burden of this disease.

The international epilepsy community thanks the Slovak Republic for its support for epilepsy.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Wiebe'.

Samuel Wiebe, M.D.
President, International League Against Epilepsy

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cc: Professor Vladimír Donáth, President, Slovak League Against Epilepsy