



International Epilepsy Day 2026: Turning Stories into Action

February 9th, 2026 - This International Epilepsy Day, the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE) and the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) come together with the global epilepsy community to raise awareness and to reaffirm our shared commitment to improving the lives of people with epilepsy everywhere.

Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological disorders worldwide, affecting more than 50 million people of all ages. Nearly 80% of those living with epilepsy reside in low- and middle-income countries, where access to diagnosis, treatment, and ongoing care remains profoundly unequal.

Despite the fact that epilepsy can be effectively treated in many cases, an estimated 70% of people globally do not receive the care they need. Beyond health impacts, stigma, discrimination, and misunderstanding continue to limit education, employment, safety, and full participation in society for millions of people with epilepsy and their families.

The theme of International Epilepsy Day 2026, *The Epilepsy Pledge*, asks participants to commit to one concrete action during the year that strengthens awareness, safety, inclusion, or community understanding of epilepsy.

This theme builds on the powerful stories shared through last year's *My Epilepsy Journey* campaign, which brought lived experiences to the forefront, and highlighted unmet everyday needs. This year, the focus is on turning those stories into meaningful and measurable action.

Accelerated action is urgently needed to meet the global targets set out in the World Health Organization's 10-year Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders (IGAP). The WHO's recent Global Neurology Status Report makes clear that most Member States are currently not on track to achieve these targets.

"The 2022 adoption of the Intersectoral Global Action Plan (IGAP) by all Member States was a landmark achievement, establishing clear and ambitious strategic objective," says Prof. Alla Guekht, ILAE President, ". As we approach the midway point to 2031, the Global Neurology Status Report underscores a critical need to accelerate implementation and ensure these targets deliver tangible impact for the global epilepsy community and beyond."

Dr Francesca Sofia, IBE President, added, "Awareness raising underpins effective advocacy, and this International Epilepsy Day is an opportunity to come together to raise awareness of what needs to be done to improve the quality of life for people with epilepsy everywhere."

On this International Epilepsy Day, IBE and ILAE call on the global community to take the Epilepsy Pledge and to drive sustained awareness and collective action to advance the IGAP goals and achieve the global targets together.