ESO TF4UKR Department-to-Department Visiting Programme - Report

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Home Institution: Regional Stroke Center, Rivne Regional Clinical Hospital, Ukraine

Host Institution: Vall d'Hebron University Hospital, Barcelona, Spain

Visit Dates: 5-9 October 2026

In October 2026, I had the opportunity to spend a week at the Stroke Unit of Vall d'Hebron University Hospital in Barcelona as part of the ESO TF4UKR Department-to-Department Visiting Programme.

I work as a neurologist at the Regional Stroke Center in Rivne, Ukraine, where I treat patients with acute stroke and am involved in intravenous thrombolysis and mechanical thrombectomy. I was interested in seeing how stroke care is organised in another European centre and comparing it with our daily practice.

During the week, I attended morning meetings and ward rounds, where we discussed clinical cases, neuroimaging findings and treatment decisions. It was interesting to see how the team approached complex cases and how treatment strategies were discussed among colleagues.

What surprised me most was how much ultrasound is part of a neurologist's daily work. At Vall d'Hebron, neurologists perform carotid and vertebral artery ultrasound, transcranial Doppler and even echocardiography themselves. I was able to observe these examinations, including bubble tests, and also had the chance to try performing vascular ultrasound, transcranial Doppler and echocardiography under supervision. This was probably one of the most useful parts of my visit, and something I would like to develop further in my own practice.

I was also interested in the centre's approach to acute ischaemic stroke treatment, particularly the important role of mechanical thrombectomy. Since I am involved in endovascular treatment in Ukraine, it was useful to learn more about their approach to patient selection, treatment decisions and cooperation between different teams.

I really appreciated how openly the doctors discussed clinical cases and shared their experience. It was interesting to see both the similarities and differences between our hospitals. I returned home with new ideas, especially about ultrasound diagnostics and the organisation of acute stroke care.

I would like to thank the European Stroke Organisation and the TF4UKR initiative for making this visit possible. I am also grateful to Dr. Marc Ribó for the invitation and to the Stroke Unit team at Vall d'Hebron for welcoming me and taking the time to share their knowledge and experience.

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