



*"Ensuring excellence and changing lives through equine-assisted activities and therapies"*

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**PATH Intl. Centers Offer Help and Hope for Stroke Survivors**

**Denver**—May is National Stroke Awareness Month, and in its efforts to increase awareness of strokes and their warning signs, the National Stroke Association hopes to greatly reduce or even conquer its effects.

People who have experienced a cerebrovascular accident (CVA) or stroke may experience challenges from deficits resulting from the area of the brain affected by the stroke. Examples of deficits include loss of the use of a limb such as an arm/hand, difficulty finding or understanding words, or balance problems.

Through equine-assisted activities and therapies, PATH Intl. Centers worldwide help those who have had a stroke find strength and independence. PATH Intl. Centers offer a variety of programs to work with these challenges, and those who have had a stroke may benefit from an enjoyable physical activity involving horses. They can learn to ride or drive with one hand or may use an adapted rein on their weaker side. Riding a horse rhythmically moves the rider's body in a manner similar to a human gait, so riders with physical needs often show improvement in flexibility, balance, muscle strength, circulation and breathing. There are emotional rewards as well, and riding in a group is a great shared social experience.

In addition to therapeutic riding, PATH Intl. Centers offer a number of therapeutic equine-related activities, including hippotherapy, equine-facilitated mental health, carriage driving, interactive vaulting, competition, ground work and stable management.

To find a PATH Intl. Center near you that can help with the effects of stroke, visit <http://www.pathintl.org/path-intl-centers/find-center>. Discover for yourself or someone you love the power of the horse to change lives.

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**About PATH Intl.:**

The Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.), formerly NARHA, was formed in 1969 to promote equine-assisted activities and therapies for individuals with special needs. At more than 850 member centers, more than 54,000 children and adults find a sense of independence through involvement with horses. These member centers range from small, one-person programs to large operations with several certified instructors and licensed therapists. Through a wide variety of educational resources, the association helps individuals start and maintain successful equine-assisted activities and therapies for individuals with special needs. There are more than 45,000 volunteers, 4,300 instructors, 6,300 therapy horses and thousands of contributors from all over the world helping people at PATH Intl. centers.

