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EMSP 2016 Spring Conference: MS sailing champions to share stories of world circumnavigation

Oslo, Norway

The *Oceans of Hope* yacht that circumnavigated the world manned by a crew of people with multiple sclerosis (MS) will be present in Oslo, between 16 and 18 May, for the 2016 annual Spring Conference of the European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP).

Nearly 100 people with MS from 16 countries worldwide, from Iceland to Venezuela, were able to sail between June 2014 and November 2015 with the *Oceans of Hope* boat, covering a total of 61,000 kilometres (33,000 nautical miles).

“I left my MS behind”

Luisa Matias from Portugal completed the crossing of the Atlantic Ocean between August and September 2014 and she described it as *a dream come true*.

“By sailing across the ocean and being at sea for one month, I could leave my MS behind and enjoy the experience”, she told EMSP shortly after her voyage.

Mikkel Anthonisen is the founder of the Sailing Sclerosis Foundation which runs this project in collaboration with corporate partners Biogen. Mr Anthonisen insists that people with MS should not be reduced to their diagnosis:

“Oceans of Hope illustrates a way of being together and living our lives, working to change the perception of what it means to live with MS. Even though you have MS, you can still sail around this wonderful blue planet.”

Boat tours and MS awareness

During EMSP’s 2016 Conference, the *Oceans of Hope* boat will dock in the Oslo Harbour, at the Royal Norwegian Yacht Club. Boat tours on the Oslo Fjord will be available for participants and other people living with MS. They will be able to learn more about the world circumnavigation directly from Mikkel Anthonisen and his crew.

Who we are

EMSP

We are an umbrella NGO relying on the experience and support of 40 national MS organisations in 35 European countries in our quest for a world without multiple sclerosis. Find out about our projects and initiatives on www.emsp.org.

Sailing Sclerosis

A Sailing Sclerosis project (www.sailing-sclerosis.org), *Oceans of Hope* set out to change the perception of MS by demonstrating the merits of empowering people with chronic conditions.

Contact: Mikkel Anthonisen – tel: +45 261 720 57; email: mikkel@sailingsclerosis.com.