



Vivistim Co-Founder Named Innovator of the Year by the Congress of Neurological Surgeons

AUSTIN, Texas, Oct. 16, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- [MicroTransponder®, Inc.](#), a commercial-stage medical technology company and developer of the breakthrough [Vivistim® Paired VNS™ System](#) for chronic stroke recovery, today announced that its co-founder and chief scientific officer, **Navzer Engineer, MD, Ph.D.**, won the [Congress of Neurological Surgeons](#) (CNS) Innovator of the Year Award.

Following presentations from each of the three finalists, attendees at the Congress of Neurological Surgeons 75th Annual Meeting in Los Angeles voted for the Innovator of the Year, and the winner was announced during the General Scientific Session on October 15.

"I am honored and grateful to have been selected as the CNS Innovator of the Year by some of the world's foremost neurosurgeons," said Engineer, who discovered the Paired VNS™ mechanism of action during his doctoral research nearly 20 years ago while studying neuroplasticity and methods to rewire the brain for more efficient information processing. "This honor is particularly rewarding as my colleagues at CNS understand the profound challenges stroke survivors experience during the chronic phase of recovery."

Vivistim is an implantable medical device, which was approved by the FDA for commercial use in 2021 with a Breakthrough Device Designation. It is the first and only intervention clinically proven to help chronic ischemic stroke survivors regain 2-3 times more upper extremity function than high-intensity therapy alone. The Vivistim device is activated during occupational or physical therapy to pair vagus nerve stimulation with high-repetition, goal-oriented functional activities, which helps enhance neuroplasticity to remodel neural pathways.

The standard Vivistim protocol involves in-clinic Paired VNS Therapy three times per week for at least six weeks. In addition, patients conduct self-directed Paired VNS Therapy at home by activating the Vivistim implant while performing activities of daily living or relevant motor tasks.

"We're proud of Navzer for being named CNS' Innovator of the Year," said Richard Foust, CEO of MicroTransponder. "His pioneering work on Paired VNS Therapy continues to help stroke survivors reclaim meaningful lives. The growing real-world evidence presented at the CNS Annual Meeting and the enthusiastic reception among the neurosurgeon community reinforce how far this innovation has come in redefining ischemic stroke recovery."

The rapid adoption of Vivistim by preeminent stroke centers and neuro-focused occupational and physical therapy clinics nationwide is validated by the [growing clinical and real-world evidence](#) supporting Paired VNS Therapy. In the May 2025 issue of [Stroke](#), published findings from a long-term analysis of the [VNS-REHAB](#) pivotal trial demonstrated that chronic ischemic stroke survivors treated with paired vagus nerve stimulation for upper extremity deficits maintained reductions in impairment, as well as improvements in activity, participation, and quality of life for at least one year after completing in-clinic therapy.

To learn more about the Vivistim® Paired VNS™ System, visit [Vivistim.com/health-pros](#). Tap to review the [clinical bibliography](#) and [safety information](#).

About MicroTransponder®, Inc.

MicroTransponder®, Inc., is a commercial-stage medical technology company and developer of the breakthrough Vivistim® Paired VNS™ System for chronic stroke recovery. The privately held company is committed to developing research-based neuroscience solutions that restore dignity and motor function for people with neurological conditions impairing sensory and motor function. MicroTransponder is transforming the stroke continuum of care by integrating **Vivistim** in premier stroke programs as the first and only FDA-approved intervention that generates two to three times more improvement in upper limb function for chronic ischemic stroke survivors than intense occupational or physical therapy alone. For more information, visit [Vivistim.com](#) and review safety information at [Vivistim.com/safety](#).

Media Contact: Kristin Strauder, kristin@microtransponder.com

SOURCE MicroTransponder Inc.