



EPILEPSY ACTION

A U S T R A L I A

Going west

It's our largest state but few epilepsy support services have been available in Western Australia, until recently.

Joint effort

People in Western Australia can now access our full range of education and support services including seizure-management planning, first-aid training for seizures, education programs, counselling and peer support.

An exciting initiative has been launched that will improve services for the 14,000 Western Australians with epilepsy. In May, Epilepsy Action signed a memorandum of understanding with the state-based Epilepsy Association of Western Australia (EAWA) to begin a formal collaboration.

On 19 May, our two organisations successfully co-presented a joint seminar for families affected by epilepsy in Perth. Epilepsy Action has also recruited two service staff, who are based at the same location as EAWA staff. Our new Educator who is a registered nurse, and our Caseworker who is a psychologist, have already begun networking and new referrals are now being received for services in Western Australia as a result of meetings and presentations. In addition we began fundraising activity to support services in the state, with a June appeal which included a donation envelope inserted into the *West Australian* newspaper.

Both our organisations have a strong history of support services. While Epilepsy Action has built up expertise over five decades, EAWA has offered education, support and advocacy in Western Australia since 1963 through services aiming to raise community awareness and improve people's quality of life.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Contact Epilepsy Action on 1300 37 45 37 for more information on any of the above or email us at epilepsy@epilepsy.org.au

Your say

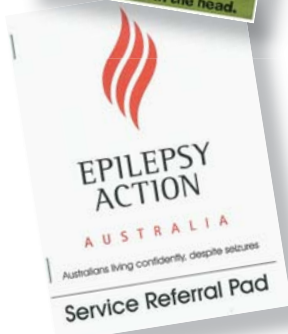
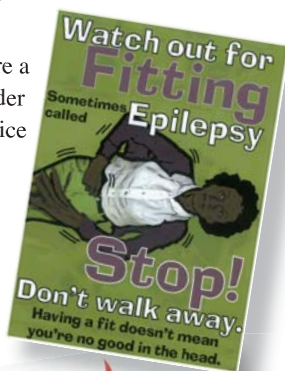
Until Emma slept through a TV appearance of her favourites, The Wiggles, even Canberra mum Jennifer Dowdy-Pitt hadn't realised her four year-old's "whingey" episodes were seizures. "Epilepsy Action went through Emma's different seizures in detail with teachers so they knew what they were looking for," says Jennifer. "I'd worried Emma would just seem like a whiney child. That made the teachers feel a lot calmer and more prepared, which helped Emma and also comforted me."



In brief...

Useful resources

Call us for copies of new publications designed to raise awareness about epilepsy and our services. Our indigenous pamphlet and poster were created in consultation with indigenous communities, outlining vital first-aid steps for responding to seizures. If you're a healthcare provider ask us for a Service Referral Pad, a great resource for directing patients to our support services with no-fuss duplicate copies you can keep on your file.



Need more help?

In 2007/08 we're developing a peer-support program to connect people with epilepsy with others who understand their situation, starting with a youth camp in NSW in August and a family camp in Tasmania in October. Regular information evenings for people who have recently been diagnosed will also begin soon in Sydney. Come along to hear facts about epilepsy in plain English, ask questions and meet other people in a similar situation.

World of difference

We learned from the world's epilepsy experts and brought Australia's needs to a global audience at July's 27th International Epilepsy Congress in Singapore. Epilepsy Action's Carol Ireland and Lisa Todd attended this meeting, presenting information about the issues for Australians with epilepsy raised at our recent forums, and our joint project with the Epilepsy Society of Australia in East Timor.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Know an adult with Rasmussen's Encephalitis? Support and information are needed for the family of a young adult diagnosed with this rare epilepsy syndrome. If you can help please contact Paula Maher on 02 9856 7082.