

Epilepsy Friendly Overview

As you are well aware, years spent in higher education can be incredibly stressful. Late nights and studying for impending exams can have a negative impact on young people and their state of mind. Unfortunately for those affected by epilepsy this is generally the case and is often made worse by issues with concentration, memory retention and seizures induced by the stresses higher education can bring.

Over the last two years the Epilepsy Friendly scheme has gathered information from both students with epilepsy and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the UK to find out what support is currently available and whether students feel that it has been beneficial to their education.

The information revealed that while there is support available for other long term conditions, in higher education a lack of understanding about epilepsy and subsequent issues with communication can lead to confusion surrounding support provisions.

The intentions of the Epilepsy Friendly scheme are as follows:

- To re-assure students with epilepsy that they will be going to a university or college that is really working to understand their condition. Helping them to achieve and reach their full potential.
- To improve epilepsy awareness and understanding in a larger number of HEIs by offering an incentive for them to do so (listed below).
- To recognise and celebrate the work done by higher education institutions who do their utmost to enhance and improve their services.
- To maintain our relationship with institutions and remain a constant resource for them.

The aim is to have simple criteria to meet which is easily within the grasp of a busy HEI. However these criteria must still impact on the way epilepsy support provisions are approached. Accreditation will require:

- A named lead contact in a HEIs support department to have undertaken and passed our free Epilepsy and Higher Education online training course - epilepsytraining.youngepilepsy.org.uk.
- This person(s) to act as a point of contact for staff and students within a HEI who either have epilepsy or have questions about it.
- This person(s) to act as a point of contact for prospective students with epilepsy.

These criteria will be reviewed each year.

It is a very simple model to fulfil and one that we hope HEIs will be interested in adopting as it grants the following benefits:

- Recognition of their endeavours to make their institution as Epilepsy Friendly as possible.
- Promotion of their services on the Young Epilepsy website.
- Adoption of our Epilepsy Friendly logo that can be displayed on your website and in email signatures.

By making some small provisions HEIs have the opportunity to make a big difference, providing an environment that will promote a positive educational experience and allow students with epilepsy to reach their full potential.



Epilepsy Friendly Agreement

This signed letter is evidence that Young Epilepsy and the named organisation agree to abide by the terms set out in the agreement below.

Named Organisation:

Approximate number of students:

The named organisation agrees to:

- Ensure a minimum of one staff member has undertaken and passed the Young Epilepsy Epilepsy and Higher Education online training course or taken part in a Young Epilepsy Study Day.
- Ensure any staff member who has undertaken the training is given the contact details of a member of staff at Young Epilepsy who is able to provide information and resources if needed.
- Ensure any trained staff members are aware of the Young Epilepsy Helpline number.
- Ensure any trained staff members annually update their training, or are replaced by others who do.
- Signpost students requiring further information to Young Epilepsy’s website and helpline.

Young Epilepsy agrees to:

- Provide information and resources for the named organisation and trained members of staff.
- Provide the Epilepsy Friendly logo that can be displayed on the named organisations website and in email signatures.
- Young Epilepsy will display the name and contact details for the named organisation on the Young Epilepsy website and promote them as an Epilepsy Friendly Organisation.

The above criteria will be reviewed annually, however should any of these criteria not be met or cease to be fulfilled as a result of staff members leaving the department, or long term staff sickness the named organisation must either remove the Epilepsy Friendly logo from their website and email signatures or ensure another member of staff is trained immediately to fill this gap. Young Epilepsy must be informed of any changes.

Trained member(s) of staff:

NAME: ROLE:

SIGNATURE: Training completed:/...../.....

NAME: ROLE:

SIGNATURE: Training completed:/...../.....

NAME: ROLE:

SIGNATURE: Training completed:/...../.....

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Trained member(s) of staff:

NAME: ROLE:

SIGNATURE: Training completed:/...../.....

NAME: ROLE:

SIGNATURE: Training completed:/...../.....

Young Epilepsy National Services Programme Manager

NAME:

SIGNATURE:

Lead contact for display on the Young Epilepsy website:

This should be a person who is trained and plans to be the main point of contact for anyone with questions about epilepsy. Please email wgilbert@youngepilepsy.org.uk or call 01342 832243 ext 424 in the event of any changes.

Please also forward a .jpg of your institution's logo and a few sentences about what you do there so it can be displayed alongside your contact details on the Young Epilepsy website.

Name:

Job Title:

Tel #1:

Email:

Address:

Address:



*By completing this course you will have a greater knowledge and awareness of epilepsy and its wider impact on young people. The content of this course is developed specifically for those working with young people with a confirmed diagnosis of epilepsy. It does not replace the advice given by a qualified medical practitioner and if in doubt guidance should be sought.