

## About Epilepsy Connections

### Our Vision

We want everyone affected by epilepsy to have the support, resilience and respect they need to live life to the full.

### Our Mission

We walk alongside people affected by epilepsy, providing vital support and encouragement so that they can live well and have their voices heard.

### Our Goals

- To deliver the accessible services and activities that people with epilepsy need to live well.
- To champion and raise awareness and understanding of epilepsy.

## About our work

### Epilepsy Fieldwork Service

Our Epilepsy Fieldwork Teams provide person-centred support to people with epilepsy and their family and friends in the Greater Glasgow & Clyde, Forth Valley, and Ayrshire & Arran areas. The Epilepsy Fieldwork service offers:

- **information** about epilepsy and a range of related issues to enable people to live well and safely with epilepsy.
- **advice** on housing, benefits, transport, travel, and on managing epilepsy at home, school, college, university or work
- **support** for individuals and families to allow them to deal with their feelings about living with epilepsy and its impact
- **links with professionals** including GPs and specialist staff to liaise about epilepsy needs.

### Befriending Service

Our Befriending Service in Greater Glasgow & Clyde matches trained volunteers with adults isolated by epilepsy to support them to access local social and leisure opportunities, develop new interests and build confidence.

### Counselling

Our counselling service offers a safe, confidential and judgement-free environment for people with epilepsy and their family members to share thoughts and feelings and to find resources to deal with their life difficulties. Counselling is available in-person in our Glasgow office and via Zoom.

### Epilepsy Awareness in Schools Project

Our Epilepsy Awareness in Schools project offers age-appropriate and informative presentations about epilepsy to learners and staff in schools communities. Children with

epilepsy are more likely to underachieve at school for a variety of reasons. Understanding of how epilepsy affects a child is integral to ensuring well-being and educational achievement.

Our Epilepsy Awareness in Schools project:

- Raises awareness of epilepsy and the challenges of living with the disease
- Promotes open and positive attitudes and behaviour towards epilepsy
- Reduces stigma and misunderstanding
- Assists children and young people in need of support with epilepsy issues
- Complements the Curriculum for Excellence Framework – in particular the Health and Well-Being Outcomes and Experiences

## Epilepsy Awareness Education Sessions

We deliver introductory education sessions on recognising and managing epilepsy and seizures to social care, housing and education agencies, employers, education providers and community groups, families and unpaid carers.

## Epilepsy Well Connected

Funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and the ALLIANCE Self Management Fund, Epilepsy Well Connected is a six-month personal development programme for adults with epilepsy who want to make positive changes in their lives. Epilepsy Well Connected is delivered remotely via Zoom.

## Support Groups

Bringing together people with epilepsy is a therapy in itself and education in a group setting enables everyone to share experiences and to develop coping strategies, support systems and friendships. Groups include:

- Friends Connected: social groups that meet every 6 weeks in Glasgow, Falkirk and Alloa to help adults isolated by epilepsy to develop social skills
- activities organised throughout the year for children with epilepsy and their families
- epilepsy and memory workshops to help people with epilepsy make the most of their memory
- support group meetings and occasional information events for special interest groups or on specific topics
- gardening at our allotments in Glasgow.

## Information Resources

Epilepsy Connections' epilepsy information leaflets are available in hard copy and on our website. Key resources are available in community languages.

## Working with Volunteers

Approximately 40 volunteers support our work in a range of roles including befriending, social activities for adults and children, and the Glasgow allotment.

## Working with Other Agencies

Working with other agencies helps us move towards our goal of raising awareness of epilepsy and ensuring that people affected by epilepsy have access to the services they need. Staff are involved in the work of the Scottish Paediatric Epilepsy Network and are active contributors to national and international umbrella groups, Epilepsy Consortium Scotland and the International Bureau for Epilepsy.