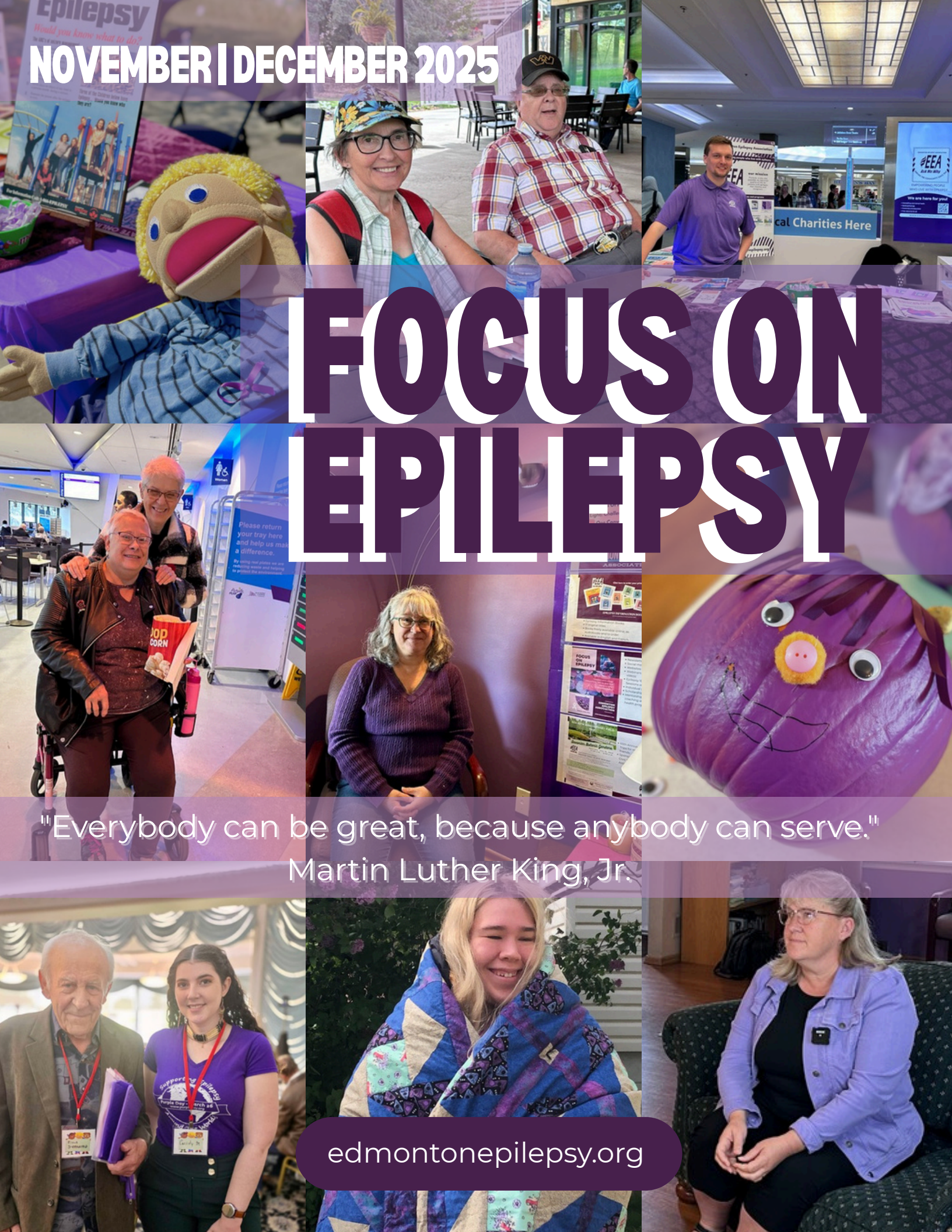


NOVEMBER | DECEMBER 2025



FOCUS ON EPILEPSY

"Everybody can be great, because anybody can serve."
Martin Luther King, Jr.

edmontonepilepsy.org

in this issue

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

The EEA has been publishing an online and in-print version of our bi-monthly newsletter since 2013. All archived copies can be found on our website at <https://edmontonepilepsy.org/eea-newsletter/>. **We fund this project on our own, and always welcome sponsors to help us continue our mission to support the epilepsy community.**

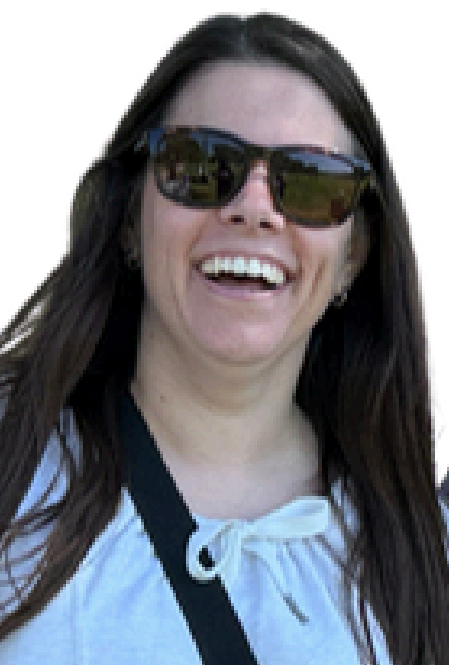
GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS

This issue of the Focus on Epilepsy Newsletter was made possible thanks to these individuals and their generosity, in sharing research and editing skills, ideas sharing and formatting and mailing support: Tammy T.; Valeria P.; Sam H., Justine B., Angie C.; Susan W.; Mei H.



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Message from the President

Dear members,

As the clocks change and we approach the holiday season, perhaps like many of you, I tend to naturally reflect on the past calendar year while also starting to think ahead to the new year. If you had asked me this time last year about my role at the EEA, I would have said how much I enjoyed being on the board as a director and advocating for those in the community; however, this year has been so much greater than that. From the personal highlights of being named president, emceeding the symposium, attending the gala, hosting the board retreat, and connecting with so many of you - to the more challenging aspects of navigating a location change and stretching our budget with today's financial climate. As you will see within these pages, it has been a busy couple of months at the EEA. Thank you to everyone who attended the open house at our new location, I hope you enjoyed checking out the space and will be back for future events

As a board we came together at the end of September to build a strategic plan that encompasses our vision for the next several years. One of the items we would like to increase is the number of individuals on our various committees. You do not have to be on the board to join a committee, so please reach out if this is something of interest to you. Committees generally meet online four times a year and the more voices the better!

Valeria and her team of volunteers continue to get our message out into the world with Kids on the Block shows and display tables at various venues, including the Bountiful Farmers' market, St. Albert market, the Stollery and Kaye clinics, and Stony Plain information nights. As you may have seen in email communications, we have submitted our March Walkathon and its surrounding event as a project in the running for The Field Law Community Fund. It is a voting based funding contest and the more clicks we receive, the more likely we are to win their financial support. Please check it out and vote regularly until November 22. While many of us look forward to the moments of joy, reflection, and connection, for some this time of year can also bring feelings of loneliness or grief - especially for those who have lost a loved one or are navigating difficult circumstances. Please know that you are not alone.

Our association is more than an organization - it's a

community. We understand that emotional well being is an essential part of living with or supporting someone with epilepsy. That's why we are proud of our mental health initiatives - including the newest focus group and research program for families with children (aged 12-18) living with epilepsy. The project aims to provide resources, support and opportunities to connect with others who understand your journey.

I would also like to give a special shout out to several individuals. The first is Kimberly, our newest board member. Kimberly comes to us with a breadth of life experiences and we are so thankful to have her voice at the table. She was a vocal participant in the board retreat, bringing lots of energy and wonderful ideas. Next, I'd like to acknowledge Tammy Tkachuk, our 2025 Cam Reid volunteer award. Tammy's volunteer and leadership presence has certainly been a constant over the past few years and this year is no exception. Whether through attending meetings of multiple committees to helping to plan, organize, and support both the symposium and gala, we are thankful for Tammy's contributions. Last but certainly not least, a shout out to long time supporter of the Edmonton Epilepsy Association, our very own Terry Mahon, who celebrated a milestone birthday last month. Happy Birthday Terry! We are so blessed to have you as an ally, advocate, and absolute force for those living with epilepsy.

Wishing each of you a fabulous holiday season and a restful end to the year. May you find moments of joy and connection this season and in the year ahead. And don't forget to vote for the Field Law Community Fund and get your tickets to the holiday party!

Warmly,

Susan Wilkie



From My Desk

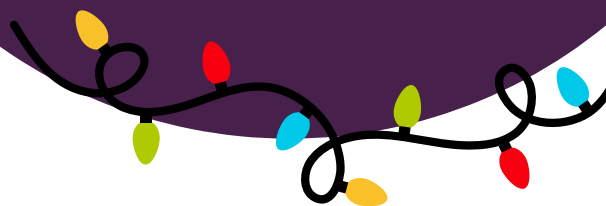
Writing a reflection for the final issue of our community newsletter always feels premature. There's never quite enough time to fully take in and appreciate the accomplishments, challenges, and growth experienced over nearly another full year of activity. Yet here we are, once again, looking back on a remarkable year of engagement, support, and progress for people living with epilepsy in our region.

Time truly flies when you're immersed in the work – delivering programs, launching initiatives, managing events, and supporting members across Northern Alberta. Beyond the everyday efforts aligned with our strategic plans, this year marked a particularly special milestone: the celebration of our 65th anniversary!

Though June now feels like a distant memory, our anniversary celebrations were the culmination of more than 18 months of preparation. That time not only strengthened bonds among our volunteers but also helped us grow our base of donors and sponsors. You can revisit key insights from our Symposium & Gala on our website:

Symposium & Gala Resources. As we approach year-end, our calendar is still full, with new programs and initiatives aligned with our enduring vision: Empower People Who Live With Epilepsy. That empowerment looks different for everyone. While we remain committed to meeting the individual needs of each member, we're also addressing the broader, common challenges faced by our diverse and growing community.

**“WHILE WE REMAIN
COMMITTED TO MEETING
THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF
EACH MEMBER, WE’RE ALSO
ADDRESSING THE BROADER,
COMMON CHALLENGES
FACED BY OUR DIVERSE AND
GROWING COMMUNITY.”**



New & Ongoing Projects

Thanks to funding from the Seniors New Horizons Project, we are preparing a new series of workshops specifically designed for older adults living with epilepsy. Dedicated volunteers will help deliver these sessions across the region. We are in the final stages of producing two French-language audiobooks. With the scripts reviewed and partially recorded, we are now entering a final phase of quality assurance before publication in March 2026. This initiative is being made possible through collaboration with three native French speakers.

We are launching a **new project for children** and families affected by epilepsy. In this first phase, we're inviting families to participate in focus groups (scheduled for late November) to share their lived experiences and inform the development of mental health resources tailored to their needs. Demand remains strong for our **Epilepsy 101 presentations** and our **“Kids on the Block” live puppet shows**. We are thrilled to share that we've expanded our pool of professional performers to help meet future demand.

Valeria and Cassidy Megan at the EEA Gala in June 2025.



From My Desk (cont.)

Membership

Our popular year-end celebration is back! This year's Holiday Party will be hosted in-house to help keep the event affordable – only \$5.00 for members in good standing. Join us for a fun-filled evening of: homemade food, holiday crafts, sing-alongs and games, door prizes, volunteer awards, and a visit from Santa!

A membership note: don't forget that memberships for the Edmonton Epilepsy Association expire on November 30, 2025. You'll receive an automatic renewal reminder by email, and for those who are offline, we'll include a paper notice in your mailed newsletter.

As the year winds down, I want to take a moment to thank each and every one of you. The progress we've made this year, despite working with a small team and even navigating a move earlier this summer, has been nothing short of inspiring.

For every contribution I've made, I feel I've received tenfold in return: from your encouragement, your stories, and your continued belief in our mission. I truly feel like I have the dream job, and I wouldn't trade it for anything. Heartfelt thanks go out to our **Board of Directors**, whose guidance continues to shape our success. And thank you to the volunteers, members, staff, and partners who make everything we do possible.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our **Holiday Party on November 29**. Please don't hesitate to reach out, stay connected, and continue being part of this incredible community.

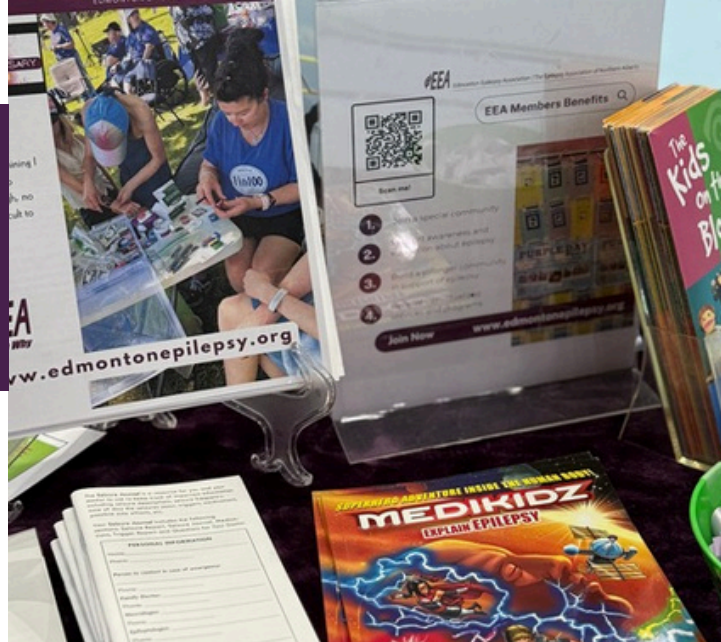
Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season filled with new memories and hope for the year ahead.

Valeria



EEA UPDATES

- EEA Display Tables in the Community Bringing Epilepsy Awareness to Everyday Spaces
- October Marks the Final Chapter of Our 2025 Epilepsy Awareness Campaigns
- Kids on the Block Shows – Fall 2025 Update
- Seizure Response Dogs Presentation – September 11, 2025
- BINGO at the EEA Office
- Epilepsy 101 Sessions
- Board Retreat
- September 6, 2025 – EEA Open House
- New Mentors for Our Mentorship Program



Creative EEA members at our Art Workshops



EEA UPDATES



Free online session
Thursday, October 2, 2025
7:00 p.m.

EEA Display Tables in the Community Bringing Epilepsy Awareness to Everyday Spaces

As we continue to advance the Edmonton Epilepsy Association (EEA)'s vision of raising awareness about epilepsy, we reflect on the many public spaces where we've set up our signature purple awareness tables. From vibrant marketplaces like the Bountiful Farmers' Market and the St. Albert Farmers' Market, to health institutions and community events, each display allows us to engage with the public in meaningful ways.

These venues are more than just places to share resources. They're opportunities to connect. People affected by epilepsy often approach our table for a quick chat. Some are surprised to learn that the EEA exists; others pause to share heartfelt, personal stories. Every interaction matters, and we're grateful for the trust and connection these moments create.

Even when people don't stop to speak with us, they still notice our bold purple display. For a few fleeting moments, they see the word epilepsy and perhaps think about seizures or neurological health. That, in itself, is awareness. We never know how that small spark might shape someone's understanding – or action – in the future.

Over the past few months, we've proudly hosted awareness tables at several locations, including:

- University of Alberta Hospital (Stollery Clinic and Kaye Clinic)
- Bountiful Farmers' Market (Edmonton)
- Tri-Municipal Fall Night (Stony Plain)
- E360 Community Booth at West Edmonton Mall

We're excited to schedule a few more awareness days before the end of 2025, and we're already planning ahead for a busy 2026. Do you know of a public space or event where our purple table could make an impact? We'd love to hear from you! Reach out at info@edmontonepilepsy.org and help us expand our reach. Together, let's keep building a more epilepsy-aware community – one table at a time.



Ho Ho Ho!



EEA UPDATES



October Marks the Final Chapter of Our 2025 Epilepsy Awareness Campaigns

Since early 2021, the EEA has proudly followed a structured awareness campaign cycle each year, ensuring that epilepsy remains in public conversation throughout all seasons. Each year includes at least three major awareness campaigns – and 2025 was no different.

We kicked things off in March with a burst of energy, hosting engaging conversations and campaigns that lead into Purple Day (March 26), a national celebration alongside other epilepsy organizations across Canada. These spring efforts set the tone for the rest of the year.

In June, our summer campaign took center stage. This year, we focused our celebrations on our 65th Anniversary, making it a particularly special occasion. Looking ahead to 2026, we are thrilled to be planning something even bigger. Now comfortably settled in our new location at 9915 148 Street, Edmonton, and with access to a beautiful community park, we're preparing to host a family-friendly summer gathering with games, a BBQ, and more!

This fall, our focus shifted to children's art and our annual Purple Pumpkin event. We know how important it is for families to have access to fun, safe, and inclusive activities, not just for children living with epilepsy, but also for their siblings and relatives. This year, we were especially fortunate to collaborate with Dr. Mai Heikal, who joined the EEA earlier this year and brought her artistic talents to our community. Together, we hosted two vibrant art-making sessions in September and October, where participants learned to paint beautiful animal silhouettes on real canvas – a highlight for many.



Volunteers at an awareness table for epilepsy.



EEA UPDATES

October Marks the Final Chapter of Our 2025 Epilepsy Awareness Campaigns (cont.)

Our Purple Pumpkin decorating event took place on October 25, 2025. Families gathered to paint pumpkins purple and get creative with their designs. These pumpkins are more than decorations, they're conversation starters. When placed by front doors, they encourage trick-or-treaters and their families to ask, "Why is your pumpkin purple?", creating a perfect moment to talk about epilepsy and seizures. Every small conversation helps reduce stigma and misinformation. It's important to share that:

- You cannot "catch" epilepsy by witnessing or helping someone during a seizure.
- Everyone can help, in small but meaningful ways.
- People with epilepsy can live full, vibrant lives and pursue their dreams.

We sincerely thank everyone who attended, volunteered, and created incredible purple pumpkins. Your participation and creativity fuel our mission of awareness and acceptance. We invite you to explore the photo gallery included in this segment and celebrate the incredible artistic spirit of our EEA community.



Members showcasing their creations for Halloween.

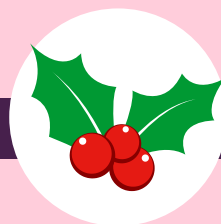


EEA UPDATES

October Marks the Final Chapter of Our 2025 Epilepsy Awareness Campaigns (cont.)



Members showcasing their creations for Halloween.



EEA UPDATES



Kids on the Block Shows – Fall 2025 Update



This fall, we had the pleasure of performing two special Kids on the Block shows at two school sites: Katherine Therrien Catholic School in northeast Edmonton, and New Humble Community School near Devon. We always love it when we can hold a school assembly in a large gym and connect with hundreds of students at once.

These performances gave us the opportunity to engage with students from Kindergarten through Grade 5 or 6. Their curious minds were captivated by the novelty of live puppetry, which was a refreshing change from the digital entertainment they're constantly exposed to. In a world filled with animation, CGI, and AI-generated effects, the simplicity and authenticity of puppetry draws them in and leaves a lasting impression.

Students were especially moved by Brian, our puppet character who lives with generalized tonic-clonic seizures. Through Brian's story and the support of his friends, children learned not only how to recognize and respond to a seizure, but also that epilepsy doesn't define a person's abilities or dreams. With a few simple accommodations, every child can thrive and become their full, unique self.

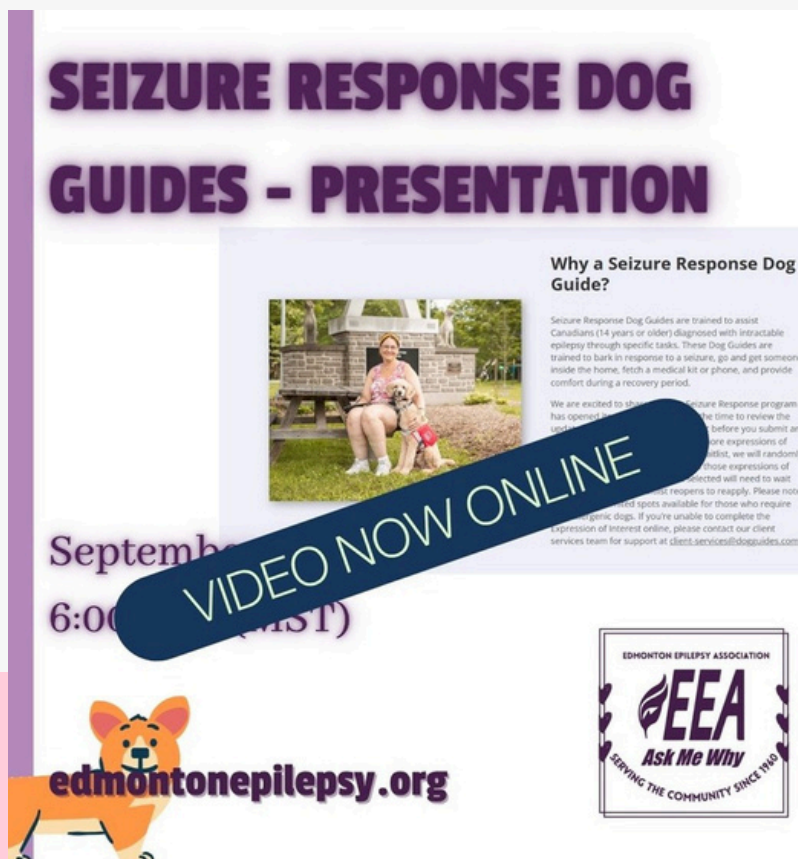
Due to the ongoing teachers' strike, school booking requests are currently on pause. However, we're confident that more schools will reach out soon, and we're eager to continue delivering this powerful and important show that supports awareness, inclusion, and empathy.

KOB show at school in north Edmonton..



EEA UPDATES

Seizure Response Dogs Presentation – September 11, 2025



On September 11, 2025, we were honoured to host a special presentation by the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides. Representatives from the organization provided an insightful overview of their Seizure Response Dog Program, including eligibility requirements and the application process. Please note that applications are expected to reopen in early 2026.

Once an individual with epilepsy is approved as a qualified candidate, they are matched with a specially trained dog and participate in an on-site training program. The presenters shared powerful stories about the life-changing impact these dogs have on their handlers. Many recipients report an immediate boost in confidence, independence, and social engagement. With a seizure response dog by their side, individuals feel reassured knowing their dog can recognize a seizure, seek help, and alert others, which often makes all the difference in an emergency.

We've recorded and published the full presentation, which you can view on our website:

👉 [Watch the video here](#)

We encourage you to watch the recording and explore whether this program may be a fit for you or someone you care about. It's one more valuable support system aimed at improving the quality of life for those living with refractory epilepsy.



EEA UPDATES

BINGO at the EEA Office

This simple yet meaningful social event has become a beloved staple among our members, especially for those who may not engage with our digital platforms, follow us on social media, or regularly use our online resources.

Held on the last Thursday of each month at the EEA office, our Bingo afternoons offer a few hours of calm, relaxed fun in a warm and welcoming environment. Add in some free snacks, small prizes, and the reassurance that everyone present is seizure-aware and supportive and you have the ideal space to connect, unwind, and belong.

We warmly invite you to join us for these monthly gatherings. Just give us a call or send us an email and we'll make sure there's a seat saved just for you.



EEA members play BINGO at the office



EEA UPDATES

Epilepsy 101 Sessions

An integral part of our services and programs is offering professional development opportunities for agencies, workplaces, and educational communities to learn the basics about epilepsy and seizures. Early this fall, we conducted three such sessions: one at École Beau Meadow School in Beaumont, just outside Edmonton, and two sessions for Child Care certificate program classes at NorQuest College.

We're happy to bring these sessions to your location! If you believe your workplace or educational community could benefit from a better understanding of epilepsy, how seizures may impact quality of life, and what simple accommodations can be made to help individuals remain productive and achieve their dreams, please reach out to our office. We'll arrange a session near you quickly and conveniently.

A graphic with a purple background showing a person's hands writing on a notepad. The text is white and reads: "DID YOU KNOW? We offer on-demand educational EPILEPSY 101 WEBINARS AND SEMINARS and in-services free of charge!". In the top right corner is the EEA logo with the tagline "Ask Me Why".

DID YOU KNOW?

We offer on-demand educational
**EPILEPSY 101
WEBINARS AND
SEMINARS**
and in-services
free of charge!

EDMONTONEPILEPSY.ORG

Our free Professional Development sessions include answers to the following questions:

- What is epilepsy?
- What causes seizures associated with epilepsy?
- What do seizures look like?
- How do you manage seizures?
- What can you do when a person has a convulsive seizure?
- What types of accommodations can you implement to support a person who lives with seizures? In all environments.

Contact us to book your free session today - online and in-person

call: 780-488-9600 or email info@edmontonepilepsy.org



EEA UPDATES



Board Retreat

At the heart of our registered charity is our Board of Directors: a group of up to 13 incredibly dedicated volunteers, each with a personal story and connection to epilepsy. These individuals commit to serving three-year terms, guiding our non-profit through effective governance and strategic planning.

While we meet monthly throughout the year, the highlight for our Board is our annual full-day retreat, held on the last Saturday of September. Since 2023, we've been thrilled to return to in-person gatherings for this important day. Led by our Board President, the retreat serves to reignite our collective passion for the cause, review accomplishments from the past year, and reflect on both successes and ongoing challenges, while also creating space to dream big for the future.

This year's retreat took place at our new office location, utilizing our spacious activity room to accommodate the full agenda. A key focus was the development of a brand-new financial investment policy. After the sale of our former office at 1115 Groat Road, the Board made the strategic decision to invest the proceeds to help create a small but steady income stream to offset current lease expenses. We also embarked on an exciting new phase: the beginning of a five-year strategic planning process. We look forward to sharing more details with our members leading up to our 2026 Annual General Meeting.

The retreat is a vital opportunity for the Board to reconnect in person, especially since our regular monthly meetings are held via Zoom. This year, we were also pleased to welcome a new director, **Kimberly Angus**. Kimberly brings a deep personal commitment to epilepsy advocacy, having lived with the condition since childhood. Her extensive legal expertise and genuine enthusiasm for our mission will be a tremendous asset to our team.

We currently have one more open seat on the Board. If you're passionate about non-profit governance and want to make a meaningful impact in the epilepsy community, we'd love to hear from you. Feel free to reach out by phone or email. It might just be the perfect fit.



EEA UPDATES

September 6, 2025 – EEA Open House

It's hard to believe our Open House was already back in early September – time flies when we have fun and keep busy with all our programs and services! On Saturday, September 6, we were thrilled to welcome around 50 guests to celebrate the official opening of our new office space, now located inside Saint Andrew's United Church (SAUC) at 9915 148 Street.

The event was informal and friendly, yet marked a significant milestone: the installation of our new EEA sign at the front entrance, officially announcing our new home.

We were delighted to see both long-time supporters and newer members, many of whom came to explore the resources and programs we offer to support individuals living with epilepsy. Our main room was transformed into a showcase of all things EEA – from our collection of epilepsy-related books and educational materials to displays featuring characters from our Kids on the Block puppet program, awareness campaign posters, program descriptions, and even a few fun giveaways.

Dr. Starreveld and Terry Mahon helped place the new office plaque at the entrance, while Past President Tammy Tkachuk shared a few heartfelt words to close the celebrations. Of course, no gathering is complete without refreshments. Food and treats were enjoyed by all.

If you haven't had the chance to visit our new space yet, we'd love to show you around! Feel free to reach out and book a visit. Or better yet, plan to join us for our upcoming Holiday Party on November 29, 2025 – more details can be found later in this issue.



EEA UPDATES



EEA members at the Art Workshop led by Dr. Heikal.

New Mentors for Our Mentorship Program

Did you know that, among other initiatives, we run a structured mentorship program that connects trained volunteers with members of the EEA who may need emotional support to cope with their epilepsy diagnosis?

Here's how it works: EEA members interested in becoming volunteer mentors reach out to our office. We provide training, which includes meeting with EEA staff, reviewing support materials, and observing how to offer meaningful peer support to someone navigating a similar but often newer, epilepsy journey. When another member, often newer to EEA and epilepsy, expresses a desire for support, we connect them with a mentor. We clearly define and agree on the program's expectations and scope. From there, mentors and mentees organize regular activities to stay connected, whether by phone calls, texts, emails, or even Zoom meetings (which we provide free of charge). Some pairs even choose to meet for coffee. The conversations, and simply knowing there's someone to turn to when epilepsy makes life more challenging, can make a real difference.

This fall, we trained three new mentors and have already established two new mentorship connections. If you feel inspired to help someone using your own experience with seizures, please reach out to us. And if you need a listening ear – a non-judgmental sounding board to share your observations or difficult moments coping with unpredictable seizures – don't hesitate to contact us.

This is yet another benefit of being part of our community, and the best part is, you don't have to live in Edmonton to participate.





EEA FINANCIAL UPDATES

FINANCIAL UPDATE FOR EEA

In this section of our newsletter, we address a crucial aspect of our nonprofit's mission: securing the necessary resources to carry out our strategic plans and connect with our community. Through these resources, we offer essential programs and services that cannot be found anywhere else.

When someone is diagnosed with epilepsy, it impacts every facet of their life. However, with the support of family, friends, colleagues, and small accommodations, many individuals are able to lead fulfilling lives. But when these support systems fall short, organizations like ours step in to provide critical assistance. The key to sustaining this support lies in our ability to access financial resources.

As we all know, these are challenging economic times. Our hard-earned dollars don't stretch as far as they used to, and nonprofits, no matter how valuable their missions, are feeling the pressure. We are proud to remain an independent agency, thriving for over 65 years thanks to bi-annual casino fundraising, generous donations from our community, and support from sponsors and project grants. However, the financial challenges persist, and limited resources mean we may need to scale back on some of our offerings.

Despite these obstacles, we continue to deliver a substantial range of creative programs and support each year. But, as always, our ability to do so is directly tied to our financial health. As we approach the season of giving, we hope you will consider supporting us in any way you can. Your generosity allows us to continue our vital work and reach those who need it most.



EEA FINANCIAL UPDATES



Year-End Update – 2025

As we close out 2025, it's our tradition to provide members with an overview of our financial position. As shared in our regular updates, EEA's finances remain stable, and our plans remain achievable when we raise between \$170,000 and \$200,000 in new funds each year.

This year was especially meaningful from a financial perspective, as we celebrated a major milestone: our 65th anniversary. Two key events – the Epilepsy Community Symposium and the Anniversary Gala, both held in late June – contributed to a total of approximately \$20,000 in new funds raised between June 2024 and June 2025.

Another significant development was the sale of our office property at 11215 Groat Road in Edmonton. Proceeds from the sale have been invested in a low-to-moderate-risk portfolio with RBC. To ensure sound financial stewardship going forward, the Board of Directors has adopted a formal Investment Policy that will guide all investment decisions, independent of future changes in board composition.

We're pleased to report that EEA will finish 2025 in a strong financial position, with a projected surplus that will carry us into the first quarter of 2026.



Creative EEA members.



EEA FINANCIAL UPDATES

Year-End Update – 2025 (cont.)

Casino revenues continue to be a vital part of our funding mix, and current reserves are expected to sustain operations through to mid-2027. Additionally, we are actively planning new fundraising initiatives to further support our work.

Our third year participating in the Birdies for Kids campaign brought in lower contributions than previous years, largely due to overlapping efforts for the anniversary events. However, our focus remains strong on delivering key projects such as the French Audiobooks initiative and the Seniors' New Horizons program, both set to conclude in late spring and early fall of 2026, respectively.

Looking ahead, we're especially excited to announce the early stages of a new initiative focused on mental health support for youth with epilepsy, specifically targeting ages 12 to 18. In partnership with Cornerstone Counselling – who have led mental health support for adults with epilepsy for the past two years – and with the support of volunteers and clinicians from the Stollery Children's Hospital epilepsy team, we're laying the groundwork for a program that addresses the most pressing needs of youth and families. Once the needs assessment is complete, we will actively seek funding to launch dedicated resources accessible to every child in Alberta impacted by epilepsy.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our mission.



EEA director, Angela W. showcases her art.



EEA FINANCIAL UPDATES



The Giving Season

As those in the world of charitable giving know, the final quarter of the calendar year is the most generous season. Many individuals look to make meaningful contributions, both to support causes close to their hearts and to plan wisely for tax purposes. It's a time when generosity meets impact.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who chooses to support our mission. Your donations directly empower our efforts as we continue expanding services to the more than 30,000 individuals in our region affected by epilepsy. Each year, our programs and resources reach over 5,000 people through educational books, a robust online resource library visited by thousands monthly, and personalized support services. Our impact also includes structured initiatives like:

- Mentorship programs
- HOBSCOTCH (Home-Based Self-Management and Cognitive Training Changes Lives)
- Family sessions and outings for children, youth, and community members
- Expert-led presentations on living with epilepsy
- Collaborations with national and international agencies
- Awareness events and community engagement
- “Kids on the Block” puppet shows
- Audiobooks and other multimedia resources
- Annual scholarships and community service awards
- ...and much more.



How Can You Help Us End 2025 Even Stronger?

In the coming weeks, we will launch a few special fundraising efforts. You'll find them listed below and on the following pages. We invite you to choose the opportunity that resonates most with you and aligns with your capacity to give. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for standing with us. Your support is a powerful force for change in the epilepsy community.



EEA FINANCIAL UPDATES



FIELD LAW COMMUNITY FUND PROGRAM

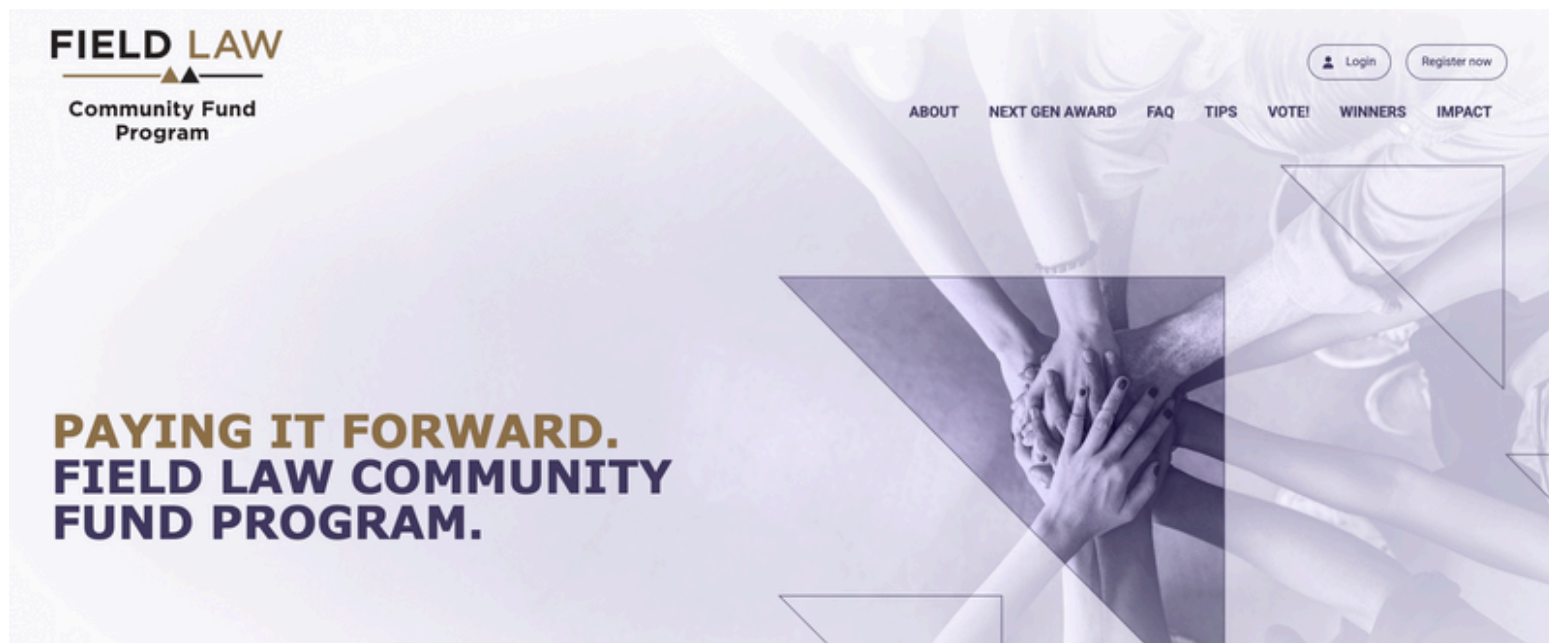
We're excited to share an easy way you can support our work, no donations required! All we ask is that you vote for our project.

Field Law is running a community fund initiative where charities submit project ideas for public support. We're participating with our proposal for the "Step Up 4 Epilepsy" event, scheduled for March 21, 2026, at West Edmonton Mall. This event marks our second annual day of epilepsy awareness and community engagement at WEM.

To support us, simply click and vote for our project. The projects with the most votes by November 22, 2025, will be eligible to receive funding. We're requesting \$5,000 to help cover costs for event activities and awareness programs. Want to help?

Just click this link and vote before November 22. Every click brings us closer to our goal!

And don't worry, the event will go ahead regardless of the outcome, but with your help, we can make it even more impactful. Thank you for standing with us!



EEA FINANCIAL UPDATES

GIVING TUESDAY – DECEMBER 2, 2025



December kicks off with an important day: Giving Tuesday! We invite everyone to come together and support our cause.

We've created a special fundraising page through our Benevity platform. Many of you may already use this via your workplace's community giving programs.

How does it work?

On the first Tuesday in December, people around the world unite to donate to meaningful causes. This year, we hope you'll join us. All funds raised on this day will directly support our vital services and programs. This is funding that no other source can cover. These include:

- Free community events
- Keeping our office running
- Individual and family support sessions
- Organizing key presentations and providing access to resources
- Mailing newsletters and managing social media to share accurate, reliable information about living with epilepsy

Additionally, your generosity helps us maintain programs that require financial commitment but are often offered free or at a reduced cost to members facing financial hardship, because living with epilepsy is challenging enough without extra financial burdens.

Your support helps us create a welcoming, supportive community we're proud of.

**Please donate generously on Giving Tuesday! [\[Click here to make your donation.\]](#)
As a thank you, you'll receive an official tax receipt to help reduce your tax burden next April.**



EEA FINANCIAL UPDATES

♥ MEMORIAL & GENERAL DONATIONS

We accept donations in various ways, with a strong preference for platforms that maximize your gift. Here are the most popular options:

✓ Zeffy (Best Option – No Fees!)

Link: [Zeffy Donation Page](#)

Zeffy allows you to donate 100% of your funds directly to us, with no fees deducted. You can choose a one-time or recurring donation. Tax receipts are issued annually, and we outline exactly what your donation helps support.

🇺🇸 PayPal

Link: [PayPal Donation Page](#)

Convenient and secure for one-time donations. Tax receipts are issued manually by the EEA for each donation.

🇨🇦 CanadaHelps

Link: [CanadaHelps Donation Page](#)

This trusted platform is a favourite among many of our supporters. CanadaHelps issues immediate tax receipts for all donations.

🏠 In-Person or Cheque Donations

Prefer something more personal? You're always welcome to visit our office or send a cheque by mail.

Office Address: 9915 148 Street, Edmonton

Donation Form (PDF): [Download here](#)

HOW ELSE CAN YOU SUPPORT THE EEA?

While Giving Tuesday is a great opportunity to donate online, we understand that people may want other ways to give and we've got you covered! Below are several alternative fundraising options that might suit your preferences better. We've also included the average annual contributions each initiative brings to the Edmonton Epilepsy Association (EEA), so you can see the impact of each option.

♻️ SKIPTHEDEPOT

Link:

<https://app.skipthedepot.com/edmontonepilepsy>

Turn your recycling into support! By using SkipTheDepot, you can donate the value of your bottles and cans directly to the EEA. It's easy:

- Schedule a pickup through the app
- Your items are counted
- 70% of proceeds go directly to us

Average annual contribution: ~\$2,500 since 2023.

📞 Need Help?

If you have any questions or would like help choosing the best donation method, feel free to give us a call. We're happy to assist you in making your gift in the most convenient way possible.



🎯 Our 2025 Fundraising Goal

We aim to raise \$10,000 between now and December 31, 2025. With your help, we can reach this milestone and continue supporting individuals and families affected by epilepsy in our community.

Thank you for your support—every dollar makes a difference!



EEA FINANCIAL UPDATES

CELEBRATING ALL OUR SUPPORTERS IN 2025!

This issue offers us a chance to list everyone who has contributed financially to our wellbeing and empowered our charity to continue with our important work empowering people who live with epilepsy to reach our personal goals.

Personal donors

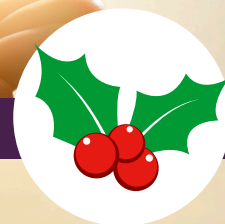
(a final list will be placed in our first issue in 2026 once all the generous donations from the holiday season in 2025 will be tallied out)

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Ashley B.
Brenda May S.
Colin R.
Daphne Q.
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Donna G.
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EPILEPSY NEWS

New AI Tool Finds Hidden Brain Lesions That Doctors Miss in Children With Epilepsy

An artificial intelligence tool that can detect tiny, hard-to-spot brain malformations in children with epilepsy could help patients access life-changing surgery quicker, Australian researchers said on Wednesday.

It is the latest example of how AI, which can crunch vast amounts of data, is changing healthcare by assisting doctors with diagnoses.

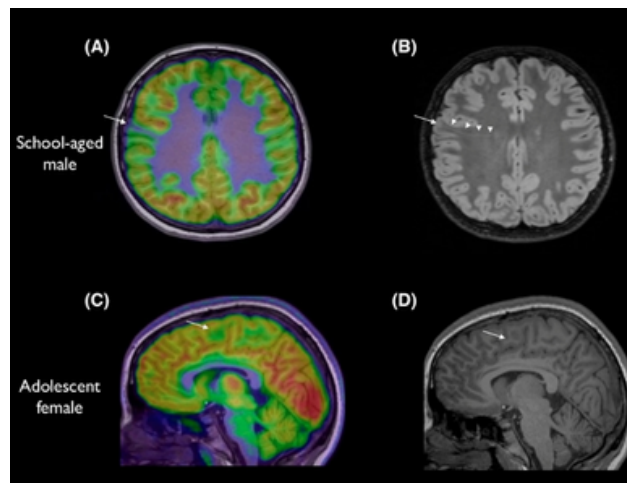
Epilepsy has several different causes, and overall around three in 10 cases are down to structural abnormalities in the brain, experts say. These are often missed on MRI scans – especially the smallest lesions, sometimes hidden at the bottom of a brain fold.

A team led by Emma Macdonald-Laurs, a paediatric neurologist at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, trained an AI tool on child brain images to find lesions the size of a blueberry or smaller.

"They're frequently missed and many children are not considered as surgical candidates," Macdonald-Laurs told a briefing ahead of the publication of her team's study in the journal Epilepsia.

"The tool doesn't replace radiologists or epilepsy doctors, but it's like a detective that helps us put the puzzle pieces together quicker so we can offer potentially life-changing surgery," she said. Of the patients who took part, with conditions known as cortical dysplasia and focal epilepsy, 80 percent had previously had an MRI scan come back as normal.

When the researchers used the AI tool to analyse both MRI and another type of medical scan called a PET, its success rate was 94 percent for one test group and 91 percent for another.



Out of 17 children in the first group, 12 had surgery to remove their brain lesions, and 11 are now seizure-free, said Macdonald-Laurs's team at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

"Our next plans are to test this detector in more real-life hospital settings on new undiagnosed patients," she said.

Epilepsy, which causes recurrent seizures, affects about one in 200 children, and about a third of cases are drug-resistant.

"This work is really exciting" as a proof of concept and the results are "really impressive", Konrad Wagstyl, a biomedical computing expert at King's College London (KCL), told AFP.

Similar research published in February by a KCL team using AI on MRI data spotted 64 percent of epilepsy-linked brain lesions that were missed by radiologists.

The Australian researchers used MRI with PET, "but some caveats are that PET is expensive, it's not as widely available as MRI, and there is a dose of radiation like a CT scan or an X-ray associated with it," Wagstyl noted.

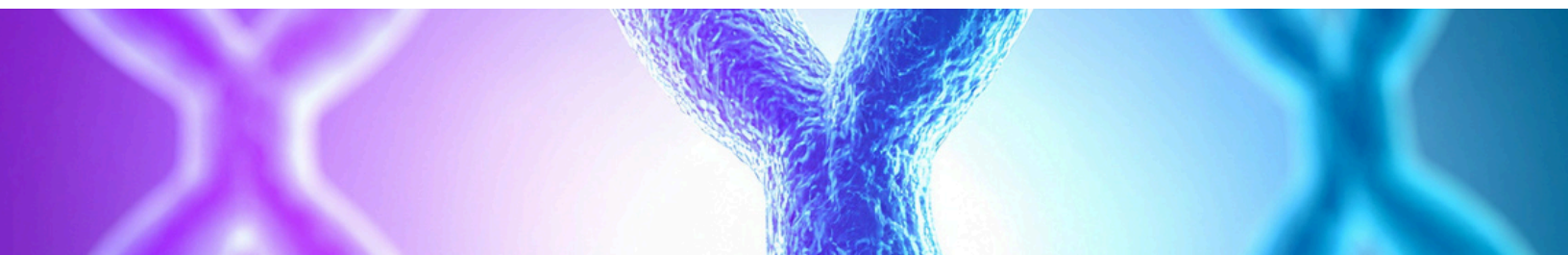
Retrieved at <https://www.sciencealert.com/new-ai-tool-finds-hidden-brain-lesions-that-doctors-miss-in-children-with-epilepsy> on October 17, 2025





Common genetic variants linked to drug-resistant epilepsy

Many patients need medication to control their epilepsy, however, not everyone finds success in these treatments due to drug-resistance. Recently, scientists compared the genetic information from a large group of epilepsy patients that are drug-resistant to those that were not. They found that there was a common genetic difference between these individuals in two genes called CNIH3 and WDR26 which are both important for brain function. This is promising information as this can lead to the development of new treatments that target these genetic differences so that patients facing drug-resistance can potentially find a treatment that works for them.



Certain common genetic changes might make some people with focal epilepsy less responsive to seizure medications, finds a new global study led by researchers at UCL and UTHealth Houston.

Focal epilepsy is a condition where seizures start in one part of the brain. It is the most common type of epilepsy.

Antiseizure medication is usually prescribed for people with the condition. However, for one in three people with epilepsy (around 20 million individuals worldwide), current antiseizure medications are ineffective. This means that people will continue to have seizures despite taking medication -- a condition called 'drug resistance'.

Drug resistance is associated with additional significant health risks in epilepsy, including a higher risk of sudden unexpected death in epilepsy, alongside substantially higher healthcare costs.

However, until now, there has been little understanding about why antiseizure medications fail to work for some people.

The new international study, published in *eBioMedicine*, found strong evidence that certain common genetic factors may contribute to drug resistance in epilepsy.

The researchers used data from EpiPGX, an international multicentre research project on epilepsy pharmacogenetics, and Epi25, the largest sequencing study in epilepsy, to examine genetic variation across the entire genome (the complete set of genetic instructions found in an organism's DNA) in 6,826 people with epilepsy.

The team compared the genomes of those who had drug-resistant epilepsy (4,208 individuals) with those whose seizures were successfully controlled with antiseizure medications (2,618 individuals).

They found that the presence of some specific common genetic variants in two genes -- CNIH3, which helps control how certain brain receptors function, and WDR26, which is involved in various cell processes -- was associated with a higher risk of having drug resistance in focal epilepsy and may influence a person's response to antiseizure medications.





Common genetic variants linked to drug-resistant epilepsy (cont.)

Senior author, Professor Sanjay Sisodiya (UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology) said: "The findings of our study offer new insights about why some people have seizures that are resistant to existing antiseizure medications. Further work may enable doctors to use this information to help predict who may turn out to have drug-resistant epilepsy and may help doctors develop newer treatments for the condition."

The findings are particularly important as these genetic signatures can be determined at the onset of epilepsy, rather than after several antiseizure medications have been tried without success. This could eventually help to predict which individuals with epilepsy are likely to develop drug resistance and avoid unnecessary exposure to ineffective medications and their associated side effects.

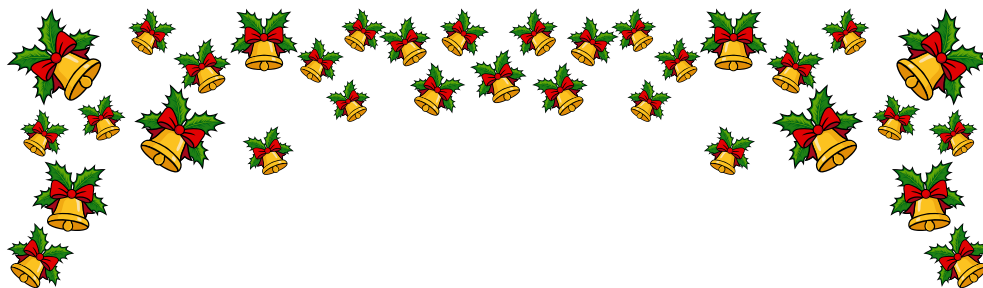
First author, Assistant Professor Costin Leu (previously UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology and now UTHealth Houston) said: "Our study provides the first evidence that common genetic variants -- usually not addressed in clinical genetic testing -- significantly contribute to drug resistance in epilepsy.

"Recognising these genetic variants, which are frequent in the general population yet strongly influence treatment outcomes, underscores the need to expand genetic testing and future therapies to address polygenic epilepsy (a type of epilepsy that is influenced by multiple genes).

"Polygenic epilepsy represents the vast majority of all genetic epilepsy cases, and addressing it through genetics-informed approaches could substantially enhance personalised treatment strategies for many individuals who currently fall outside the scope of targeted genetic medicine."

This work is part of the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme and the Centers for Common Disease Genomics (CCDG) program, funded by the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI). The study authors are grateful to all the people with epilepsy and their doctors who helped enable this important research.

University College London. "Common genetic variants linked to drug-resistant epilepsy." ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 16 April 2025. <www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2025/04/250415183427.htm>.





Could an arthritis drug unlock lasting relief from epilepsy and seizures? Promising results in mice.

An arthritis medication known as tofacitinib was designed to target a pathway in the body called JAK. This pathway plays an important role in not only arthritis, but recently it was found to have an impact on epilepsy and seizures as well. Thus, scientists from the University of Wisconsin-Madison decided to test this drug on mice to see whether it could treat epilepsy. Though the drug did not work for preventing the development of epilepsy after traumatic head injuries, the drug was very successful at stopping seizures later on after the epilepsy had developed. Furthermore, the drug also helped brain function of patients, aiding with things such as learning and memory. This provides a new potential treatment area for patients with epilepsy as drugs targeting this pathway that were typically used for other diseases can now be tested with epilepsy patients to produce a positive outcome

A drug typically prescribed for arthritis halts brain-damaging seizures in mice that have a condition like epilepsy, according to researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The drug, called tofacitinib, also restores short-term and working memory lost to epilepsy in the mice and reduces inflammation in the brain caused by the disease. If the drug proves viable for human patients, it would be the first to provide lasting relief from seizures even after they stopped taking it. "It ticks all the boxes of everything we've been looking for," says Avtar Roopra, a neuroscience professor in the UW-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health and senior author of the study, which was published last week in the journal Science Translational Medicine.

Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological diseases, afflicting more than 50 million people around the world. While there are many known causes, the disease often appears after an injury to the brain, like a physical impact or a stroke. Some days, months or even years after the injury, the brain loses the ability to calm its own activity. Normally balanced electrical activity through the brain goes haywire.

"The system revs up until all the neurons are firing all the time, synchronously," says Roopra. "That's a seizure that can cause massive cell death."

And the seizures repeat, often at random intervals, forever. Some drugs have been useful in addressing seizure symptoms, protecting patients from some of the rampant inflammation and memory loss, but one-third of epilepsy patients do not respond to any known drugs, according to Olivia Hoffman, lead author of the study and a postdoctoral researcher in Roopra's lab. The only way to stop the most damaging seizures has been to remove a piece of the brain where disruptive activity starts.





Could an arthritis drug unlock lasting relief from epilepsy and seizures? Promising results in mice. (cont.)

On their way to identifying tofacitinib's potential in epilepsy, Hoffman and co-authors used relatively new data science methods to sift through the way thousands of genes were expressed in millions of cells in the brains of mice with and without epilepsy. They found a protein called STAT3, key to a cell signaling pathway called JAK, at the center of activity in the seizure-affected mouse brains.

"When we did a similar analysis of data from brain tissue removed from humans with epilepsy, we found that was also driven by STAT3," Hoffman says.

Meanwhile, Hoffman had unearthed a study of tens of thousands of arthritis patients in Taiwan aimed at describing other diseases associated with arthritis. It turns out, epilepsy was much more common among those arthritis patients than people without arthritis - but surprisingly less common than normal for the arthritis patients who had been taking anti-inflammatory drugs for more than five-and-a-half years.

"If you've had rheumatoid arthritis for that long, your doctor has probably put you on what's called a JAK-inhibitor, a drug that's targeting this signaling pathway we're thinking is really important in epilepsy," Hoffman says.

The UW researchers ran a trial with their mice, dosing them with the JAK-inhibitor tofacitinib following the administration of a brain-damaging drug that puts them on the road to repeated seizures. Nothing happened. The mice still developed epilepsy like human patients.

Remember, though, that epilepsy doesn't often present right after a brain-damaging event. It can take years. In the lab mice, there's usually a lull of weeks of relatively normal time between the brain damage and what the researchers call "reignition" of seizures. If it's not really epilepsy until reignition, what if they tried the drug then? They devised a 10-day course of tofacitinib to start when the mouse brains fell out of their lull and back into the chaos of seizures.

"Honestly, I didn't think it was going to work," Hoffman says. "But we believe that initial event sort of primes this pathway in the brain for trouble. And when we stepped in at that reignition point, the animals responded."

The drug worked better than they could have imagined. After treatment, the mice stayed seizure-free for two months, according to the paper. Collaborators at Tufts University and Emory University tried the drug with their own mouse models of slightly different versions of epilepsy and got the same, seizure-free results. Roopra's lab has since followed mice that were seizure-free for four and five months. And their working memory returned. "These animals are having many seizures a day. They cannot navigate mazes. Behaviorally, they are bereft. They can't behave like normal mice, just like humans who have chronic epilepsy have deficits in learning and memory and problems with everyday tasks," Roopra says. "We gave them that drug, and the seizures disappear. But their cognition also comes back online, which is astounding. The drug appears to be working on multiple brain systems simultaneously to bring everything under control, as compared to other drugs, which only try to force one component back into control."





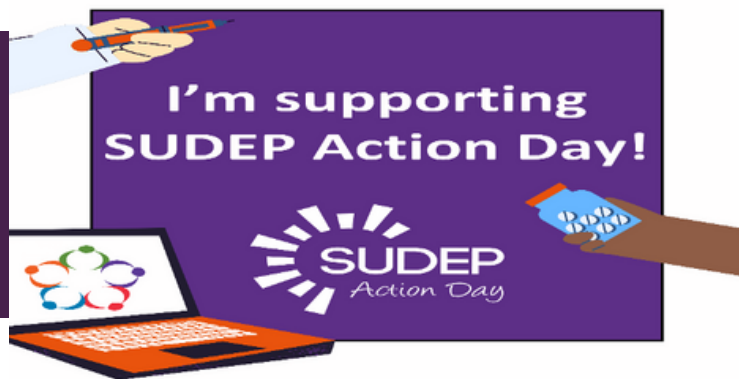
Could an arthritis drug unlock lasting relief from epilepsy and seizures? Promising results in mice. (cont.)

Because tofacitinib is already FDA-approved as safe for human use for arthritis, the path from animal studies to human trials may be shorter than it would be for a brand-new drug. Roopra's epilepsy research has long been funded by the National Institutes of Health as well as key early support from Madison-based Lily's Fund for Epilepsy Research and CURE Epilepsy. The next steps toward human patients largely await NIH review of new studies, which have been paused indefinitely amid changes at the agency.

For now, the researchers are focused on trying to identify which types of brain cells are shifted back to healthy behavior by tofacitinib and on animal studies of even more of the many types of epilepsy. Hoffman and Roopra have also filed for a patent on the use of the drug in epilepsy.

University of Wisconsin-Madison. "Could an arthritis drug unlock lasting relief from epilepsy and seizures? Promising results in mice." ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 25 March 2025. <www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2025/03/250325141535.htm>.





Let's talk about SUDEP

The Epilepsy Foundation dedicates the 15th of October every year to spread the awareness about one of the most important Epilepsy challenges, SUDEP.

SUDEP or Sudden Unexpected Death refers to sudden unexpected and unwitnessed death of a person with epilepsy who is otherwise healthy, not caused by injury, drowning or status epilepticus. More than 1 in 1,000 people with epilepsy die from SUDEP. This is the leading cause of death in people with uncontrolled seizures. Understanding how SUDEP occurs is an important step in reducing risk.

It can occur during or in absence of a seizure, due to changes that can occur in the brain in areas that control breathing and the heart. Seizures can cause breathing to stop for a prolonged time or lead to a dangerously slow heart rate or abnormal heart rhythm. Abnormal heart rhythms are more likely to occur if breathing is abnormal and the lungs, like the rest of the body, rely on the heart for their blood supply. Abnormal heart function can reduce blood flow to the brain, while brain function can also be affected by low oxygen and high carbon dioxide in the blood. So, because of seizures a sort of dysfunction happens between these three stations leading to death.

SUDEP more frequently occurs in bed and victims are often found face down. It's common with generalized tonic clonic seizures GTCS and people having night seizures. Simple first aid steps like stimulation to help arouse someone after a seizure and adjusting the person's position to keep their airway open after a seizure may help. Also, some studies show that monitors in ICUs and sleeping with someone in the same bedroom may be a savior during these unwitnessed events.

There are also ways to reduce the risk of death in people with epilepsy if they are personally adopted in their life style and living with epilepsy. Working to have as few seizures as possible, particularly reducing the number of GTCS, is the most important way to lessen the risk of SUDEP :

- Taking prescribed seizure medications consistently
- Identifying and avoiding seizure triggers: poor sleep, alcohol, drugs, menstrual disturbances, specific foods...etc
- Keeping regular appointments with your doctors
- Considering other epilepsy treatments, when medications are not working like surgery, VNS and Ketogenic Diet.

In 2019, the American Disney star Cameron Boyce died at the age of 20 during sleep. He was diagnosed with epilepsy 4 years before his death and the cause was attributed to SUDEP. Although he was on medication, his parents ,who are now SUDEP advocates, reported that they have never known anything about SUDEP or its risk factors during his illness and they were not sure if he is managed effectively. They believe that if they had enough information in the right time, their son may have had a different fate and that is why they are now on a mission to spread this awareness.

That is why it is very important to talk openly about SUDEP!



EEA PROJECT UPDATES



SENIORS NEW HORIZONS PROJECT

FRENCH AUDIOBOOKS

We are ready to begin recording sessions for our French Audiobooks project, proudly funded by the Community Initiative Project (CIP). This initiative will produce two audiobooks based on our French titles from the Epilepsy Book Series:

- L'épilepsie – UN APERÇU
- VIVRE AVEC L'épilepsie

Three French-speaking volunteers, from both within and outside our membership community, have committed to recording these audiobooks. Sessions will begin in early November, and we anticipate the completed audiobooks will be published by early 2026 on the 29 platforms that currently host our English titles.

Stay tuned for updates as this exciting project progresses!

This important initiative is also moving ahead smoothly. Two dedicated volunteers, Val G. and Sylvia P., have stepped up to lead the first few sessions of our upcoming half-day workshop for seniors.

The session structure has been finalized, and we are currently conducting dry runs in preparation for the official launch. The first workshop will take place at:

📍 St. Albert Seniors' Centre

📅 November 26, 2025

🕒 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

These engaging workshops aim to raise awareness about life with epilepsy and seizures in later life. Alongside receiving valuable information, participants will enjoy crafts, social games, and fun prizes.

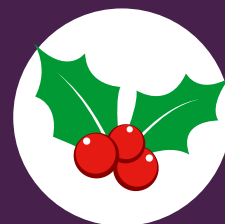
If you know of a senior centre or community space that could benefit from this workshop, please contact us at info@edmontonepilepsy.org.

KIDS WITH EPILEPSY: MENTAL HEALTH EXPLORATIONS & SOLUTIONS

After several months of planning, we are launching the “needs assessment phase” of this vital project, focusing on mental health challenges faced by youth with epilepsy (ages 12–18) in Alberta.

A detailed poster is available on the following page, but here's a brief overview:

We're gathering reliable, up-to-date information from families, healthcare professionals, and existing research to better understand the mental health needs of children living with epilepsy. To do this, we will host 2–3 hybrid focus group sessions (in-person and online) before the end of 2025.



EEA PROJECT UPDATES



KIDS WITH EPILEPSY: MENTAL HEALTH EXPLORATIONS & SOLUTIONS (CONT.)

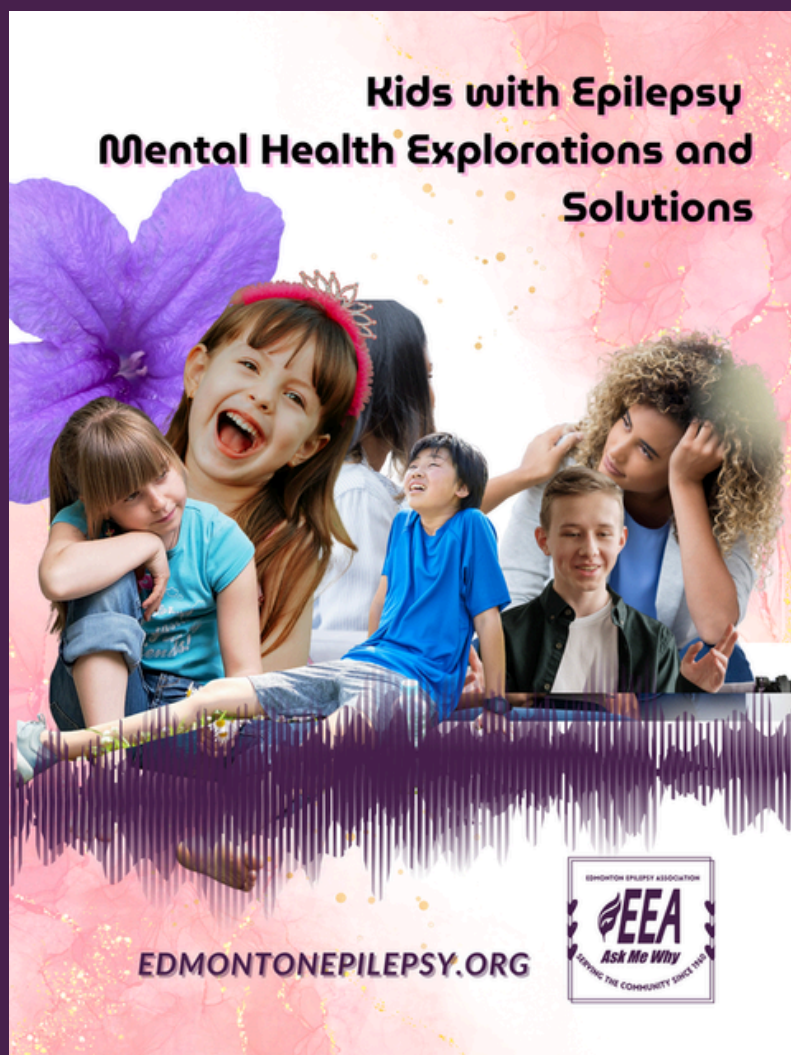
These sessions will:

- Be led by a psychotherapist team from Cornerstone Counselling, who also supported our previous Mental Health for Epilepsy project.
- Provide education on mental health basics.
- Offer a safe space for families to share their experiences and challenges related to seizures in everyday environments like school, home, and community.

Collected data will be compared with clinical and national research to identify what supports currently exist and where there are gaps. While we anticipate limited resources tailored specifically to epilepsy in youth, we aim to uncover successful strategies and areas needing further development.

Thanks to funding from Canada Post and the Oilers Community Foundation, we will use this research to build a strong foundation for future mental health resources, both online and offline, for young people with epilepsy in our region.

If your family would like to participate in the focus groups, please reach out to us at info@edmontonepilepsy.org or call 780-488-9600.

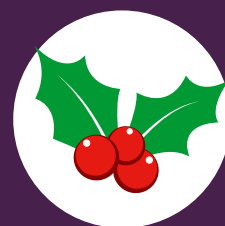


**Your voice can help shape
this important initiative.**



Focus on Epilepsy November | December 2025

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AISH-ADAP CONVERSATION UPDATES



As many of you are aware, through recent emails and informal conversations at the EEA office, the Government of Alberta is considering a review and overhaul of the AISH program.

As we gather more information and share it without community, we read from the government website (link: <https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=93761744A4743-E916-D685-83481604D141E9ED>)

Albertans with disabilities and the organizations that support them have made it clear they want supports that meet their unique needs and abilities, rather than the one-size-fits-all approach currently offered by the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program. They have stressed the importance of providing pathways to employment for those who can work but still need support.

In January 2025, Alberta's government announced plans for the new Alberta Disability Assistance Program (ADAP), which will be offered in addition to AISH and will empower Albertans with disabilities to pursue fulfilling job opportunities while continuing to receive the support they need.

ADAP will allow for the highest income while receiving benefits, meaning Albertans on ADAP can earn more from working while continuing to receive their financial benefits. In addition, Albertans on ADAP will also be able to receive the health benefits they need, regardless of their employment income. Through ADAP, Albertans with disabilities will not only receive the financial and health benefits they rely on, they will also have access to the employment resources they need to gain new skills and work to their full potential.

Several agencies affiliated with the EEA have voiced serious concerns about the proposed changes. Among the most troubling aspects are potential cuts of approximately \$200 per month to income support and reduced earning exemptions for recipients who are able and willing to work while on AISH.

On October 30, 2025, the People's Alliance for Disabled Albertans held a demonstration at the Alberta Legislature in Edmonton to express their opposition. Other organizations have also mobilized in protest, and we encouraged all our members to participate in the government's public survey, which was open until early September. We share the belief that these proposed changes will have harmful effects, particularly on EEA members who rely on AISH and are among the most vulnerable in our communities. We must continue raising our voices against these systemic shifts that threaten the rights and well-being of Albertans with disabilities.

Please know that the EEA remains committed to supporting our members as we collectively navigate these challenges.



DIGITAL LITERACY ALERT – SCAMS AND ZOOM PARTICIPATION



As our reliance on digital tools grows, whether for content creation, presentations, webinars, or online conversations, we find ourselves navigating both opportunities and risks in the virtual space. In early September, we hosted a successful webinar on Seizure Response Dogs, presented by the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides. The event took place via Zoom, using a secure registration link. While the session itself ran smoothly, we later discovered that someone had created a fraudulent web page mimicking our presentation. This fake site used screenshots and chapter information from our session to misleadingly represent our content and organization.

This incident was deeply concerning. As a result, we're sharing this message in our newsletter to warn participants about the risks of using third-party tools during online events, such as translation or recording apps that promise to take notes for you. Some of these unauthorized tools can infiltrate meetings, harvest content, and misrepresent our sessions, posing a risk not just to privacy, but also to our organizational credibility.

We've been in contact with Zoom and have received confirmation that malicious actors are actively targeting legitimate online events. As a protective measure, we now require Zoom account verification when registering for our sessions. Additionally, please avoid clicking on links or visiting websites that do not originate from our official platforms. If the content is not hosted on our website, treat it with caution. It may be an attempt to collect personal information or distribute misinformation.

Digital vigilance is essential. Please be mindful of what you access, share, or download online. Staying informed and cautious helps protect everyone in our community.



GENS PROJECT UPDATES (IBE)



The International Bureau for Epilepsy's (IBE) Global Epilepsy Needs Survey (GENS) was organized as a data-driven project designed to give members from IBE-affiliated countries around the world an opportunity to speak up and make a real difference.

A preliminary research article has been published and is currently undergoing peer review to ensure the accuracy and validity of the collected data.

The project explored key aspects of daily life for people living with epilepsy and their caregivers across different countries, focusing on:

- Managing uncertainty and redefining daily life
- Living with risk, social exclusion, and misunderstanding
- Challenges in navigating inaccessible systems
- Consequences of inaccessible or inadequate information
- The need for more than standard approaches to address complex epilepsy needs



According to the draft findings of the article:

This study examined the everyday challenges faced by people living with epilepsy across various regions of the world. It revealed that many individuals experience fear, stigma, limited access to services, and a lack of clear information and support. Women, people living in rural areas, and those in low-income settings often face the greatest difficulties.

The study highlights the urgent need for improved education, greater support for caregivers, and systemic enhancements across health care, employment, education, and transportation. It also underscores the importance of continued research to better understand and respond to the real-life needs of those most affected by epilepsy.

We will continue to keep our members informed about the next steps of this project and will share the Canada-based data once it becomes available to agencies across the country. We trust that these findings will help inform new policy directions and strengthen the conversation about supporting life with epilepsy in our region.

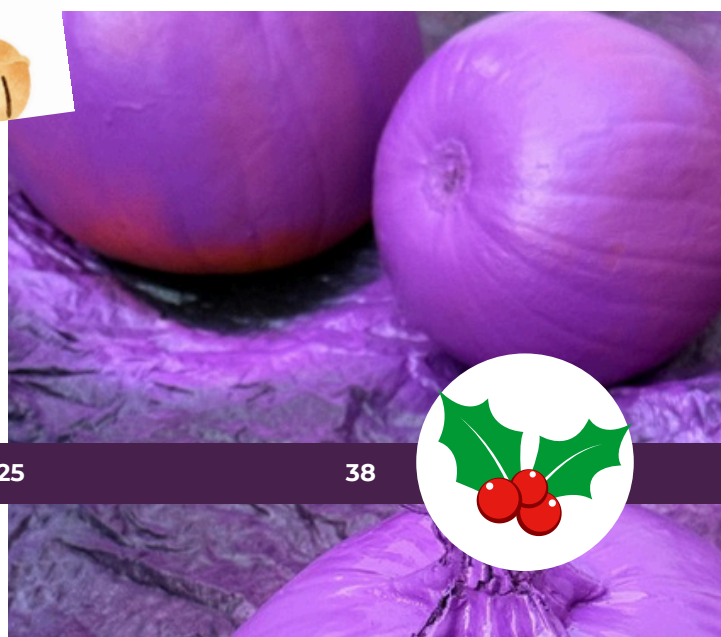


EEA UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

- BINGO SESSIONS – FINAL DATES FOR 2025
- EPILEPSY 101 SESSIONS & UPCOMING AWARENESS EVENTS
- OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF SENIORS WORKSHOPS



Art helps members improve their mental health!



EEA UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

BINGO SESSIONS – FINAL DATES FOR 2025

Join us for our final two Bingo sessions of the year on:

- Monday, November 17, 2025
- Thursday, December 18, 2025

Please note: Our office will be closed during the last two weeks of December for the holiday season.

Enjoy warm treats, soft drinks, and fabulous free gifts in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. These events are a great opportunity to unwind and connect with fellow members. Attendance is free for members, but we kindly ask that you call our office to confirm your attendance for either session. We look forward to seeing you there!



EPILEPSY 101 SESSIONS & UPCOMING AWARENESS EVENTS

We're excited to announce that we've confirmed dates for Epilepsy 101 online sessions with the Excel Society, scheduled for later in November. We'll also be raising awareness at the NorQuest College annual fair for the International Day for Persons with Disabilities on December 3, 2025, at their main campus in downtown Edmonton.

In addition, we'll be at West Edmonton Mall one last time this year, hosting the E360 Community Booth on Sunday, December 7, 2025, for the entire day.

Between now and the end of the year, we expect even more requests for epilepsy information sessions and we're always happy to respond. Whether it's a community center, agency, or school, we're proud to educate others about epilepsy, seizures, and seizure first aid. The more people know, the better the support and quality of life for those living with epilepsy.

Interested in volunteering? If you'd like to help out at one of our awareness tables, please contact our office. It's a great way to connect with the community and share important information, plus, it's always an enjoyable and rewarding experience.



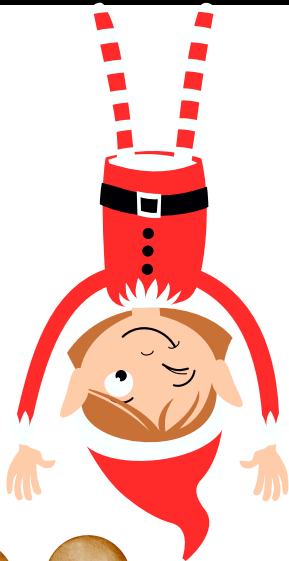
EEA UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS



OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF SENIORS WORKSHOPS

We are proud to announce that the first Seniors New Horizons Project workshop will take place on Wednesday, November 26, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the St. Albert Seniors' Centre. Our lead presenters for this inaugural session will be Val G. and Sylvia P.

If you are a senior living with epilepsy, or if you support someone who is, we invite you to contact our office. There may still be a free spot available for this session or for future sessions scheduled for early 2026. We're also welcoming volunteers who would like to lend a hand in making these workshops a success.



THE EDMONTON EPILEPSY ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

NAVIGATING EPILEPSY: SENIOR INSIGHTS AND STORIES

Empowering Seniors Living with Epilepsy

Facing epilepsy in later life comes with unique challenges — memory loss, social isolation, unpredictable seizures, medication side effects, stigma, and limited support.

To address these issues, we're offering free half-day workshops at senior and community centers across the Greater Edmonton area.

What You'll Gain:

- Practical knowledge about epilepsy and brain health
- Connection with others who understand your experience
- Access to support systems and resources
- Fun, social activities like crafts and games
- Snacks included!

These sessions are open to:

- Seniors living with epilepsy
- Caregivers, family members, and friends
- Anyone interested in senior brain health

All workshops are led by EEA senior volunteers.

- 📍 Locations throughout Greater Edmonton
- 🕒 Half-day, in-person sessions
- 💜 Always free of charge



edmontonepilepsy.org



EEA UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS



Mark your calendars! Tuesday, December 2 is Giving Tuesday – a global day of generosity and giving back. Help us make an impact by spreading the word and connecting with as many generous supporters as possible. Every share, every dollar, every act of kindness counts.

[!\[\]\(d66ff64371a51729ac8c1cdaa685ba6f_img.jpg\) **Let's come together to support a cause that matters.**](#)

 **Edmonton Epilepsy Association**



GIVING TUESDAY

DECEMBER 2, 2025

GIVING TUESDAY DECEMBER 2, 2025

\$0 of \$2,000 goal 0%

Choose an amount:

☐ One-time

☒ Monthly

Supports one informal social gathering for people with epilepsy - a safe space to enjoy social interactions.

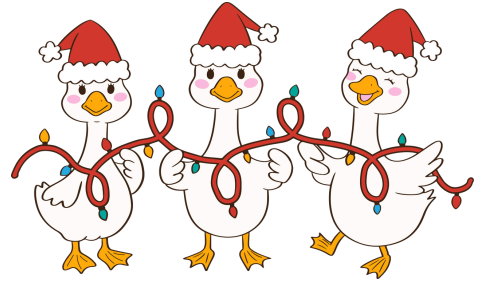
☐ You'll receive a tax receipt for making a donation.

☐ Did you know? We fundraise with Zeffy to ensure 100% of your donation goes to our mission!



EEA UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

HOLIDAY PARTY – NOVEMBER 29



Register now and join a fun community celebration!

We're thrilled to officially open registration for our annual holiday season social event:

EEA Holiday Party

When: Saturday, November 29, 2025

Time: 12:30 PM – 4:00 PM

Where: EEA Office, 9915 148 Street

Our new office space includes a spacious, fully accessible auditorium in the basement, complete with a lift for those with mobility devices. The venue can comfortably host up to 200 guests, making it the perfect spot for our very first potluck holiday party!

How to Join the Fun Contribute to the Potluck

We invite community members to bring delicious dishes to share! If you'd like to contribute, please sign up using [this link] or call our office at (780) 488-9600 to coordinate your dish. Contributors will receive one free ticket to the event.

Register for the Party

Ready to join the festivities? Register online at **[registration link]** or call our office to sign up.

- \$5 per guest for EEA members
- \$10 per guest for non-members



What to Expect

- **A delicious meal featuring potluck favourites**
- **Door prizes and a special visit from Santa**
- **Holiday sing-alongs and fun games**
- **Hands-on holiday craft activities (complete at least two!)**
- **Great company and a chance to visit our new office**

This event is a highlight of the season, and we can't wait to celebrate with you! If you haven't visited our office yet, now's the perfect time.

Registration closes November 24, 2025 — don't miss out on this festive community gathering!

For questions or assistance, call us at (780) 488-9600.



EEA UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

HOLIDAY PARTY NOVEMBER 29, 2025

\$5.00 FOR EEA MEMBERS

\$10.00 FOR NON-EEA MEMBERS

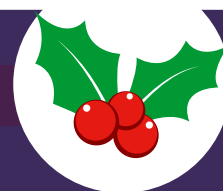
REGISTER ONLINE OR CALL US: 780-488-9600

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2025
9915 148 STREET (EEA OFFICE)
12:30 TO 4:00 P.M.



- DELICIOUS FOOD
- SANTA'S VISIT
- CRAFTS
- HOLIDAY GAMES
- DOOR PRIZES
- ...AND MUCH MORE!

REGISTER HERE ONLINE





EEA REGULAR PROGRAMS

In this issue, we provide a comprehensive overview of all our operational programs — the initiatives we offer each year, regardless of financial challenges. We believe these programs, outlined in the following pages, have been essential to the success of our charity over the past 65 years.

While we continue to run a variety of specialized projects each year, these core programs enable us to deliver on our strategic goals and uphold the vision that guides our work: Empowering People Who Live With Epilepsy! You will also find detailed reasons to become a member of our community. Although many of our awareness and education programs and resources will continue to be freely available to everyone — locally, regionally, and even internationally — our members enjoy a deeper level of connection and support. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our office.

EPILEPSY BOOKS

We run a comprehensive 11-titles epilepsy information books. [Learn more at this link.](#) The books are in English and in French. All English copies are always available as audio books and audio files, and can be ordered online for free (large orders will require postage payment). We also have several titles with short video clips that can be used for learning purposes.



Order books for free!



EEA REGULAR PROGRAMS



KIDS ON THE BLOCK

Book your elementary-grades live puppet show today. [More info at this link.](#) The program is offered free of charge to schools, community centres, daycares and any other spaces that can benefit from an engaging live show, teaching younger kids the basics about epilepsy, seizures and how to be a good friend.

Edmonton Epilepsy Association



KIDS ON THE BLOCK

TEACHING CHILDREN ABOUT EPILEPSY ONE SCHOOL AT A TIME

Online Presentations

The Kids on the Block Puppet Show:

- models first aid practices
- examines the social and emotional impact of epilepsy
- addresses questions and stereotypes surrounding epilepsy
- provides support and encouragement to children living with epilepsy
- empowers classmates to understand and accept individual differences

THE ONLINE PRESENTATION

During COVID-19, times, the Edmonton Epilepsy Kids on the Block presentation is offered online. Register to connect with us in Edmonton, watch the show and interact with our chat-line.

PERFORMANCE COST

While there is no charge for a Kids on the Block Performance, donations will ensure its ongoing viability.

BOOK AN ONLINE PERFORMANCE

Online performances take about 40 minutes and we can connect up to 100 households at one time. Students can also interact with the puppets through chat questions. Call the Edmonton Epilepsy @780-488-9600 or email at us info@edmontonepilepsy.org for more info.

Book your free show today!!



EEA REGULAR PROGRAMS



HOBSCOTCH MEMORY PROGRAM

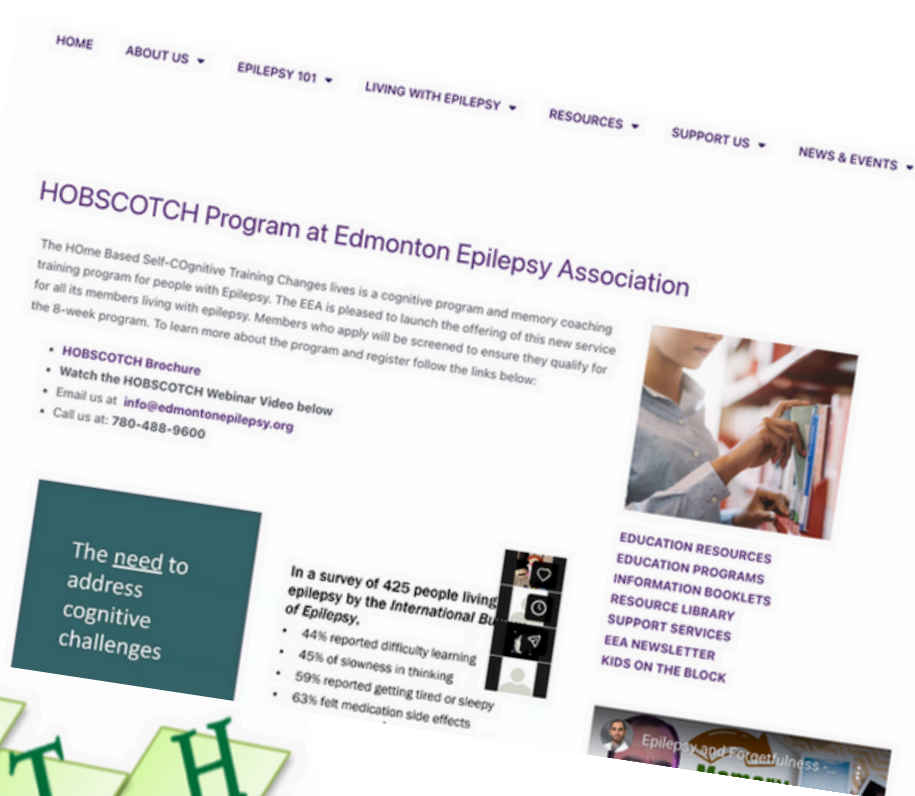
Free memory-coaching program for people with epilepsy. [Click here for more info.](#) The HOme Based Self-COGnitive Training Changes lives is a cognitive program and memory coaching training program for people with Epilepsy. The EEA is pleased to launch the offering of this new service for all its members living with epilepsy. Members who apply will be screened to ensure they qualify for the 8-week program.

*Free program
for EEA
members!!*



Home Based
Self-Management &
Cognitive Training Changes Lives

 **Dartmouth-Hitchcock**
MEDICAL CENTER



HOME ABOUT US ▾ EPILEPSY 101 ▾ LIVING WITH EPILEPSY ▾ RESOURCES ▾ SUPPORT US ▾ NEWS & EVENTS ▾

HOBSCOTCH Program at Edmonton Epilepsy Association

The HOme Based Self-COGnitive Training Changes lives is a cognitive program and memory coaching training program for people with Epilepsy. The EEA is pleased to launch the offering of this new service for all its members living with epilepsy. Members who apply will be screened to ensure they qualify for the 8-week program. To learn more about the program and register follow the links below:

- [HOBSCOTCH Brochure](#)
- Watch the [HOBSCOTCH Webinar Video](#) below
- Email us at info@edmontonepilepsy.org
- Call us at: 780-488-9600

The need to address cognitive challenges

In a survey of 425 people living with epilepsy by the International Bureau of Epilepsy,

- 44% reported difficulty learning
- 45% of slowness in thinking
- 59% reported getting tired or sleepy
- 63% felt medication side effects

EDUCATION RESOURCES
EDUCATION PROGRAMS
INFORMATION BOOKLETS
RESOURCE LIBRARY
SUPPORT SERVICES
EEA NEWSLETTER
KIDS ON THE BLOCK

[Epilepsy and Forgetfulness](#)



EEA REGULAR PROGRAMS



MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Inquire with us about connecting with a trained EEA mentor, to get individualized support about life with epilepsy. **More info here.** We are accepting applications for this program from any EEA member in good standing. We also always look forward to recruiting new Mentors. To learn more about either role, connect with our office at info@edmontonepilepsy.org



Edmonton Epilepsy Association | The Epilepsy Association of Northern Alberta

EEA MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Mentee Form -2022

Purpose

The EEA Mentorship program is created to provide people impacted by epilepsy to access invaluable perspectives and support from others who have been or are living similar experiences and understand what it means to live with epilepsy. The program is established to ensure mentees and mentors, as members of the Edmonton Epilepsy Association, develop a mutual understanding of expectations from the beginning of their relationship. The program fosters communication, connectivity and understanding. The program lays out expectations and definitions of each role and provides guidelines to follow to build and nurture the relationship.

*Free program
for EEA
members!!*



EEA REGULAR PROGRAMS



SCHOLARSHIPS

Applications for these scholarships close March 31 every year. [Learn more at this link.](#) Scholarships are an essential part of our work, reflecting our commitment to recognizing and celebrating the achievements of people living with epilepsy across all ages. We offer three scholarships: two are open for applications from January to March each year, and one is available year-round.

Scholarships for EEA members!!

Brittany Hughes Memorial Scholarship Fund



Life Enhancement Scholarships for Youth

These Scholarships, to a maximum of \$500 each, are available for Youths of any age, up to the age of 18, to assist them in participating in Arts and Cultural Activities that will enhance their development as individuals. APPLICATIONS ARE ACCEPTED FROM JANUARY 1ST TO MARCH 31ST EACH YEAR. [CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE PDF APPLICATION FORM.](#)

Watch an interview with Lyndsay Kruger, Brittany's sister, telling her story and talking about her legacy.



Garry Hannigan Memorial Scholarship Fund



Life Enhancement Scholarships for Youth

These Scholarships, to a maximum of \$500 each, are available for Youths of any age, up to the age of 18, to assist them in participating in Sports, or Recreational Activities that will enhance their development as individuals.

APPLICATIONS ARE ACCEPTED FROM JANUARY 1ST TO MARCH 31ST EACH YEAR. [CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE PDF APPLICATION FORM.](#)

Continuing Education Scholarship



EEA also manages the Edmonton Epilepsy Continuing Education Scholarship.

APPLICATIONS FOR 2025 are now open. APPLICATIONS ARE ACCEPTED FROM JANUARY 1ST TO MARCH 31ST EACH YEAR. [CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE PDF APPLICATION FORM](#)



EEA REGULAR PROGRAMS



FAMILY PROGRAMS

We offer education sessions tailored to families with kids diagnosed with epilepsy.

KIDS AND YOUTH PROGRAMS

We run regular outings and kids-focused programs.

*Support programs
for EEA member families!!*

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES



EPILEPSY 101 SESSIONS FOR FAMILIES

Visit this page for new dates of epilepsy 101 sessions for families. This presentation offers access to basic understanding of what epilepsy is, what seizures are and how they can be recognized, seizure first aid and other information about supporting kids with epilepsy!

NEXT WEBINAR AND IN PERSON SESSION

- Email us at info@edmontonepilepsy.org to request a

RESOURCES FOR YOUTH



YOUTH FUN SESSIONS

See the list below and keep visiting this page to learn of new projects. Click on the links below to register for your fun session today! Registration will be followed by sharing details about safety protocols, costs and other information.

2025 UPCOMING EVENTS

- **ART WORKSHOP** – register to attend this workshop in person, at our office in Edmonton (9915 148 street) – learn to paint silhouettes and discover how art can help you face challenges.



**CLICK HERE TO
ACCESS
RESOURCES:**

**FOR FAMILIES
FOR FRIENDS/ PEERS
FOR TEACHERS/
EDUCATORS
FOR EMPLOYERS/
EMPLOYEES
FOR MEDICAL
PROFESSIONALS
FOR FIRST RESPONDERS**



EEA REGULAR PROGRAMS

AWARDS

We recognize special contributions by EEA members living with epilepsy. [More info here.](#) In 2026, the EEA will honor two outstanding members — the recipients of the Cam Reid Volunteer of the Year and the EEA Achiever of the Year awards. Each recipient will receive a prize valued at \$250, and their names will be added to our commemorative trophies in recognition of their contributions.



In 2026
Volunteer awards will come
with money prize!



EEA REGULAR PROGRAMS



SOCIAL GATHERINGS

We organize regular gatherings for children, families and adults living with epilepsy. Check our calendars for dates.

EPILEPSY EDUCATION WEBINARS

Regular online webinars offered on topics about epilepsy. <https://albertaeweb.ca/>

EPILEPSY 101 ON-DEMAND SESSIONS

We run online and in-person on demand educational sessions about epilepsy. Email us at : info@edmontonepilepsy.org.

AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

We are all about epilepsy awareness. We run three official campaigns per year.

ADVOCACY

We advocate for people with epilepsy. Connect with us and see how we can help.

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

Every person impacted by epilepsy has different needs. Reach out to see how we can help you.



EPILEPSY TRUST RESOURCE CENTRE



Thanks to the generous support of one of our major donors, Dr. Starreveld, we proudly offer a vital service to our members: the Epilepsy Resource Centre. Established and maintained through the Epilepsy Trust, a fund created by Dr. Starreveld decades ago. This centre has grown into a rich repository dedicated exclusively to epilepsy-related causes.

Through the Trust's funding, we have gathered an extensive collection of books, videos, and other educational materials, all available for free to our members. While there is an abundance of epilepsy information accessible online (and we continually update our website), many of our most important and in-depth studies and resources are housed here in our physical library. Members are warmly invited to visit our office to explore this collection or simply inquire about specific titles. Lending is completely free for members, and we encourage you to take full advantage of this valuable resource.

To highlight these treasures, we're launching a new feature in our newsletter. Each edition will spotlight a featured book from our collection, encouraging members to discover and borrow these insightful works.

Brainstorm



Detective Stories from the
World of Neurology

Suzanne O'Sullivan

Featured Book: Brainstorm: Detective Stories From the World of Neurology by Suzanne O'Sullivan

Brainstorm follows fascinating true stories of patients with mysterious neurological symptoms so unusual that even their doctors are baffled. From a man who sees cartoon characters running across his vision, to a girl whose world morphs into an "Alice in Wonderland" landscape, and another who becomes like a ragdoll whenever she even thinks about moving, each case presents a unique medical puzzle.

The brain is the most complex structure in the known universe, and neurologists are the ultimate detectives, piecing together tiny clues to solve life-changing diagnoses. In this gripping book, one of the UK's leading neurologists takes you on a journey through her patients' extraordinary symptoms, revealing the remarkable intricacies of the human brain and the boundless diversity of human experience.

We're excited to announce that Brainstorm is now available in our library! If you'd like to borrow this captivating book, please contact our office. Lending periods are up to three weeks.





EEA members at a "Coffee with Katrina" session.



WHY BECOME AN EEA MEMBER?

JOIN NOW

As we wrap up a year filled with celebration, marking 65 years of service to our community, we wanted to take a moment to reflect on the importance of membership in the Epilepsy Association (EEA). Our charity adopted a membership model years ago, and here's why we believe it continues to serve our community well.

Membership Is a Statement

Becoming a member of EEA means standing with us and our mission. It signals to others in the community, and to the broader public, that you support our vision and our cause.

Even by simply paying the yearly dues (which we keep as low as possible, and always waive for those in need), you're making a statement: you believe in the importance of what we do.

In a world that increasingly emphasizes individualism, we take a different path, celebrating not only individual milestones, but also collective progress. We rely on the personal contributions and involvement of our members to help us deliver vital programs and services.

It's Only \$20 a Year (Individual) or \$40 for a Family (up to 5 people)

For the cost of a few cups of coffee, you gain:

- Access to up-to-date information (like drug shortages or new seizure monitoring devices)
- Invitations to webinars, live presentations, and conferences
- Opportunities to share and celebrate community successes
- A voice in shaping the future of epilepsy care and awareness

We stay in close contact with our members, offering meaningful ways to reflect on the role each of us plays in shaping the epilepsy conversation in Canada.

**ARE YOU AN EEA MEMBER YET?
IF NOT, VISIT OUR WEBSITE TODAY AND JOIN OUR FABULOUS COMMUNITY.
THE MORE MEMBERS WE HAVE, THE STRONGER OUR VOICE BECOMES.
LET'S CONTINUE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE, TOGETHER.**





WHY BECOME AN EEA MEMBER? (CONT.)

What Do EEA Members Receive?

While much of our content and services are available to the public, members gain access to a deeper, more connected experience. Here are just some of the benefits:

✓ **Tailored Programs for Individuals and Families**

- Mentorship Support: One-on-one mentorship for members who want to share, learn, or connect about life with epilepsy.

✓ **HOBSCOTCH – Free Memory Program**

- Delivered by trained staff and volunteers, this program addresses memory challenges commonly experienced after a diagnosis.

✓ **Kids Up Front – Free Event Tickets**

- Our member families receive access to tickets for sports, arts, and entertainment events throughout the year.

✓ **Social Gatherings**

- From epilepsy awareness campaigns to holiday parties, monthly Bingos, and other fun events, members are at the heart of our community. Most gatherings are free or low-cost for members.
- Best of all, you can attend knowing that if a seizure occurs, you'll be supported with understanding, not judgment. That sense of safety and belonging is priceless.

✓ **Access Resources from our Epilepsy Trust Resource Centre**

- We have a library of resources our members can access and book for free, whether they be in Edmonton or live all over our region (Northern Alberta). Connect with us to learn more about our titles and types of resources.

✓ **Professional Mental Health Support**

- For the past two years, we've subsidized free mental health sessions for adult members. We are now building a similar program for children and youth with epilepsy.

✓ **Individualized Support**

- Need help filling out an AISH application? Advocacy at school or work? Support navigating seizure first aid in schools with our KOB (Kids on the Block) program? We're here for that and more! If we don't have the answer, we'll find someone who does.



ALL ABOUT EEA VOLUNTEERS!

Ainslie B.	Kimberly A.
Alexandra W.	Kris Z.
Alison A.	Lisa M.
Anaze P.	Lucas S.
Angela W.	Mary-Jo G.
Angie C.	Maureen W.
Anna p.	Michael B.
Bill P.	Michelle Z.
Brandon B.	Nathan M.
Celine H.	Nick P.
Cheryl G.	Nicolas M.
Colleen M.	Nicole E.
David W.	Nicole E.
Deb h.	Nicole M.
Dr. Kassiri	Noella D.
Dr. Mai H.	Norm G.
Elva R.	Rosa S.
Gene W.	Shandea P.
Hellia N.	Sherri-Lee E.
Jack M.	Susan W.
Julia G.	Sylvia P.
Justine B.	Tammy T.
Katie T.	Terry M.
Katrina B.	Val G.
Kay W.	Virginia N.



It's a fact: we remain a small but mighty charity. When people learn about our work, they're often amazed at how much we accomplish with such limited resources and a small staff team. But for those of us who work and volunteer regularly with EEA, including our dedicated Board of Directors and core team of supporters, it's no surprise. The real magic behind our success comes from the passion, commitment, and generosity of our incredible volunteers.

Everyone has a talent to share, and we welcome anyone who approaches us, working with them to ensure they have a meaningful way to contribute. One that suits their interests and strengths. Whether it's sharing personal stories, learning new skills, presenting sessions, hosting awareness tables, mentoring fellow members, spreading the word about our programs, or simply helping set up for a special event, every single act of generosity makes a difference. And our entire community benefits from it.

In the final issue of each year, we make it a priority to recognize all the volunteers who have contributed directly to our activities. If we've inadvertently missed someone, we sincerely apologize and invite you to contact us so we can properly acknowledge your support. All volunteers listed in this issue are invited to contact our office via email to claim one free ticket to our upcoming Holiday Party on November 29, 2025, at the EEA office. This final social event of the year is our chance to celebrate you in a special way.

On the following pages, you'll also find an excerpt from our interview with Tammy Tkachuk, Past President of EEA and the 2025 Cam Reid Volunteer of the Year Award recipient. Tammy's leadership has been truly exceptional, and we are so fortunate to have her as part of our community.

Looking ahead to 2026, we're excited to announce a new enhancement to two of our annual awards: The Cam Reid Volunteer of the Year Award and The Achiever of the Year Award will now include a monetary gift, made possible through the generous support of the Kassiri family. More details will be shared in upcoming issues.



2025 CAM REID VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD RECIPIENT

TAMMY TKACHUK



This is an excerpt from the interview with Tammy Tkachuk, Past President for EEA and recipient of the Cam Reid Volunteer of the year award for 2025. You can listen to the entire interview at this link on our website: <https://edmontonepilepsy.org/awards/>

Tammy, a dedicated volunteer and former president of the Edmonton Epilepsy Association (EAA), shares her deep gratitude for receiving a volunteer award, emphasizing that it's a reflection of the whole community's efforts. Her experience on the board has been a major learning journey, especially in nonprofit governance and leadership. Motivated by personal experience (her daughter's epilepsy diagnosis), Tammy is passionate about advocacy, education, and building community. She's proud of helping the EAA become more visible and accessible. Among her fondest memories are community events and public outreach moments that connected people to the support they needed.

She highlights the symposium and gala as major achievements, alongside growth in social media and membership. However, financial sustainability remains a key challenge, as does adapting to change, such as relocating the association's headquarters. Tammy remains optimistic, focusing on the strength and unity of the people behind the organization.

Interview Bits:

Q: What does winning this award mean to you?

Tammy:

It is an incredible honour to receive this award. The association has meant so much to my family and me. Being able to give back, even in the smallest way, is deeply meaningful. I don't see this as just my award—it's really a recognition of our whole volunteer community. It's been a wonderful experience being on the board and a part of this amazing community.



2025 CAM REID VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD RECIPIENT



Q: How would you describe your experience serving as a volunteer in leadership roles such as Director and President?

Tammy:

I've learned so much from serving on the board, especially in executive roles. I've gained a deep understanding of nonprofit governance and financial decision-making. It's been a huge learning opportunity. I've loved meeting members and the public, representing the association, and being a small part of its face. It's truly been a unique and rewarding experience.

Q: What drives your volunteer efforts for this charity and cause?

Tammy:

My main drive is advocacy and raising awareness. When my daughter was first diagnosed, I knew nothing about epilepsy. I came across the Edmonton Epilepsy Association while searching for help. Since then, I've been passionate about helping others find us more easily. We've made great strides in awareness, advocacy, and public presence. Education is a passion of mine, and supporting families through their journey—especially during diagnosis or in schools—is deeply important to me. Building community is another key motivator. I truly believe in the power of a strong, connected community.

Q: What's one of your fondest memories as a volunteer and leader of the Edmonton Epilepsy Association?

Tammy:

It's hard to pick just one. I've loved our events—Christmas gatherings, June park celebrations, and events at both our old and new facilities. I also cherish the moments at public booths like farmers' markets or West Edmonton Mall, where people learn about us for the first time. Hearing someone say, "I'm so glad I found you," is incredibly rewarding.

Q: What do you consider the biggest achievements of the past few years as a volunteer leader?

Tammy:

Hosting the symposium was a major milestone. It brought people together to learn and share in person, which was powerful. The accompanying gala, with guests like Cassidy Megan and our donors all in one space, was also a highlight. Other achievements include creating audiobooks, growing our social media presence, and increasing our membership.

Q: What remains the biggest challenge?

Tammy:

Like many charities today, financial uncertainty is a big challenge. Donations are harder to secure as people are stretched. We've had amazing sponsors and supporters who helped us through, but it's ongoing. Another big challenge was selling our house and moving to a new facility. It was a tough but necessary decision. Ultimately, it's the people who make the association—not the building—and I think we've ended up in a good place to move forward.



NEW PLANS FOR 2026!



We're already deep into planning for an exciting year ahead in 2026! Every new year brings us renewed energy and an unwavering commitment to serve our community. Our mission remains clear: to offer hope to those diagnosed with epilepsy, to raise awareness, and to provide meaningful education and resources for everyone living this journey.

With over 400,000 Canadians affected by epilepsy, we know that each diagnosis represents a unique experience. And we believe that deeply. But we also know there is power in shared experiences — in recognizing common challenges and collective strengths. When a community unites with a shared purpose, especially one rooted in support and compassion, amazing things happen.

So, what's ahead in 2026?

We are thrilled to announce the upcoming release of our **new 5-year Strategic Plan**, which will be unveiled at our **Annual General Meeting on February 26, 2026**. This event will be offered in a **hybrid format** (in-person and online) to ensure all members can participate.

In 2026, we'll also:

- **Continue our three major annual epilepsy awareness campaigns**
- **Complete three key projects:**
 - Launching **French-language audiobook titles**
 - Delivering the **Seniors New Horizons** project to over 300 seniors
 - Laying the groundwork for our new **Mental Health and Epilepsy** initiative, focused on youth and children in our province

We aim to grow our **membership base by 25%** and continue to expand our **unique, member-centered services**.

What else is changing?

Starting January 2026, our **newsletter will shift to a quarterly publication**, with four issues per year. Each edition will be packed with updates, information, and opportunities for community involvement as we continue to grow our outreach.

We are also intensifying our **fundraising efforts**, with the support of a soon-to-be-hired **part-time fundraising specialist** (we're currently in the hiring process). Their expertise will help amplify EEA's voice (locally, provincially, nationally, and internationally) in our ongoing fight to reduce stigma and improve the quality of life for people with epilepsy.

In short, we're building on a strong foundation and looking forward to staying on the leading edge of community service, support, and advocacy in 2026 and beyond.

And one final plan for 2026 will entail exploring what it could mean for our agency to adopt a name that most accurately represents the services we offer to the region we serve. We are the Edmonton Epilepsy Association, The Epilepsy Association of Northern Alberta. By adopting a name that will more closely reflect exactly who we are and who we serve, we hope to open new doors to resources, funding and possibilities to grow together. These conversations will be part of our 2026 AGM.

Stay tuned and thank you for being on this journey with us!



EEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2025

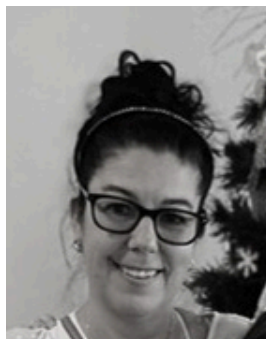
This page is dedicated to recognizing the invaluable contributions of a special group of volunteers: the Board of Directors of the Edmonton Epilepsy Association. We are pleased to welcome Kimberly Angus to the Board of Directors. While her official appointment will be confirmed at the upcoming Annual General Meeting, directors have the authority to invite new members to the board, pending that final approval. Kimberly began her formal involvement with our organization through the Epilepsy Portraits Project, part of our 65th Anniversary celebrations. She brings a wealth of experience in non-profit governance, along with a valuable legal perspective that will help guide the strategic direction of our agency. As someone who has lived with epilepsy since childhood, Kimberly is a strong believer in the power of positive thinking, community involvement, and forging one's own path despite the challenges that come with a neurological condition.

We are thrilled to welcome Kimberly to our team!



Susan Wilkie

President



Shandea Patras

Vice-President



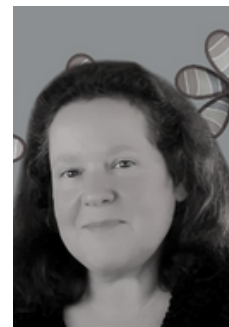
Tammy Humphreys

Secretary



Tammy Tkachuk

Past President



Valeria Palladino

Executive Director



Sherri-Lee Emiry

Director



Noella Desaulniers

Treasurer



Angela Wilm

Director



Anna Pagliuso

Director



Terry Mahon

Advisor



Dr. Kassiri

Director



Brandon Brost

Director



Kimberly Angus

Director



EEA SCHOLARSHIPS

The Brittany Hughes Memorial Life Enhancement Scholarships

for Youth, to a maximum of \$500 each, are available for Youths of any age up to the age of 18 to assist them in participating in Arts, Music, Dance, and/or Ethnic Identity Cultural Programs that will enhance their development as individuals.



The Garry Hannigan Memorial Life Enhancement Scholarships

for Youth, to a maximum of \$500 each, are available for Youth of any age, up to the age of 18, to assist them in participating in Sports or Recreational Activities that will enhance their development as individuals.



Edmonton Epilepsy Continuing Education Scholarship

EEA also manages the Edmonton Epilepsy Continuing Education Scholarship, funded by the Epilepsy Trust Fund.

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