EPILEPSY NEW ZEALAND
Kia titiro ki te tangata | See the person

Person-centred Healthcare



Person-centred healthcare involves a person actively participating in their own medical treatment in close cooperation with health professionals. Good communication between the person, their healthcare team (doctors and others), families and carers is the best way of ensuring that person-centred care sits centrally when discussing treatment.

A person-centred care approach places you at the centre of all discussions, plans and choices regarding your care. This means that decisions about your care takes into account your life experience, values, culture, interests, beliefs and goals. It acknowledges your needs and preferences, and provides information and advice to make an informed decision about your epilepsy-related care and treatment.

If you agree, it can be a good idea for family and carers to be involved in decisions about your care, as this assists everyone to understand the diagnosis and treatment plan. So, in addition to supporting you, part of the person-centred approach should include provision of information and support to your family, carers and anyone else important in your life.

SUPPORTING A CHILD OR PERSON LIVING WITH A COGNITIVE DISABILITY

If a person living with epilepsy is under-age or does not have the capacity to make decisions it is important, where appropriate, to involve them in discussions about their care. Assisting a child or person living with a cognitive impairment to understand their epilepsy diagnosis and treatment can help them to learn to manage their own health as much as possible.

The amount of information provided to a person about their epilepsy will greatly depend on their age, ability to process information and communicate their needs, and other relevant personal factors. It is important to strike a careful balance between the amount and type of information provided against the risk that disclosing details will cause distress. It may be worth providing information gradually and in a way that is age and ability appropriate. It is equally important that the diagnosis of epilepsy does not define the person – they are a person first and foremost, and a

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person with epilepsy second.

Elsewhere on this site, you will find more detailed information about how to best support a child living with epilepsy or a person living with epilepsy and a cognitive disability.