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

Providing Support

It is important to be properly informed and prepared in order to provide the best support to a person living with epilepsy and a cognitive disability. While each person will have unique needs, in general you should remember:

– The person will have needs related to both their epilepsy and cognitive disability, all of which need to be considered when providing support

– As diagnosing epilepsy in a person living with a cognitive disability can sometimes be challenging and complex, their support network should look out for behaviours and activity that are repetitive and unusual

– It is important that family and support workers keep a record of changes in symptoms that are new or uncommon to the person, which may indicate seizure activity. Records or diaries about symptoms or changes will be useful to a doctor investigating the possibility of epilepsy

– To ensure the person's Seizure Management Plan (SMP) is current and endorsed by their doctor

– If the person has an Emergency Medication Plan (EMP), ensure it is reviewed by their doctor every year and that their support network has been trained appropriately

– Implement risk management strategies to enhance the safety of the person

– Support the person to engage in social and leisure activities, as participation in these can greatly enhance physical and mental health and wellbeing

– Support the person to have adequate sleep, maintain a healthy diet, reduce stress, limit alcohol consumption, and undertake appropriate exercise/activities.

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