

Mersey Region Epilepsy Association



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helping the association

What is the Mersey Region Epilepsy Association?

We are an independent charity working towards improving the quality of life for people with epilepsy and their families across Merseyside and Cheshire. For 50 years we've been providing a free and confidential community-based service, which aims to give support and information on a personal basis.

It's our belief that treatment for epilepsy does not begin and end with diagnosis. When you leave the consulting room or hospital, you have to go and live in the world with epilepsy.

That is where we come in.

What sort of information is on offer?

Whether you or a family member have recently been diagnosed or whether you've lived with epilepsy for some time, you may have questions about day-to-day living. Can I drive? What about work? Am I entitled to benefits? How will my epilepsy affect my lifestyle? - Just some of the many different kinds of queries we can help you with.

We will try our best to help with any question. What we can't offer, though, is medical advice. Please direct any queries relating to epilepsy treatment through your medical practitioner.

Can I get written information?

MREA has a range of information leaflets and booklets, many of which we publish ourselves, about numerous aspects of living with epilepsy. These are available free of charge through the office. If your child has epilepsy, we have a selection of publications designed to appeal to children. We also have a range of books for sale, chosen because they offer good, practical advice about living with epilepsy. Please contact the MREA office for availability and price.

How can I get this support?

A telephone call or letter to MREA's office will put you in contact with our support services.

The office, at the Neurosupport Centre in Liverpool's Norton Street, is open between 9:30am and 4:30pm Monday to Friday. We can offer information over the telephone (if there's an answer-machine on, please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as possible). If you prefer face-to-face advice, you can make an appointment to come and see us in the Centre, situated off London Road, next to the National Express Coach Station.

You may feel you would like the more direct support offered by a Fieldworker. If so, you'll be asked to leave your details and our Fieldworkers will contact you directly.

What do Fieldworkers do?

Our home visiting service is an important aspect of our work. Once you are referred through the office, our Fieldworker will discuss your needs with you over the telephone. They may then make an arrangement to visit you in your own home to talk about practical matters concerning your epilepsy. You can also find our Fieldworker at our help-desk at the outpatients department in the Walton Centre on epilepsy clinic days. You can visit the desk to pick up free literature, find out more about our services and chat informally.

Do I need to become a member?

You don't need to be a member to use our services. Many people find, however, that they like the closer contact with the Association that membership brings. Becoming a member is easy - the fee is just £10 per year, to make it affordable to everyone. If you can afford more, you can make a regular gift using a banker's order. Just contact the office and we'll forward a membership form.

What other work do we do?

- MREA works in any way we can to provide support for people with epilepsy and their families across the region.
- Educating people towards a greater understanding of epilepsy is integral to our work. Our experienced speakers are available to provide training, talks and courses to lay or professional groups.
- Our commitment to raising awareness by helping to dispel myths surrounding epilepsy is ongoing. Whenever and wherever we can, we promote positive publicity about epilepsy.
- Because looking to the future is crucial, we provide financial support to research projects which have the potential to better the lives of people with epilepsy.
- We have a network of affiliated groups and clubs who meet regularly throughout the region. If you would like to get in touch with people who understand, please contact the office.
- We are committed to working closely with medical personnel at the Walton Centre for Neurology and Neurosurgery, Liverpool; the Department of Neurosciences at the University of Liverpool; the Roald Dahl EEG Unit and the Child Development Centre at the Royal Liverpool Children's NHS Trust, Alder Hey.
- MREA is a member of the Joint Epilepsy Council of the UK & Ireland, an umbrella group of epilepsy charities which promotes the welfare of people with epilepsy.

How can I help?

We rely on volunteers and voluntary donations to be able to continue our work. You can help us by:

- becoming a member
- making a donation, however small
- supporting our fundraising efforts
- volunteering your time to help us raise funds
- showing an understanding to people who have epilepsy

Referrals for all services outlined in this leaflet are taken on the understanding that the person seeking help is the one who initiates the request. Most services are **FREE OF CHARGE** and are **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL** within the organisation.