

EPILEPSY & PSYCHOSOCIAL ISSUES

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OVERVIEW

- Historical Understanding
- Stigma
- Mental Health
- Social Issues & Recommendations
 - Transportation
 - Employment
 - Medication

HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING

- ❖ Epilepsy can be traced back to 2,000 B.C.
- ❖ Derived from the Greek word epilambanein
- ❖ Person with Epilepsy regarded as “possessed & contagious”
- ❖ 17th Century school of Hippocrates
 - understood to be a disease of the brain



STIGMA

Defined as the relation between the differentness of an individual and the devaluation society places on that particular differentness.” (Epilepsia, 2003)

Manifests as discrimination/prejudice in:

Workplaces/Schools

Social Settings

Relationships

Medical Settings



MENTAL HEALTH

Depression

- ❖ Feelings of sadness, tearfulness, hopelessness
- ❖ Loss of interest/pleasure
- ❖ Lack of energy
- ❖ Loss of appetite
- ❖ Frequent thoughts of death

Anxiety

- ❖ Feeling restless, nervous, or tense
- ❖ Being easily fatigued
- ❖ Difficulty concentrating
- ❖ Sleep disturbance
- ❖ Irritability



SOCIAL ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Employment/School
- Transportation
- Medication Costs



SOCIAL ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

(CONT'D)

Employment/Schools Milieus

❑ Americans with Disability Act (ADA)

Reasonable Accommodations

- Change job tasks
- Improve accessibility in a work area
- Provide/Adjust a product, equipment, or software
- Allow a flexible work schedule
- Provided with extra time for tests/assignments



SOCIAL ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

(CONT'D)

Transportation

- Covered benefits with some medical insurance (e.g., Veyo),
- Dial-A-Ride)
- ADA Paratransit
- Community-based based programs (e.g., Human Services, Sk Life Science)
- Senior Centers
(e.g. Med Rides)



SOCIAL ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

(CONT'D)

Medication Costs

- ❑ Patient Assistance Program via Manufactures
- ❑ Provider letter validating medical necessity
- ❑ Talk to insurance carrier for a tiering exception



TAKE AWAY POINTS

- ✓ Communicate with your neurologist/epileptologist
- ✓ Communicate with school/college counselor
- ✓ Communicate with your therapist/psychiatrist/psychologist

REPEAT

Epilepsy is only my diagnosis, it is not my identity.
It is my aim to manage it well, as everything in life is a possibility.



REFERENCES

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