2016 Epilepsy Awareness Day
at the Capitol

Tuesday, March 29, 2016
REGISTER by March 8 and receive a $5 Caribou gift card!

ADVOCACY GUIDE

Agenda
Research Your Legislators
Sharing Your Story
2016 Focus Issues

1600 University Avenue West, Suite 300, St. Paul, MN 55104
800.779.0777 | efmn.org
Tuesday, March 29, 2016 | 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Department of Transportation Building Cafeteria
395 John Ireland Blvd. in St. Paul

DETAILS

- Meet at 7:30 AM (EFMN Office) for a light breakfast; parking validated for the Spruce Tree Center ramp. Tickets provided to board the light rail at 8:00 AM to the Department of Transportation Building (DOT).
  
  OR travel independently and meet up with the group at the DOT Cafeteria at 8:30 AM

- Share your personal story and focus issue with your legislators (staff scheduling group meetings between 9 AM—2PM).

ACTIVITIES

- Join EFMN and the Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities for Tuesdays at the Capitol from 10—10:30 AM in the DOT Cafeteria. Hear speakers, receive a legislative update and tips on sharing your story.

- Redeem your FREE lunch voucher.

- Return to EFMN or home when you’d like.

QUESTIONS?

If you need additional tools or have questions, contact Diane at dsenjem@efmn.org or call 800.779.0777, ext. 2312.
NEW THIS YEAR: EFMN will schedule your legislative appointments! If you still want to schedule your own private appointment, please notify Diane.

Find your state senator and representative by typing your home address into the search box here: www.gis.leg.mn/OpenLayers/districts.

Use the space below to note things of interest about your legislators, such as committee assignments, term in office and/or bills chief authored.

**Minnesota State Senator** ________________

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**Minnesota State Representative** ________________

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We will not be reaching out to federal legislators. After registering, staff will notify you of your appointment times, building and room numbers as soon as possible (these are tentative as legislators have very busy schedules). Staff and volunteers will be available to accompany advocates to legislative meetings.
Advocacy takes many shapes and forms: from providing seizure recognition and response training to displaying artwork and stories of artists affected by epilepsy throughout the community—we’re raising awareness and educating the general public.

Epilepsy Awareness Day at the Capitol is another opportunity to share the message that 1 in 10 people will have a seizure in their lifetime, and 1 in 26 develop epilepsy.

Writing Your Story

1. **Introduce yourself** (who you are, where you live, your connection to epilepsy)
2. **Identify your issue** (focus issue or your own)
3. **Explain how the issue impacts or has impacted your life** (share concise, real-life examples)
4. **Describe a solution and ask for specific action** (supporting a bill)
5. **Thank them for their time**

Other Helpful Tips

- Limit story to five minutes or less
- Practice telling your story
- Be honest, it’s okay not to have all the answers
- Follow-up and stay in touch with legislators
2016 FOCUS ISSUES

Epilepsy impacts everyone differently, which is why we support advocates sharing their own priorities with legislators.

Medical Assistance (M.A.) Reform Campaign

- **Issue:** Current limits force thousands of adults with disabilities to live below the poverty line. THE SPENDDOWN is the money an individual is expected to spend on medical bills in order to bring their income down low enough to qualify for M.A. Current law leaves only $792 a month to live on. ASSET LIMITS are $3,000 in savings per person, $6,000 per couple.
- **Solution:** Raise the Spenddown Limit to the poverty level ($990) and raise the Asset Limit to $10,000 per person and $18,000 per couple. M.A. Reform supports independence, promotes simplification, is more cost effective and helps stabilize provider-based services.

Prior Authorization Legislation

- **Issue:** In theory, prior authorization of prescription medications is intended to help ensure that patients receive high-quality, cost-effective therapies. In reality, prior authorization is a source of great frustration to patients and physicians alike.
- **Solution:** The process should be easier, the information exchanged should be standardized and variations across payers should be reduced.

Best Life Alliance (formerly 5% Campaign)

- The Best Life Alliance supports reform and a rate increase for community-based service in 2016 to address the current workforce crisis. It will ensure better compensation for caregivers, and support quality services that allow people with disabilities and older adults to live as independently as possible in the community.

Pacer Coalition Priority

- See insert
MISSION

The Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota leads the fight to stop seizures, find a cure and overcome the challenges created by epilepsy.

VISION

A world where people with seizures realize their full potential.

FACTS

- Epilepsy affects more Americans that multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy and Parkinson’s disease combined.
- EFMN provides programs and services that educate, connect and empower people with seizures—we serve over 100,000 people annually.
- Over 500 individuals from MN/eastern ND are engaged in advocacy activities with the foundation.
- EFMN serves the entire state of Minnesota and has staff in St. Cloud, Duluth, Rochester, Fargo/Moorhead & the Twin Cities.