

What you need to know about Employing a person with Epilepsy

Some employers are concerned that people with epilepsy may pose a higher risk for accidents in the workplace, or impact negatively on occupational health and safety. Most of this fear arises from a misunderstanding of the condition.

Medical Facts

The employer needs to know some basic facts about epilepsy and its possible impact on work performance.

- There are different kinds of seizures.
- In most cases, seizures can be completely controlled with appropriate medication.
- Drugs for epilepsy should not cause side effects which will have an effect on work performance.
- Work related accidents and sick leave are no more frequent in people with epilepsy than in other workers.

Job Suitability

- People with epilepsy can do most jobs.
- If a person with epilepsy possesses the right qualifications and experience they should be considered for the job.

Seizures at Work

- If a seizure occurs for the first time in an employee, the employer should give the employee adequate time to receive proper medical treatment before making any decisions about job suitability.
- If the employee is likely to have a seizure, provide first aid training or information to those who might be involved.

- If in spite of proper medical attention, redeployment to another job is necessary, appropriate vocational guidance should be made available at an early stage.

Helpful Questions

If an applicant discloses their epilepsy these are some questions that can help you find out about the condition and if it will affect their work ability.

- What kind of seizures do you have?
- How often do you have your seizures?
- What happens when you have a seizure?
- Is there a pattern to your seizures?
- What should we do if you have a seizure?
- How long after a seizure can you resume work?
- Do you have a warning before a seizure?
- Are your seizures triggered by anything?

How can Epilepsy Queensland Inc help?

Epilepsy Queensland can provide information about different types of seizures and the appropriate first aid. Training is available to workplaces as well as resources such as videos and books on the topic.

Although every effort has been made to ensure up to date and accurate information is provided, Epilepsy Queensland cannot accept any liability in relation to the information provided. It is strongly recommended that you discuss any information with your doctor or other relevant organisation.