

HOT TOPICS – MARCH 2023

WORLD PURPLE DAY [EPILEPSY DAY]

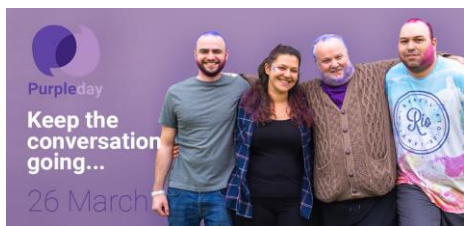
Purple Day is on 26th March

What do you know about epilepsy? Do you know somebody with this condition? Well,



"epilepsy is not just one condition, but a group of many different 'epilepsies' with one thing in common: a tendency to have seizures that start in the brain" [Source: [What is epilepsy? | Epilepsy Society](#)]

FACT: There are over half a million people with epilepsy in the UK, so around 1 in 100 people [Source: [What is epilepsy? | Epilepsy Society](#)]



On Purple Day "tens of thousands of people across the globe come together to start conversations around epilepsy, raise awareness of the condition and fundraise to make a difference to the lives of people affected by epilepsy.

Purple day was created in 2008 by Cassidy Megan, a young girl from Canada, who has epilepsy and wanted to get people talking about the condition. Cassidy decided to use the colour purple because lavender is recognised as the international flower of epilepsy. Cassidy not only wanted to raise awareness but also assure people with epilepsy that they are not alone". [Source: [What is Purple day | Epilepsy Society](#)]

Introducing Zach's law

In May 2020, Zach Eagling, then aged 8 and still at primary school, was undertaking a challenge at home to complete 2.6km in laps around his back yard to raise £2,600 for the Epilepsy Society. Zach has cerebral palsy as well as epilepsy and this was the first time he had walked unaided, because he had left his walking aid at school and the country was in lockdown. His mum posted a video of him on Twitter and that was when everything changed.

"In an unprecedented attack, internet trolls flooded the Epilepsy Society's Twitter account with flashing images and Gifs, designed to cause seizures. They tagged the posts with key words that would be picked up by anyone who lived with seizures and specifically targeted people who were celebrating their one-year seizure free

milestone. An important day as people can apply to drive again once they have been seizure free for 12 months". As a result of Zach raising this issue, he secured the support of Professor Penney Lewis, Commissioner of Criminal Law at the Law Commission, and she recommended that government should consider a



specific offence to stop malicious trolling of people with epilepsy. "On 7 December 2022, MPs in the supreme legislative body of the United Kingdom, declared that Zach's Law – the dream of an 11-year-old lad from Liversedge - would become law across

England, Wales and Northern Ireland. That trolls would no longer menace people with epilepsy online without being brought to justice". [Source: [Zach's Law - how it happened \(epilepsysociety.org.uk\)](#)]. Watch the video of Paul Skully, MP, announcing that Zach's Law will become law: [#ZachsLaw: world leading legislation | Epilepsy Society](#)

Epileptic seizures

Any of us could potentially have a single epileptic seizure at some point in our lives. This is not the same as having epilepsy, which is a tendency to have seizures that start in the brain. Click on the link to learn more about epileptic seizures: [Epileptic seizures | Epilepsy Society](#)

Click on the link to read more about how epilepsy is covered as a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010: [Equality law and disability discrimination | Epilepsy Society](#)



Now discuss with your PDC how the issues that you have read about may impact upon your role as a police officer. You should consider the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. What aspects of our British Values [Democracy, Rule of Law, Respect & Tolerance, Individual Liberty] would be relevant to policing those with epilepsy?

The Epilepsy Society's confidential helpline is available for anyone affected by epilepsy, this includes you, your family and friends. **You can call the helpline on 01494 601 400.** You can also discuss your concerns with your PDC, HEI staff or your line manager in the first instance

Links:

[Epilepsy Society | Transforming lives through advocacy, research and care](#)