

When Epilepsy Funding Disappears...

What Happens to the Over 129,000 People Who Need It Most?

If the proposed FY2010 Illinois State budget becomes a reality, the impact on people with epilepsy throughout the state will be devastating. The elimination of funding will place severe limitations on Epilepsy Foundation services currently offered to individuals and families affected by epilepsy throughout the state. Impacted programs will include:

- Hispanic outreach and support
- Client/family support programs
- Individual education plan (IEP) development services for children with epilepsy
- Child/teen support and recreation programs
- Professional training programs in seizure recognition
- First aid for educators, medical professionals, and social service providers

The impact will be immediate. In just the first year following elimination of these services:

- **350 children and adults with epilepsy** who cannot afford or otherwise have no access to neurological care for their seizures will be at risk of ineffective management of their seizures, potentially resulting in loss of employment, loss of driving privileges, inadequate special education services, and increased emergency room visits and hospital admissions.
- **449 Hispanics affected by epilepsy** will lose Spanish-language support groups, assistance with accessing medical care, client/family epilepsy education, coordinated case management services, and employment/housing/education/advocacy services.
- **2,340 people with epilepsy** will no longer have local resources for epilepsy information and one-on-one case management.
- **387 adults with epilepsy and parents of children with epilepsy** will have no local options for sharing resources with and getting support from other families similarly affected by epilepsy.
- **360 children and teens with epilepsy** will not have assistance in developing IEPs specific to their medical, academic, and psychosocial needs.
- **368 children and teens with epilepsy** will have no support and recreational opportunities with other youth with epilepsy.
- **356 camp and youth program staff** will lose training in how to respond to seizures.
- **2,032 teachers** and other school personnel, **331 school nurses**, **920 other medical providers**, **1,093 students** in grades K–12, **2,092 social service providers**, and **211 first responders** will not receive training and information on appropriate recognition, response, and management of seizures and epilepsy.

More than 129,000 people in Illinois—that's one out of every 100 people—have epilepsy. And for over 60 years, they have turned to their local Epilepsy Foundation affiliate for education, support, advocacy, and unparalleled individualized services. Don't let 2009 be the end of the road. Keep epilepsy services alive and strong in Illinois.
