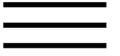


Improving understanding, promoting social inclusion, and fostering empowerment related to epilepsy: Epilepsy Foundation public awareness campaignsâ€™2001.

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Special Communication

Improving understanding, promoting social inclusion, and fostering empowerment related to epilepsy: Epilepsy Foundation public awareness campaigns â€™ 2001 through 2013

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Highlights

- â€¢ The Epilepsy Foundation and CDC have a partnership to increase awareness about epilepsy.
- â€¢ We reviewed epilepsy public awareness campaigns from 2001 to 2013.
- â€¢ Public awareness campaigns were not only broad but also targeted to specific populations.

â€¢ The campaigns included traditional and social media, and celebrity spokespersons.

Abstract

It is a significant public health concern that epilepsy, the fourth most common neurological disorder in the United States, is generally poorly understood by both the public and those living with the condition. Lack of understanding may magnify the challenges faced by those with epilepsy, including limiting treatment opportunities, effective management of symptoms, and full participation in daily life activities. Insufficient awareness of epilepsy and appropriate seizure first aid among the public and professionals can result in insufficient treatment, inappropriate seizure response, physical restraint, social exclusion, or other negative consequences. To address the need for increased public education and awareness about epilepsy, the national Epilepsy Foundation, supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has conducted yearly multifaceted public education and awareness campaigns designed to reach the broad population and targeted segments of the population including youth, young adults, racial/ethnic groups (i.e., African-, Hispanic-, and Asian-Americans), and people with epilepsy and their caregivers. Campaign channels have included traditional media, social media, and community opinion leaders and celebrity spokespersons. The key activities of these campaigns, conducted from 2001 to 2013, are summarized in this report.



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Keywords

Epilepsy; Seizures; Stigma; Health communication; Public awareness campaigns

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- † Disclaimer: The findings and conclusions in this study are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- 1 Self-employed consultant.

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