

LABOUR WOES

Canadians living with epilepsy report workplace barriers

The Impact of Epilepsy on Canadians survey, the first of its kind in Canada, was conducted to provide an in-depth look at how Canadian adults living with the disorder are impacted with respect to quality of life, health and access to care and treatment. Among the top challenges, respondents identified workplace barriers as a clear burden.

Half of survey respondents stated that their job choices are limited and 39% felt they couldn't get a job if they disclosed they have epilepsy. Marcel, a police officer in Ontario who was diagnosed with epilepsy as an adult, attests to these particular limitations.



Marcel
A police officer in Ontario.

"Early on I made a clear decision to steer my career toward the operational side of the police force, rather than administration. This was my preference," said Marcel. "Unfortunately, my

diagnosis with epilepsy meant that I had to switch focus. I now have little choice but to work behind a desk rather than out in the community."

Marcel's story rings true for many Canadians living with epilepsy. According to the survey, the belief that one's job choices are limited steadily increases with seizure frequency. Among the 50 per cent who believe their job choices are limited, most (75 per cent) classify themselves as having uncontrolled epilepsy.

"We have known anecdotally that people living with uncontrolled epilepsy face significant barriers in terms of finding and maintaining employment across the country," said Gail Dempsey, President of the Canadian Epilepsy Alliance (CEA). "*The Impact of Epilepsy on Canadians* survey verifies this challenge and confirms that the central issues faced by our community include a lack of knowledge about the disorder and misinformation about its real impact in the workplace."

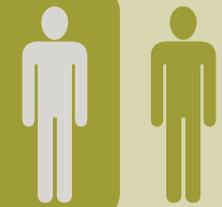
According to the CEA, lack of awareness and resulting misunderstanding create unnecessary fear and anxiety for both employers and their employees with epilepsy. Specific concerns include disclosure, accommodation, safety and liability.

"Though my role has shifted, I am taking advantage of the situation and planning to implement programs that introduce epilepsy education to the police force," said Marcel. "It is my hope to break down some of the workplace barriers we face. I appreciate the support I have from the officers and staff in my new role, and in their willingness to assist in educating others about epilepsy."

Please visit www.E-Action.ca to learn more about epilepsy and how to live well with the condition.

HOW DO CANADIANS WITH EPILEPSY FEEL ABOUT WORK?

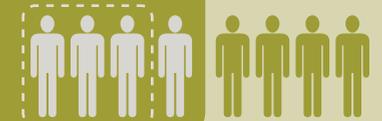
50% of respondents feel their job choices are limited



39% of Canadians say they can't get a job if they disclose they have epilepsy



Among the 50% who believe their job choices are limited, 75% have uncontrolled epilepsy



Ontarians are more likely than Quebecers to believe they can't get a job if they disclose they have epilepsy (46% vs. 30%)



Source: *The Impact of Epilepsy on Canadians* survey, conducted by Leger Marketing (2011). A sample of 671 Canadians living with epilepsy were surveyed. A probability sample of the same size would yield a margin of error of +/-3.8%, 19 times out of 20.

The survey was funded by UCB Canada Inc. UCB aspires to be a patient-centric global biopharmaceutical leader, transforming the lives of people living with severe diseases like epilepsy.