



STRONGER TOGETHER

MEDIA CONTACT:

Marikate Taylor

Information & Communications Coordinator

[mtaylor@efepa.org](mailto:mtaylor@efepa.org)

215-629-5003 x. 100

## **Epilepsy Foundation of Eastern Pennsylvania Demands Increased Medical Marijuana Access and Research**

Philadelphia, PA, April 4, 2014- The Epilepsy Foundation Eastern Pennsylvania (EFPEPA) will answer the call of its constituents and defend the rights of patients and families to secure full access to physician directed treatment options, including medical marijuana. The EFPEPA is proud to join the national Epilepsy Foundation by urging physicians, legislators and the general public to consider the potentially life changing effect new and alternative treatments can offer. *30% of people with individuals with epilepsy live with uncontrolled seizures and approximately 1 out of 1,000 people with epilepsy will die from Sudden Unexplained Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP.)* **Medical marijuana has the potential to save their lives.** As such, the Foundation is resolute that the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) end restrictions that limit clinical trials and research into medical marijuana for epilepsy.

### **The Epilepsy Foundation of Eastern Pennsylvania will be doing the following to support improved access and research into medical marijuana:**

1. Calling on the Drug Enforcement Administration to implement a lesser schedule for marijuana so that it can be more easily accessible for medical research.
2. Supporting appropriate changes to Pennsylvania state laws to increase access to medical marijuana as a treatment option for epilepsy, including pediatric use as supported by a treating physician.
3. Advocating for the inclusion of epilepsy as a condition that uses medical marijuana as a treatment option where it is currently available.
4. Supporting research on multiple forms of cannabis and seizures.

“We refuse to take a back seat while children and adults are denied access to a potentially life-saving treatment for epilepsy,” states Allison McCartin, Executive Director. “There are a lot of myths and misunderstandings about medical marijuana that stand in its way. We hope that Pennsylvanians will take the time to visit our website and learn the true facts.”

Presently, the EFPEPA is encouraging constituents to learn more about medical marijuana and consider signing a White House petition for the DEA to reschedule marijuana to a lower level for research purposes (available here: <http://bit.ly/epilepsywhitehouse>.) The EFPEPA will continue to work towards encouraging new research and advocating for local Pennsylvanian’s who struggle every day with the threat of seizures. For more information, visit [www.efepa.org](http://www.efepa.org).

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### **About Epilepsy**

When a person has two or more unprovoked seizures, they have epilepsy, which affects more than 2 million people in the United States and 65 million people worldwide. There are an estimated 110,000 individuals living with epilepsy in Eastern Pennsylvania and countless more that remain undiagnosed. Despite all available treatments, 4 out of 10 people with epilepsy continue to experience uncontrolled seizures while many more experience less than optimal seizure control.

### **About the Epilepsy Foundation of Eastern Pennsylvania**

The Epilepsy Foundation Eastern Pennsylvania is the only organization in the area that addresses the non-medical issues and needs of those with epilepsy/seizure disorder through education, support and advocacy. The EFEPa is a 501(c)3 certified not-for-profit health agency and is an affiliate of the Epilepsy Foundation of America. Tax-id number 23-182279.