



MEDIA RELEASE

WHAT: Purple Day For Epilepsy

WHERE: Worldwide

WHEN: Thursday 26 March 2020

WHY: To raise awareness and spread information about one of the world's most common serious brain disorders – epilepsy. Go [HERE](#) for more information

Purple Day for Epilepsy is recognised worldwide on **26 March**. Each March local community Purple Heroes raise awareness and vital funds to assist Queenslanders living with epilepsy. Carseldine has its own Purple Hero, Grace Adams.

Grace Adams has had the toughest two years of her life. In 2018 she graduated with distinction from her nursing degree and landed her dream job at a Brisbane based hospital. It was on her first day of work when she went in for a routine eye check that her life took a turn. "I had optic nerve swelling which we learnt was a result from excess fluid in my brain," says Grace. After this, Grace was diagnosed with a rare disease called Idiopathic Intracranial Hypertension. "It was a complete shock and my life had to completely stop as I had severe side effects from the medication and ended up having brain surgery."

A few months after surgery, Grace returned back to work and had just completed a busy night shift when she collapsed. "Having your first seizure is really daunting. I woke up completely disorientated and afraid of what had just happened." As it turns out, Grace had a tonic clonic seizure which resulted in her diagnosis with Adult Onset Generalised Epilepsy.

"It was completely devastating. Even as a health professional, I didn't know the toll that it would have on my life. I wasn't able to work or drive for six months and it took away a lot of my independence."

"The year after that was extremely hard as even after I was cleared to start work, the trauma from what I experienced made it really hard for me to adjust and I ended up leaving my dream job. I then sought a second opinion and had the worst three weeks of my life as I was weaned off my medication, which resulted in me ending up in hospital again."

Grace says it wasn't until then that she actually came to terms with her diagnosis. "Acceptance was the hardest part of it for me, I am still grieving the loss of my past life. Epilepsy takes a lot more of a mental toll than anyone talks about."

Now 23, Grace is ready to start her life again. Although she is still undergoing tests for her most recent symptoms, she is busier than ever. "I am studying my Masters

of Clinical Education, which I never thought I would do. I also have my own wedding and birthday cake company which I find to be an amazing creative outlet." She also wants to start her own YouTube channel and blog to help spread awareness. "If I can help others then I know that all of this wasn't for nothing."

Grace speaks fondly of Epilepsy Queensland Inc. "I reached out to them when I was originally diagnosed. Even as a registered nurse, I had no idea what was going on." Since then, Grace says that she finds the support groups and meet and greets to be extremely comforting. "They even call me just to check in and see how I am going which really makes me feel understood and supported."

This Purple Day, Grace says that she is going to have a purple themed day with purple cupcakes and manicures before meeting her peers and the Epilepsy Queensland team at Southbank to celebrate. "I am so happy that it is almost Purple Day. Even though I am still under-going testing, I am happy to have something to look forward to and have a day to spread awareness."

Commented [M1]: Where are we hosting it this year?

Anyone can be a part of Purple Day during March - the national epilepsy awareness month by:

- Supporting your local fundraiser
- Having fun with all things purple, the internationally recognised colour for epilepsy!
- Hosting purple events in school and at work such as dress up days and themed morning teas.
- Buying Purple day merchandise from Epilepsy Queensland's website or a participating Pharmacy.

To support Purple Day or find out more about epilepsy visit our website:
epilepsyqueensland.com.au.

MEDIA: If you would like further information or are interested in setting up an interview or photo opportunity, please contact Epilepsy Queensland's Communications Manager, Karen Furnivall on 07 3435 5000 / 0402 578 954 / kfurnivall@epilepsyqueensland.com.au. Photos can also be made available.

[Epilepsy Queensland Inc.](#) was founded in 1969 and provides vital services and support to the 100,000 Queenslanders diagnosed with epilepsy. Through counselling services, guided workshops, and community advocacy Epilepsy Queensland is the only Queensland based epilepsy organisation dedicated to improving the quality of life of people with epilepsy, their carers and families.