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**Terms of Reference**

The **European Advocates for Epilepsy Working Group** is a group of cross‐party, cross‐national MEPs with particular interest in epilepsy. The group has a President who chairs the Group and can have up to four Vice-Presidents, who are elected by the members of the group. The President for the term 2014-2019 is Mr Brian Hayes MEP with Vice-President Mrs Nathalie Griesbeck MEP.

**Mission Statement**

The aim of the **European Advocates for Epilepsy Working Group** is to improve the quality of life of all people with epilepsy, their families, care‐givers and healthcare providers through European Union (EU) policy.

In particular, by providing a network for the exchange of experience, information and data on epilepsy between all interested stakeholders, the **European Advocates for Epilepsy Working Group** serves to:

* introduce impetus to the development, introduction and implementation of a targeted EU epilepsy strategy, in the form of an EU Council Recommendation on epilepsy diagnosis, management, education and research;
* address specific EU and national policies which have a potential positive or negative impact on the lives of people with epilepsy.

**Policy Objectives**

The key policy objectives of the **European Advocates for Epilepsy Working Group** are:

1. **Public Health:** to have epilepsy viewed as an EU public health priority and support cross­sectoral policies and legislation that promote awareness, diagnosis and management of the disease;
2. **Research:** to secure increased funding and improved coordination in epilepsy research;
3. **Education:** to ensure that the general population, including people with epilepsy, have clear and accurate information on epilepsy;
4. **Employment & social affairs:** to support EU policies and legislation that prevent discrimination against people with epilepsy in all aspects of their lives, including education and employment;
5. **Rights of persons with epilepsy:** to ensure that EU healthcare policies and legislation adequately safeguard the rights and safety of persons with epilepsy.

**Structure and Membership**

Members of the **European Advocates for Epilepsy Working Group** commit to provide the following support over the period 2014‐2019:

1. Attending meetings of the **European Advocates for Epilepsy Working Group** on a regular basis – approximately three times each year;
2. Providing advice to the epilepsy community on how best to advance their policy objectives both in the European Parliament and more widely;
3. Participating in roundtable or discussion groups in the European Parliament, and in member states, to address those problems faced by people with epilepsy and to advocate new policy initiatives;
4. Sharing information with colleagues at both EU and national levels;
5. Supporting the epilepsy community in shaping policies that will impact positively on epilepsy by tabling amendments, oral or written questions and resolutions; by communicating with relevant Commissioners; and by organising targeted events on specific policy issues.

MEPs who become members of the **European Advocates for Epilepsy Working Group** receive a certificate confirming their membership as well as regular updates on important developments in the field of epilepsy policy.

*September 2014*