

Annual Congress on

Rare Diseases & Orphan Drugs

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Epilepsy & rescue meds in schools

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Statement of the Problem: While there are many other conditions, syndromes and diseases that both faculty & staff at public schools are comfortable and encouraged to administer rescue meds. Epilepsy remains a strange and scary thing. The over-all issue, especially in Utah is from school nurses not administering medications and not having enough nurses to cover schools.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: By encouraging staff buy-in and advocating with school nurses, the Epilepsy Association of Utah hopes to make seizure med training the norm in schools, not just in Utah, but across the country.

Findings: This does not seem to be a local problem only affecting those with epilepsy in Utah, but other states as well. Epilepsy affects more people than multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy. Muscular dystrophy and Parkinson's disease combined! Yet, epilepsy receives less funding than each of them individually. Just the use of the name "epilepsy & seizure disorders" creates a stigma for many people. Epilepsy still seems strange and foreign, even while 1 in 3 know someone with epilepsy. 1 in 10 will have a seizure in their lifetime. 1 in 26 will be diagnosed with epilepsy. By increasing public knowledge and awareness, through concerted efforts and outreach, we can show that not only are rescue meds important but also that failure to administer them endangers safety and violates various statutes and federal laws. Seizures can be scary for those who aren't used to seeing them and those who are used to it. With a little training, however, our public schools can be more seizure-friendly. No parent should have to worry that while at school, their child may have a medical need that won't be addressed.

Biography

Tyson E Dewsnup has served as the Chairman of the Board of the Epilepsy Association of Utah since July 2016. Earlier he has served as the Associate Vice President of Programs. Outside of his service with the Epilepsy Association of Utah, he has served on various other non-profit boards in the public and private sector. He has a Bachelor of Science in Human Resource Management and is currently working on both his MBA and MHA. Aside from his board service, he is a Practice Supervisor for Intermountain Medical Group, a Physician and medical practice subsidiary of Intermountain Healthcare.

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