

Dear [REDACTED]

**Response to Regulation 28 Report – Action to Prevent Future Deaths** – 12 February 2021

My apologies for the somewhat late reply to your request. I can advise the following.

**Epilepsy Action's current position**

Our five advice and information officers were asked if blocked doors was a significant or frequent enquiry. Two said they had never encountered this. Three who have had calls on this subject report it to be a rare and infrequent occurrence. When it has happened it has related to bathrooms or toilets (small rooms) with inward opening doors where a person has had (or could have) a seizure, loses consciousness and becomes wedged against the door in the tight space preventing the door from being opened. The concern raised is not so much that it has happened but that the risk has been identified by the person concerned and they want to avoid it.

The low level of enquiries means our advice and information service doesn't have a category specific to this issue. Enquiries of this nature would be classified under the general category of 'safety'. In 2019, our Helpline advice and information service was used 11,771 times. 102 enquiries (0.87%) were about 'safety' in all its forms. In addition, there were 147 enquiries (1.25%) about daily living aids or adaptations which might also be relevant here.

**What our current advice and information says**

Within our website advice and information section is a page <https://www.epilepsy.org.uk/info/daily-life/safety/practical-guidance>

Here we advise the following:

- *Have a bathroom door that opens outwards, or folds or slides open and closed. Then, if you fall against it during a seizure, you won't block someone from getting in*

Our written advice references bathroom doors only. This reflects the enquiries we receive. The same advice could be extended to any door to any confined space. We will make this amendment to our online information by the end of June 2021. Relevant printed information is due for reprint in July 2021. We will update this in the same way at that time.

The verbal advice given by our officers responds to the specific nature of the enquiry being dealt with. Currently, if appropriate, we already extend our advice to cover all doors to any confined space. This will continue.

**What else we will do**

During the course of 2021 we will publish an article in our magazine Epilepsy Today to raise awareness about this issue. This will include referencing and signposting people to sources of funding that might be available such as grants for home adaptations.

During the course of 2021 we will notify our healthcare professional contacts about what we're doing and why so as to increase their awareness about the issue and to guide them in providing appropriate advice to their patients.

We will continue to monitor the number and type of enquiries we receive on this topic and adapt our responding materials accordingly.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]



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