

Epilepsy kills. The mortality rate for people living with epilepsy is three times that of the general population. Epilepsy related seizures can lead to falls, burns and fatal injuries. Drowning accounts for around 10% of all deaths in children and young people with epilepsy. Prolonged seizures and status epilepticus have a 30% mortality rate and Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP) claims the lives of around 1 in 1000 people with epilepsy each year.

Many of the causes of epilepsy mortality are preventable and treatable. Effective seizure control can be achieved for most patients with relatively low-cost medication. For some patients, surgery offers the possibility of long-term seizure freedom. Early and appropriate emergency treatment of seizures reduces morbidity and fatalities. Research into SUDEP is beginning to provide answers to this condition that causes so much tragedy to so many families.

The International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) is working with health professionals and researchers around the world to improve diagnosis, care and treatment. Given the high rates of morbidity and mortality associated with epilepsy ILAE is calling for:

- Urgent action to reduce the unacceptable global treatment gap - currently only one in five people worldwide have access to safe and effective anti-seizure medicines
- All first aid programs to include seizure first aid as part of their curricular
- Better training and regulatory support for first responders to ensure that emergency rescue medicines are accessible and used quickly to control seizures
- Strengthened multidisciplinary approaches to improve outcomes for patients with status epilepticus
- More research into preventing SUDEP

ILAE would like to thank Member States and WHO for their commitment to the 2022-2031 Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders (IGAP) and look forward to continuing to work with all partners to achieve these targets.