At the end of the 19th century, epilepsy was largely misunderstood and stigmatised. Employment prospects for people with the condition were virtually non-existent. Many ended up in the workhouses or asylums of Victorian England. It was against this hostile environment that a pioneering group of neurologists took the revolutionary step to found a colony for people with epilepsy where they could work. And in 1892, they chose Chalfont St Peter to establish what would become a beacon of hope for people with epilepsy.

Epilepsy Society is one of the oldest charities operating in the UK today.

By 1900 the site at Skippings Farm provided seven homes for 90 men and over 40 women. Employment was key, as was fresh air and nutrition. And the peer support of meeting others with epilepsy for the first time, meant that for many people, their seizures improved dramatically. And in between seizures, people with epilepsy led ‘normal’ lives.

The Chalfont ‘colony’ was based on the theory that an outdoor life and intellectual and physical activities were “a very great help in the restoration of nervous equilibrium, and in the occasional cure of the disease. ” (Sir William Broadbент)

By the late 1960s, the centre became known as “The Chalfont Centre for Epilepsy”. Homes were modernised and employment options improved. The emphasis moved towards empowering people admitted on a short-term basis, to resume their lives outside. These radical changes helped ensure the Society continued to lead the way in the medical care and rehabilitation of people with epilepsy.

The EEG department was updated with the latest diagnostic equipment. And a research unit began investigating the side effects of medication. Numerous scientific papers were published by the medical team.

Our vision today is a full life for everyone affected by epilepsy. Like our founding fathers, we are still pushing forward the boundaries of the treatment of epilepsy. We use the very latest diagnostic equipment. And a research unit and biologists investigate the side effects of medication and scientific papers were published by the medical team.

We've received multiple visits from the Royal Family over the years, including our patron, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Charles. Of course, we continue to provide high quality residential care for people with severe conditions, as well as advocating for those with epilepsy.

Our goal is to find the right treatment, at the right dose, from the point of diagnosis. We are still pushing forward the boundaries of the treatment of epilepsy. We use the very latest diagnostic equipment. And a research unit and biologists investigate the side effects of medication and scientific papers were published by the medical team.

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Our vision is to be at the forefront of excellence in medicine, ensuring future generations are free from the life-changing effects of epilepsy.

The ultimate goals of our current research are to spearhead personalised treatment and to incorporate genomic diagnosis into the NHS for people with epilepsy.

epilepsysociety.org.uk/research

World leading research

Unlocking the code through genomics

Genomic medicine has the potential to transform the way we care for people with epilepsy. We believe that whole genome sequencing will help us to unravel the way that genes contribute to the different types of epilepsy.

epilepsysociety.org.uk/genomics

Neuroimaging

Funded by the Wellcome Trust and the Department of Health, EpiNav™ (Epilepsy Navigator) enables more sophisticated and accurate brain surgery for epilepsy, increasing the numbers of people who can become seizure free.

epilepsysociety.org.uk/neuroimaging

Artificial Intelligence

Our researchers are using machine learning – or Artificial Intelligence – to teach computers how to read brain scans where the human eye is unable to detect abnormalities.

epilepsysociety.org.uk/ai

Today

The future

Our mission will always remain the same – ensuring everyone affected by epilepsy has the best opportunity for a full life. We will combine our cutting-edge research, our leading awareness campaigns and our specialist medical care to ensure this happens.

Helpline
01494 601 400
Monday and Tuesday 9am to 4pm, Wednesday 9am to 7.30pm.
Confidential, national call rate.
Information and emotional support.

/epilepsysociety

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