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# Proclamation

*Purple Day for Epilepsy  
March 24*

- WHEREAS: Purple Day is a global effort dedicated to promoting epilepsy awareness in countries around the world and;
- WHEREAS: Purple Day was founded by nine-year-old Cassidy Megan of Nova Scotia who wanted to let people know that if you have epilepsy, you are not alone, and,
- WHEREAS: Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological conditionS, estimated to effect over 10,000 people in Newfoundland and Labrador, over 300,00 people in Canada, and 50 million people worldwide; and,
- WHEREAS: One in ten persons will have at least one seizure during his or her lifetime; and,
- WHEREAS: The public is often unable to recognize common seizure types, or how to respond with appropriate first aid; and,
- WHEREAS: Purple Day will be celebrated on March 24, annually to increase understanding, reduce stigma and improve the quality of life for people with epilepsy throughout the country and globally:

THEREFORE: Be it resolved that I, Joedy Wall, of, Pauch Cove do hereby proclaim March 24 as Purple Day in an effort to raise awareness and understanding of epilepsy and to support all those who live with seizures each day.

Dated this 13<sup>th</sup> day of March, 20 17

  
Signature



# Epilepsy Newfoundland and Labrador

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February 2017

My name is Deidre Skinner and I am a 17 year old student at Exploits Valley High, Grand Falls-Windsor. I am a typical 17 year old who enjoys spending time with friends and participating in various activities such as voice, swimming, Fundamentals Family Fitness, Social Action, Leadership, and Grad Steering, and my passion, Figure Skating. I do well in school and have Honours, thanks to the support of my family, teachers and administrators past and present who have guided me on my journey. I am hoping to study Kinesiology at Memorial University in 2017. Although I am active and I am a conscientious student, I have a seizure disorder.

In December 2009, my mother and I were sat at the kitchen table playing Mastermind. Although it was unknown to me at the time, my mom noticed me grasp onto the placemat suddenly for no apparent reason. Over time, she began to notice starring episodes and babbling about things that didn't make sense. She started to monitor me closely and believed these episodes were seizures and I visited my family doctor. From there, I was referred for an EEG in February 2010. The EEG showed abnormalities on the right side of my brain. A few days later, I had a CAT scan which led to the diagnosis of a brain tumor. The diagnosis came as a shock to me and my family and we were all devastated by the news. At the time I didn't realize the seriousness of having a brain tumor. My biggest concern was not being able to skate and missing the Kiwanis Music Festival. I immediately had to start taking seizure medication and one week after my diagnosis in 2010, I underwent brain surgery at the Janeway Children's Hospital. Fortunately, my tumor was removed and it was determined that it was benign, which was a huge relief; however, I did have to continue to take seizure medication. After recovery I returned to school and 6 months after surgery I returned to skating. Nothing made me happier than getting to return to the ice and skating again. I wasn't going to let the ordeal interfere with my skating or my schooling. I was seizure free for about 8 months... but the seizures started again.

Over the next 5 years I tried different medications to try to control my seizures but to no avail. My seizures became more frequent over time. Despite the challenges, I refused to let my seizures interfere with my activities, my school work, or skating. I always tried to persevere despite the obstacles. Since we couldn't get my seizures controlled with medications, I was referred to the SickKids Hospital in Toronto. I spent a week in the Epilepsy Unit where they ran a battery of tests. More testing was done at the Janeway and it was determined that I was a candidate for another brain surgery that would hopefully stop my seizures or at least reduce them. I made the decision, with the support of my family, to have the surgery. In 2015, I had a Right Temporal Lobectomy at the Toronto SickKids hospital. I had to continue to take seizure medication and will continue to do so for a while but I am happy to say that I have been seizure free ever since the second brain surgery. Since my initial diagnosis I have achieved numerous awards through skating, qualifying for the NL Winter Games and to the Atlantic Figure Skating Competitions in Halifax. As well, I have achieved many academic successes at school. Just recently on January 9, 2017 I obtained my Driver's License. Driving was something I never thought I would be able to do but the second brain surgery has made that possible.

One thing I've learned through this entire experience is not to give up and always believe in yourself. There were times during my journey when it would have been easier for me to give up on everything, but I always believed I was capable of accomplishing anything I set my mind to. I kept fighting and I proved to myself that anything is possible. My journey has taught me life lessons and has shaped me into the person I am today - strong, determined, and compassionate. While we cannot change the hand we were dealt, we can certainly take our challenges and use it as motivation to achieve anything we set our mind to.

March is Epilepsy month and a time to bring awareness to people living with this neurological disorder. I would ask you to join with me and Epilepsy NL as we use this opportunity to bring epilepsy out of the shadows.



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Epilepsy Newfoundland and Labrador would like to see those all living with epilepsy feel as good as Christine does but unfortunately not everyone has such a positive experience. We would like you to help us change that.

March 24<sup>th</sup> is Purple Day, a global initiative to help end the stigma associated with epilepsy and let those living with seizures know they are not alone.

Last year, here in Newfoundland and Labrador, close to 4000 people from all corners of our great province hopped, danced, took to social media, donated their spare change, held events, shared information and most of all, wore their purple proudly.

On March 24<sup>th</sup>, Newfoundland and Labradoreans can once again take one simple step to show individuals and families who face epilepsy, that we understand, and they are not alone: we will wear purple. We will do so for people like Deidre, and the other 10,000 people of this province who live with seizures every day.

Will you stand with us?

- **Sign the Purple Day Commitment.** A copy of the Purple Day commitment is attached confirming your support. Please email this commitment to us at [info@epilepsynl.com](mailto:info@epilepsynl.com) or fax it to us at 709-722-0999, so that we can promote your participation as a part of our Purple Day for Epilepsy events on our website and we can share your status on social media.
- On March 24<sup>th</sup> please wear an Epilepsy ribbon and take to Social Media to announce your support for Purple Day. There is a large amount of stigma and misunderstanding surrounding Epilepsy and we can use technology to help educate the public, while supporting those diagnosed with Epilepsy. Talk about Purple Day on Twitter, Facebook and any other venue that will get the word out there. We will share all your messages on our social media pages, as well as our website.

Imagine how inspiring it could be if for one day, everyone in the province wore Purple for Epilepsy.

With your help we can make Newfoundland and Labrador positively purple!

We thank you for your continuous support and look forward to celebrating and sharing this day with you and the rest of the province.

Sincerely,

Gail Dempsey

Executive Director, Epilepsy Newfoundland and Labrador

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