

NEWS RELEASE

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Preston hosts Epilepsy conference

Epilepsy Action, the leading epilepsy charity, is organising a major conference in Preston for people with epilepsy, their families, and professionals with an interest in the condition, to update themselves on the latest developments in epilepsy care and treatments.

Epilepsy affects 440,000 or one in every 133 people in the UK and it can affect anyone, at any age and from any walk of life. Yet the majority of people with epilepsy can continue to take part in the same activities as everyone else, with the help of simple safety measures and many youngsters 'grow out of' epilepsy in adult life.

The conference, hosted and supported by the University of Central Lancashire will be held on Saturday 17 April. It will provide a valuable opportunity for those with the condition to meet others, talk to Epilepsy Action staff and find out about developments in treatment and research.

UCLan Lecturer and Chair of Epilepsy Action's Preston Branch, Ian Wardle has lived with epilepsy for most of his life and will be taking an active part in the conference. He says: "Even though epilepsy is the most common serious neurological condition, there is still a lack of understanding of how it can affect a person's life and this inevitably leads to discrimination in the workplace and makes it difficult to obtain all types of insurance.

"Bringing together such eminent specialist speakers at a conference like this obviously gives everyone attending the opportunity to share the best practices available and to find out more about the level of care in the North West."

The conference is one of a regular series of events held around the country to raise awareness of epilepsy and to help combat discrimination against those who have the condition. For more information about the Preston Branch of Epilepsy Action, contact either Joanne Baker on 0113 210 8800 or Sue Blake on 01226 723292 or look for details on the website www.epilepsy.org.uk. There is also a Freephone helpline 0800 800 5050 for general information about epilepsy.

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-Note to editors follows-

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Note: The conference, 'Epilepsy Action: Making Choices', will be held in the Greenbank Building, University of Central Lancashire from 9.30am to 4.30pm on **Saturday 17th April 2004**. Journalists and photographers are welcome to attend. Please contact Pam Culley, UCLan Press Office, 01772 894425 or Liz Kelly, Conference Services, 07970 155 821 for further information.