



Client Handbook

About Epilepsy Foundation –McHenry County Office

Epilepsy Foundation North/Central IL (EFNCIL) is a non-for-profit organization that provides case management, advocacy and education. We served McHenry County residents with Epilepsy and Brain Injury.

Here at EFNCIL we have developed a nationally recognized model of care that includes an Epileptologist, a Mental Health APN, an Epilepsy/Brain Injury NP, and a Nurse clinician; all RUSH Medical Center employees. We also have a bilingual case management team to provides comprehensive care to our clients.

Our Vision

A world where everyone has access to cutting edge epilepsy care within their community.

Our Mission

EFNCIL leads to fight to stop seizures, find a cure, and overcome the challenges created by epilepsy.

Our Services

1. Case Management

Case Managers work with each individual to facilitate appropriate access to epilepsy and brain injury services. Case Managers coordinate with the medical team and other social service providers. Case Managers participate as needed in the development of the Individual treatment Plans (ITP). They assist the client with follow through that is outlined in their individual plans and they provide advocacy in such areas as Individual Education Plans (IEPs), employment, and civil rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Case Managers also connect clients with community resources, transportation, and provide linkages to ancillary services. They provide training for schools including education for staff, nurses, and other providers.

2. Medical Team

Our medical team is composed of an Epileptologist, a Mental Health APN, an Epilepsy/Brain Injury NP, and a Nurse clinician, all RUSH Medical Center employees.

- a) *Dr Marvin Rossi, MD, PhD* –Dr Rossi serves as Medical Director of EFNCIL McHenry County Office. He provides personalized treatment that focuses on touching all aspects of the individual’s life including psychosocial, physical, and emotional health. He evaluates, monitors, and manages epilepsy clients in inpatient and outpatient settings, performs evaluations, interprets diagnostic testing, ambulatory and continuous video-EEG monitoring. Services are provided through clinic visits and telemedicine visits in our offices.
- b) *Nadine Wengroff, APN* –Nadine provides individual assessment, diagnosis and treatment to meet the mental health needs of our clients. This includes prescribing and monitoring medications as

well as provision of individual therapy services. Mental health services are coordinated with other medical services and promote adherence to the individual care plan.

- c) *Laurie Sabol, NP* –Laurie provides general and preventative care, conducts check-ups, treats illnesses, orders diagnostic tests and prescribes medication for our clients. Laurie provides individual treatment that focuses on physical and psychological well-being.
- d) *Kellie Kelley, RN* –Kellie serves as the contact point, advocate and information resource for our clients and their caregivers. Kellie is a liaison between the client and the pharmacies, insurance companies and other providers.

3. Advocacy and Education

We help individuals learn about their legal rights and/or educational rights as a person with disabilities. We provide education to the community, to other providers, employers, schools, families, and individuals on a wide range of epilepsy and brain injury topics. Case Managers can attend IEP meetings and are available to provide expertise on school accommodations, seizure plans, and general information about epilepsy and brain injury to school personnel, students, families, employers, and providers.

4. Support Groups

Epilepsy/Brain Injury Support Group—The epilepsy support group focuses on epilepsy and brain injury education and peer support. A variety of topics are discussed and group members have an opportunity to share information with peers. Socialization and communication skills are emphasized in this group and attendees have the opportunity to meet others who may be struggling with similar difficulties or share similar interests. This group meets on the third Tuesday of the month at 6:00pm at the McHenry County Mental Health Board.

Skill building groups—These groups meet weekly, each for one hour with focus on providing peer support, socialization opportunities, focus on healthy living and education on a variety of topics to keep your brain sharp. Regular group topics are listed on the following pages.

Targeted skills groups—These groups meet on an intermittent basis and provide targeted skills training on specific topics of interest. Recent targeted skills topics have included cooking classes, art classes, technology skills, and community gardening.

5. Representative payee services

In coordination with the Social Security Administration, EFNCIL is available to act as a representative payee to assist individuals in managing their SSDI and/or SSI benefits. This service requires application through the Social Security Administration and the main duties of a representative payee are to pay monthly expenses for basic needs such as food, shelter, and clothing. A payee must also keep records of expenses and provide an accounting as requested by SSA regarding use of these benefits. Rep-payee accounts do not earn interest.

6. Skills Groups

Cognitive Skills –This class addresses various cognitive topics in multi-week sessions. Curricula focus on improving thinking skills for such activities as reading, following instructions, improved memory, organizational skills, managing time and problem solving. Cognitive skills classes provide an excellent opportunity to nourish and exercise your brain. Peer support is utilized to learn and share strategies with others.

Readers' Choice Book Club –This is a book club which meets weekly to discuss articles, books, poetry, and other forms of creative expression. Topics and books are chosen by group members who have an opportunity to improve reading and comprehension skills, expressive communication skills, and utilize memory strategies as well as have a chance to process, discuss, and socialize with others. Audio books are frequently utilized.

Yoga/Meditation –This class provides a combination of chair yoga movements and meditation exercises. Studies have shown that a combination of yoga and meditation is effective for easing memory problems, pain, and depression for people with neurologic conditions. Physical improvements may also include increased flexibility and range of motion, improve balance, increased strength and decrease fatigue.

Information & Technology –This group will educate participants in the use of technology including smart phones, tablets, and computers. Managing passwords, accessing the internet, avoiding viruses, using apps, and other related topics will be covered in this hands on class. Emphasis on technology strategies to compensate for memory loss, promote improved organization, cognitive skills and planning will also be included (*minimum of 4 participants required*).

Peer Support –This group meets weekly before a cognitive skills class to share information with each other and to develop a social support system. Group members share similar concerns and interests and are able to provide resources and strategies with each other. The group arranges occasional community based activities.

7. Linkage and Referrals

We provide linkage and resources for benefits, transportation, housing, behavioral health, employment, legal, and other topics.

Criteria requirements

1. Diagnosis of Epilepsy or be at risk of seizures.
2. Diagnosis of an acquired Brain Injury.
3. Must be a McHenry County Resident.
4. Must be 4 years old or older.

Requesting Services

1. An initial intake over the phone will be completed by the intake coordinator.
2. All clients receive case coordination services. Based on the severity of the individual's needs a Case Manager may be assign to the individual.
3. Intake documentation will be obtained, which includes releases of information, copy of State ID, copy of insurance cards, and guardianship/ Power of Attorney (POA) documentation.

4. An Individual Treatment Plan (ITP) will be developed; needs will be identified and goals will be established. The client, the Case Manager and/or the medical team develop the plan jointly.
5. For any client who has a guardian, a copy of the Guardianship documentation or Power of Attorney must be provided at the time of the intake.

Clients may withdraw from receiving EFNCIL services at any time. If a client has accomplished their goal(s), a new ITP can be written if they decide to use any additional services.

EFNCIL will not be able to provide services to any person who is unable or refuses to complete the required intake documentation.

Refusal/Discharge of Services

Refusal of services—You may refuse services suggested by members of your treatment team. You are responsible for your decision to refuse services and the consequences that may occur. If you and your treatment team cannot agree on any treatment goals that we can mutually work on, this may lead to withdrawal from services. If you decide to withdraw from services, we will assist you in finding alternate services if you prefer.

Discharge—If you decide to discharge from services or you meet the criteria for discharge by moving out of the county, choosing not to participate, refusing to follow treatment, or violating the Zero Tolerance Policy; a formal discharge plan will be formulated, this will include a summary of services you received from our office and information to other agencies/providers offering similar services.

Confidentiality Policy

It is the policy of EFNCIL and your right under the law to hold all communications, observations, and information, both written and verbal, between you and EFNCIL staff confidential. Information is kept in strictest confidence and will not be released without the client's specific written consent with the exclusion of:

- a) The Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act #325ILCS5;
- b) Risk of serious physical injury or death of a person; and
- c) Site audits required by some of the EFNCIL's funders.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA), gives you rights over your health information, including the right to get a copy of your information, make sure it is correct, and know who has seen it. When you enroll in services at EFNCIL, you will be given a *Summary of Notice of Privacy Practices* which will further explain your protections under this law and you will be asked to sign a statement that you received this information.

To discuss, report, or in any manner, share information about a client with persons other than appropriate EFNCIL staff shall require a Release of Information form signed by the client and/or guardian. Clients may revoke, in writing, any previously established Permission for Exchange or Release of Information forms at any time. EFNCIL staff, peer visitors, and volunteers involved with EFNCIL are bound by these confidentiality guidelines.

Client Rights and Responsibilities

1. You have the right to be informed of EFNCIL programs and services and be provided with the requested programs/services so that you can fulfill your goals. You have the right to determine your goals, and to be the lead person in the development of your own plan of activities to reach those goals. You have the right to determine when your goals are met or are no longer appropriate.
2. To request the provision of interpreter services or other accommodations in the process of working with EFNCIL staff when needed for full access to our services or administration.
3. You have the right to strict confidentiality regarding your interactions with any services you are receiving from EFNCIL, as outlined in this client handbook.
4. You have the right to inspect and copy any information in your EFNCIL client file upon request, as outlined in this client handbook.
5. You have the right to request a change in EFNCIL staff if you have a conflict with the EFNCIL staff member(s) assigned to work with you.
6. You have the right to appeal any action or decision made by EFNCIL staff regarding your case by following the appeal/complaint process, as outlined in this client handbook. Upon request, you have the right to receive the assistance from EFNCIL staff in the exercising this right.
7. You have the responsibility to respect the confidentiality of all other EFNCIL clients with whom you may be in contact with during groups or any other associations throughout the agency.
8. You have the responsibility to keep and be prepared for scheduled appointments unless you notify staff that you need to reschedule. You must provide a 24 hrs. notice.

Staff Rights and Responsibilities

1. To the greatest extent possible, ensure provision of requested, accessible services -through the agency directly or through referral to other organizations as needed.
2. To always respect the confidentiality of all agency's clients.
3. To be prompt and prepared for all appointments or other interactions with clients.
4. To be sensitive, respectful, and responsive to the needs of clients, being available and flexible whenever possible.
5. To inform clients of their rights as clients of EFNCIL during the initial intake. Upon request, professionally assist clients in exercising their right to use the appeal/complaint process if they are dissatisfied with the agency services.

Direct Threats and Harassment Policy

Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not require a public accommodation to permit an individual to participate in, or benefit from the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages and accommodations of that public accommodation when that individual poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. A direct threat is explained as a "*significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by modification of policies, practices or procedures, or provision of auxiliary aids or services*". A person who poses a significant risk to others may be excluded from receiving EFNCIL services if reasonable accommodations will not eliminate that risk. The determination of whether an individual presents a direct threat and warrants an exception to services will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Executive

Director and Management Team.

Zero Tolerance Policy

EFNCIL has a zero tolerance policy and will not tolerate violence, threats, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior, either physical or verbal, that occurs in the agency or other areas. This applies to members of management, co-workers, employees, and non-employees such as clients, visitors, and contractors. *Violation to this policy will result in discharge of services.*

Appeal/Complaint Policy

During the initial intake, clients will receive a client handbook detailing EFNCIL appeals/complaint process. It is the policy of the EFNCIL to provide equal and fair access to services offered to all applicants and clients, as well as to ensure that services are provided in an appropriate and professional manner. EFNCIL does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation or disability. EFNCIL has developed a procedure for the resolution of any appeal/complaint.

If you are dissatisfied with any action or inaction on the part of EFNCIL or its employees in connection with the provision of services to you, you may request an administrative review of the matter.

Your appeal/complaint:

1. Must be in writing. Assistance will be made available if requested and justified.
2. Must be addressed and forwarded to the Director of Client Services no later than thirty (30) calendar days following the date on which the incident occurred. The postmark date will be the date of record.
3. Must describe briefly the reason for the appeal/complaint including date(s), name(s), and place(s) related to the matter(s) described.
4. The Director of Client Services will notify the Executive Director of the administrative review.

A date and time for the administrative review will be set which falls within twenty (20) business days from the postmark date. You will be provided at least five (5) calendar days advance notice of the administrative review. Such notice will be in writing and will address the following:

- The date, time, and place and who will preside at the administrative review, prior to the date of the review.
- The opportunity to withdraw the request for administrative review, in writing, prior to the date of the review.
- The opportunity to request rescheduling of the review for good cause.
- The opportunity to amend the appeal/complaint prior to the date of the review.
- The opportunity to have representation of your choice.
- The opportunity to have present witnesses and/or documents relevant to the issues and not excluded by requirements of confidentiality.

A written decision will be forwarded to you by the Director of Client Services within fifteen

(15) business days following the completion of the administrative review and will include:

- The reason(s) for the decision.
- A statement that procedure described above has been completed.
- Notice of the opportunity to request a second hearing.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision resulting from the administrative review, you may, within ten (10) calendar days of your receipt of the decision, request an impartial hearing. The steps leading to the impartial hearing as well as the manner in which it is conducted will be the same as the administrative review (see pg.6 and 7) with the following exceptions:

- The impartial hearing will be presided over by the EFNCIL Executive Director who will be responsible for rendering the final decision.
- The decision of the impartial hearing will be forwarded to you within twenty (20) business days following the conclusion of the hearing and will include notice of the opportunity to file further appeal/complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, Illinois Department of Human Rights, the Client Assistance Program of the Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services 1-800-641- 3929, and/or pursue the matter through the civil courts.

Resource List

The following resources may be of assistance to you. We list the following agencies here for your convenience. This listing does not necessarily constitute the endorsement of any of these agencies by the staff, board or benefactors of EFNCIL.

DHS Family Community Resource Center in McHenry County

512 Clay St, Woodstock, IL 60098
Phone: 815-338-0234 or 800-843-6154
TTY: 866-383-1869
Fax: 815-338-0396

A State agency providing services to people with disabilities through home service and vocational rehabilitation programs.

Equipped for Equality

20 North Michigan Ave., Suite 300
Chicago, IL 60602
Phone: 312-341-0022 or 800-537-2632
TTY: 800-610-2779
Fax: 312-541-7544

Provides assistance to people with disabilities in understanding, protecting and exercising their legal and human right.

General Agency Information

Agency hours—We are open Mondays through Thursdays, 8:30am to 5:00pm and Fridays, 8:30am to 12:00pm. Evening support groups are scheduled monthly as listed on our program descriptions.

Building accessibility— While we make every effort to meet your accessibility needs, there may be times when you require assistance with doors and entry. Staff will provide assistance in mobility within reasonable accommodation.

Holiday and weather closures—Generally our holiday schedule follows the McHenry County Government Center holiday schedule. We will inform you of additional closures. Inclement weather poses another reason for closures. Should we close or cancel appointments requiring travel, we will notify you by phone.

No smoking policy—Our building is designated as a non-smoking facility. You may smoke in designated areas outside the building.

No firearms policy—Firearms are not permitted on the premises.

No alcohol/illegal drugs policy—The use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs are not permitted in our offices.

Transportation—We will provide you with information about public transportation arrangements. Additionally, some program participants rely on Medicaid for transportation. Occasionally we receive calls from these service providers verifying your appointments in our offices. We will provide this information with proper release of information permissions. Please consult staff about other transportation resources.

Program fees—Our programs and services are free of charge. They are funded by the McHenry County Mental Health Board to McHenry County residents.

Appointment cancellations—Should you need to cancel an appointment, we request that you notify us 24 hours in advance. You may call us at the general office phone number and be connected to the person with whom you have an appointment. Excessive cancellations and/or more than 3 no shows will result in restrictions from access to services.

Epilepsy Foundation North/Central IL –McHenry County Office

333 Commerce Dr, Suite 500, Crystal Lake, IL 60014

Phone: 815-893-0709 Fax: 779-220-9604

www.epilepsyheartland.org