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Epilepsy Ontario Applauds News Service for Its Work During Crisis

Axiom News stories raised awareness during critical medication shortage

When [Epilepsy Ontario](#) needed to inform its community about [a shortage of anticonvulsive medication clobazam](#) in January, the organization turned to its news service provider, Axiom News, to help spread the word.

A series of stories was posted to [Voices of Epilepsy](#), the advocacy organization's news program which appears on their website. These stories were also sent out as e-news alerts to almost 400 people about the situation. This brought attention to the clobazam shortage and the need for a national warning system to avoid potential catastrophes from occurring.

The referenced media source is missing and needs to be re-embedded.

One of the news alerts circulated during the clobazam shortage.

"When the drug issue came up ... the (Axiom News) reporter picked up on the fact that this is a really critical issue and recommended that we do a real focus on the issue of drug shortages," explains Epilepsy Ontario executive director Rozalyn Werner-Arcé, adding the stories also appeared on an aggregate news site focused on disability issues.

"The repeated stories on the same issue really helped to make an impact with the

message ... and helped people understand that (the medication shortage) really is a serious issue.”

Rozalyn says the news stories and e-news alert accomplished their mission of raising awareness about the drug shortage.

“We had someone contact us and say, ‘Wow, this is great, (I) didn’t know about this and I’m going to follow up,’ and that allowed us to tell [that person’s story](#),” she notes.

“The fact that we were able to alert people made a difference in terms of people having the opportunity to be proactive.”

For people who take clobazam, learning about the shortage was crucial. Because clobazam is not a medication people can instantly stop taking, many people needing the drug were able to contact their pharmacist and secure orders, says Rozalyn.

Epilepsy Ontario coined its news program *Voices of Epilepsy* because the organization wanted to raise the voices of people who have the neurological disorder and their families, and this is exactly what it has accomplished since it was launched in March 2012, she adds.

Looking ahead, Rozalyn says Epilepsy Ontario is planning to expand its news program.

“We’re looking forward to producing a print edition of *Voices of Epilepsy* that we can use to send out to our donors and let them know that Epilepsy Ontario really is action-oriented and working on behalf of people with epilepsy,” she says.

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