



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## *News Release*

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### **Valentine's campaign to raise awareness of childhood epilepsy**

People are being asked to share their top five greatest loves this Valentine's Day to raise awareness of childhood epilepsy through social media.

St Valentine is one of the patron saints of people with epilepsy and the University of Edinburgh campaign aims to use the day to highlight the condition.

Around five people in every 100 will have a seizure at some point in their lifetime, which is why researchers are asking people to list the top five things they love most.

The viral media campaign is helping to raise vital funds for the Muir Maxwell Epilepsy Centre – a medical research facility at the University of Edinburgh dedicated to finding the causes of childhood epilepsy and developing ground-breaking new treatments.

More than 200 people have already shared their 'love list' and the campaign is gathering pace on social media.

Epilepsy is a brain condition that causes repeated seizures in those affected. It usually starts during the first five years of life and around one per cent of children worldwide are estimated to have the disease.

The Muir Maxwell Epilepsy Centre aims to revolutionise research and clinical care in epilepsy. World leading experts in brain biology and genetics work closely alongside doctors, psychologists and sociologists to better understand the disease and its effects.

Raising £5000 would enable a researcher to work full time for six months on a potentially life-saving new treatment.

For 70 per cent of children with epilepsy, the cause of their condition is unknown. In around a third of cases, the seizures cannot be controlled with existing medications.

The effects of repeated seizures on a child's development can be devastating. It often leads to severe learning and physical impairments as well as behavioural problems and social difficulties.

Dr Richard Chin, Director of the Muir Maxwell Epilepsy Centre, said: "Epilepsy has been recognised as an illness for more than 4000 years yet we still know little about how the condition develops and what the best treatments are. Research is vital for answering these questions."

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