The underlying cause(s) of depression and anxiety in people with epilepsy differ from person to person. The connection between epilepsy and mental health issues may be related to:

- Depression which existed prior to a diagnosis of epilepsy.
- Seizure activity, particularly where seizures lead to feelings of sadness or negative thoughts.
- Depression and/or anxiety may develop after a diagnosis of epilepsy, as this can be a life changing event and lead to feelings of sadness, grief, lowered self-esteem and fear of having a seizure.
- Depression and/or anxiety may develop as a result of living with epilepsy, and can be as a result of feeling socially isolated, and/or feeling stigmatised, or AEDs.