

MS PLUS
Neuro Wellbeing

2026 Annual Report

Stronger together



Our aspiration

The home of comprehensive support for neurological conditions.

Our purpose

Together on the journey to break down barriers, achieve goals and live well.

Our values

Empowerment, Community, Expertise, Creativity, Spirited

MS PLUS Neuro Wellbeing

70 CELEBRATING YEARS

Cover photograph: Sarah Mei Photography

Contents

Message from the Chair 4
Message from the CEO 5
MS Plus in numbers 6
Delivering on our Strategic Directions 2025–2027 8
Santo's story 10
Building capability, choice and opportunity 11
Christine's story 12
Support that changes lives 14
Mark's story 15
Volunteers making a difference 16
Creating opportunities and connection 17
MS Plus milestones 18
Fundraising and events supporting services and research 20
Kate's story 22
Giving and community impact 23
Shaping the future of neuro care 24
Bec's story 25
Care For You at Home 26
Research for a better future 27
Concise financials 28
Our Board Committees, Executive Team and Senior Management Team 32
Marjorie's story 34
Benefactors, trusts and foundations 35

Message from the Chair



This year marks 70 years since our organisation began supporting people living with multiple sclerosis – an important milestone for MS Plus and the community we serve. It has been an opportunity to recognise the extraordinary contribution of the people who have shaped our organisation over seven decades, while also looking ahead to the role MS Plus can play in the future.

For the Board, that future has been an important focus throughout 2025–26. The health, disability and community services landscape is undergoing significant change, with reform of the NDIS, aged care and Commonwealth employment services occurring alongside increasing financial pressures and changing expectations of service providers. Our responsibility is to ensure MS Plus anticipates these changes, makes considered strategic choices and remains strong, sustainable and relevant.

Our Strategic Directions 2025–2027 continue to guide this work. During the year, the Board commissioned a comprehensive strategic business review, providing valuable insight into our service portfolio, organisational performance and future opportunities. This work has sharpened our priorities, including a renewed focus on building our fundraising capability and diversifying our sources of income.

Following our successful tender in 2025, MS Plus transitioned its employment services to the Australian Government's new Inclusive Employment Australia program. This provides an important platform from which to continue supporting people with disability to find and sustain meaningful employment.

At the same time, the scale and pace of proposed NDIS reform has required the Board and management to carefully consider the implications for our clients, our services and the future operating environment. We have actively assessed these changes to ensure MS Plus is well positioned to respond as the reforms develop. We have also continued to contribute to advocacy where proposed changes may affect people living with MS and other neurological conditions.

Significant aged care reforms have similarly required MS Plus to prepare for a new operating and regulatory environment. Together, these reforms reinforce the importance of anticipating change, adapting our services and maintaining a strong focus on long-term sustainability.

We have also continued to work with our partner MS organisations to identify opportunities to strengthen our collective impact and better respond to the changing needs of the MS community. By sharing knowledge, collaborating and exploring opportunities of mutual benefit, we can strengthen the contribution of the MS network and the outcomes we collectively seek to achieve.

Strong governance remains fundamental to our future. During the year, we were pleased to welcome Dani Dalby and John Rowland to the MS Plus Board. Both bring valuable experience and perspectives, and I thank them and my fellow Directors for their contribution and stewardship.

On behalf of the Board, I thank our Chief Executive Officer, John Blewonski, the Executive team, our employees and volunteers and our partners, supporters and donors.

Most importantly, I thank the people living with MS and other neurological conditions, their families and supporters who place their trust in MS Plus. As we enter our eighth decade, they remain at the centre of our purpose and the decisions we make.

Adriana Zuccala

Message from the CEO



Throughout 2025–26, our teams continued to deliver services and support to people living with multiple sclerosis and other neurological conditions across Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania and the ACT. At the same time, we implemented some of the most significant operational changes MS Plus has undertaken in recent years.

Our priority throughout has been to ensure that change translates into a stronger organisation and better outcomes for our clients, with increased emphasis on service performance, productivity, quality and sustainability.

Our accommodation services have remained an important focus. We have worked to improve occupancy across our specialist disability accommodation, secure appropriate funding outcomes for clients and strengthen overall performance, while continuing to provide contemporary, person-centred support to residents.

Our employment services experienced one of their most significant operational changes in many years. Following our successful tender, our teams completed the transition to Inclusive Employment Australia and implemented the systems, processes and service requirements of the new program. Our focus has now moved to participant access, employment outcomes, consistent service delivery, quality and compliance.

Across allied health and our other community-based services, we have focused on improving access, utilisation and connections between services. Our Care For You at Home service has also undergone operational review and improvement, strengthening its operating model, preparing for the new aged care environment and opening to NDIS participants.

Another significant achievement was completing our transition from our Victorian office in Blackburn to our new Hawthorn East location. This represented much more than a property move. It provided an opportunity to rethink how we work, create a contemporary environment for our Victorian allied health services and bring our teams together in a more flexible and connected workplace.

The sale of Blackburn also completed an important period of property and balance-sheet restructuring for MS Plus. Together with other initiatives completed during the year, this has materially strengthened our financial position, reduced financial obligations and provided greater flexibility to invest in our services and respond to future opportunities.

Fundraising has also been an area of renewed focus. We commenced a strategic reset with greater emphasis on major giving and philanthropy, corporate partnerships and digital engagement, together with greater discipline around investment and return.

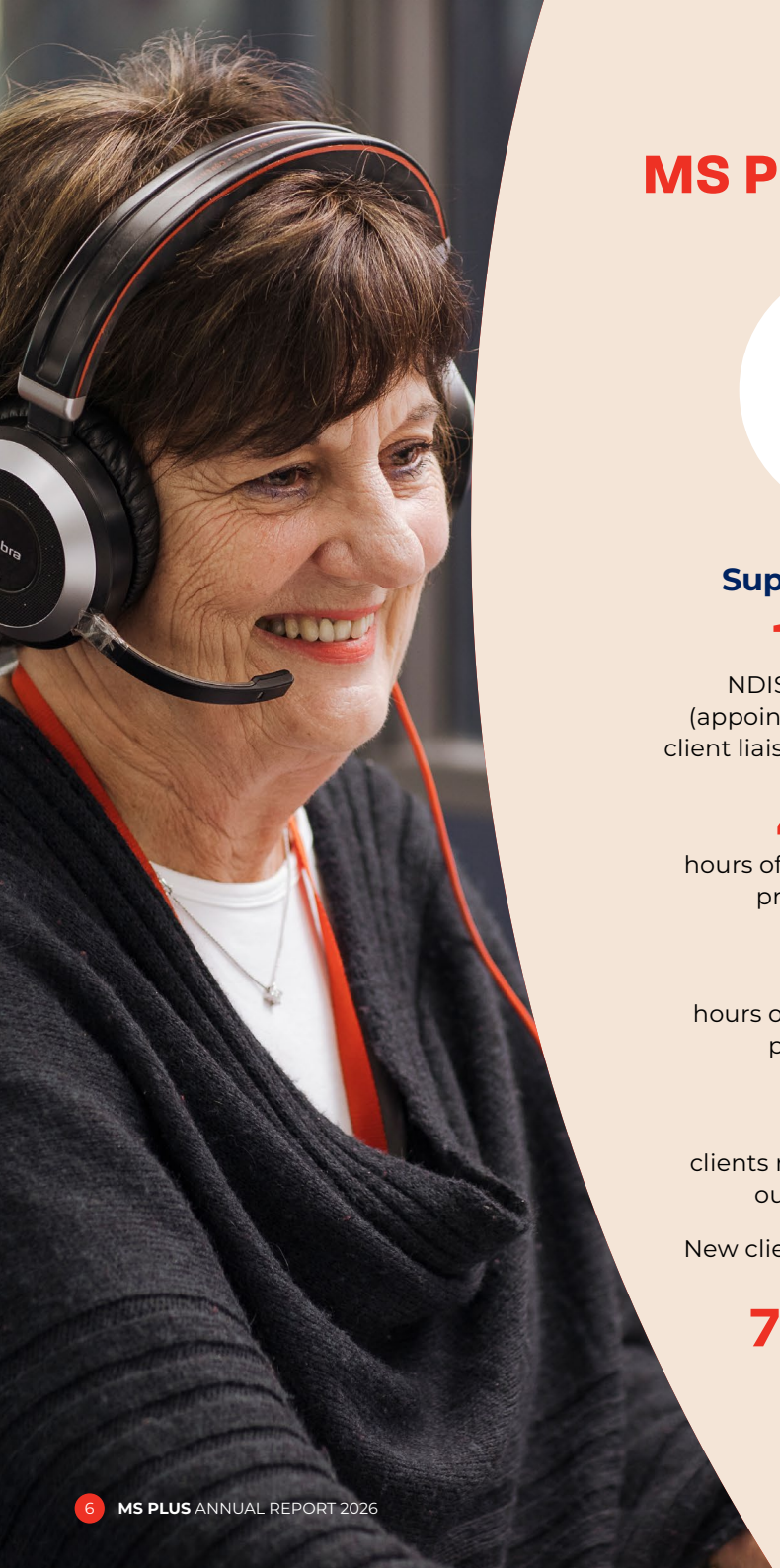
We have also increased our focus on data, reporting and technology. Better access to timely information is helping us understand performance and identify issues earlier, while emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, offer opportunities to improve productivity and the way we work.

None of this could have been achieved without our people. I thank our employees and volunteers for their professionalism, adaptability and commitment throughout a demanding period of change.

Seventy years after our organisation first began supporting people living with MS, that commitment remains at the heart of MS Plus. Our focus for the year ahead is clear – innovating our client-centred services, improving performance, strengthening quality and compliance, increasing productivity, growing sustainably and continuing to deliver better outcomes for the people we support.

I thank our Chair and Directors, our partners, donors and supporters and above all our clients and their families for the trust they continue to place in MS Plus.

John Blewonski



MS Plus in numbers

Support delivered

168,621
NDIS services delivered (appointments, client reports, client liaison and documentation)

42,594
hours of Support Coordination provided to clients

4,511
hours of support provided by physiotherapists

1,026
clients received support from our Nurse Advisors

New client numbers increased by 16.5%, from
726 to **846**

Community connection

1,445
people generously volunteer their time to support MS Plus

13,203
people participated in an MS Plus event

458
event volunteers donated 2,163 hours of their time to MS Plus

818
people accessed Peer Support

Opportunities created

889
people received assistance from our Employment Support Service

234
applications for MS Go for Gold Scholarships

268
people entered the MS Virtual Art Show

93%
of Peer Support participants said the program improved their health and wellbeing

The difference we make

Health and wellbeing

50-83%
rated their health as either good or better

90%
reported increased mobility

82%
reported better understanding and management of symptoms

>90%
of Exercise Physiology and Physiotherapy clients reported improved mobility

Independence and participation

79%
reported improved community participation

79%
felt safer in their home

57%
felt safer getting out and about

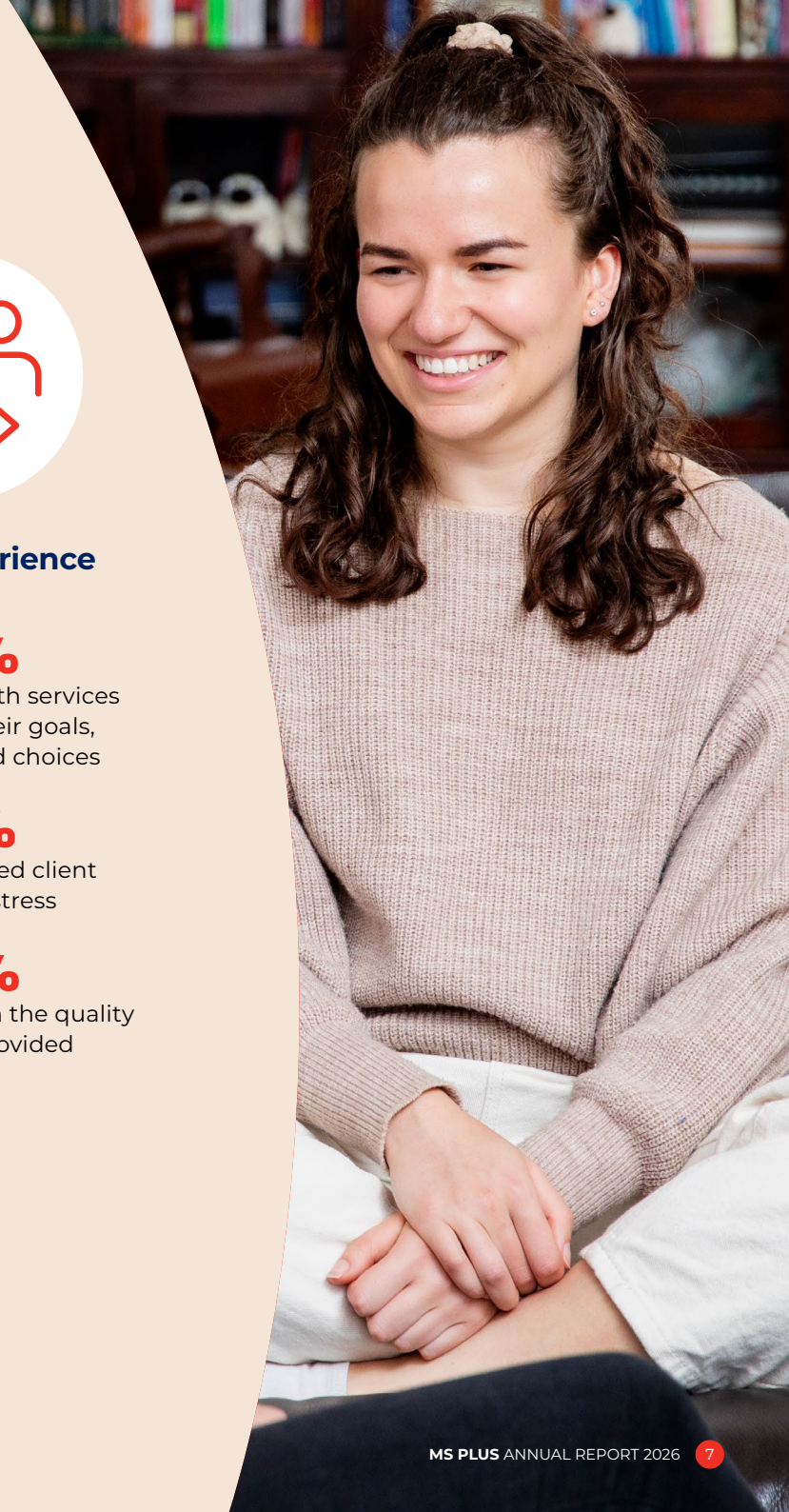
93%
said Peer Support improved their wellbeing

Client experience

82%
felt respected, with services recognising their goals, preferences and choices

76%
reported reduced client and family stress

84%
were satisfied with the quality of support provided



"The sooner you reach out for help, the better and because the staff at MS Plus are experts in MS they know exactly what's good for you and what will work specifically for you."

MS Plus client, Nicole

Delivering on our Strategic Directions 2025–2027

Celebrating 70 years while shaping the future of neuro care

As MS Plus prepares to celebrate 70 years of supporting people living with multiple sclerosis and other neurological conditions, we do so with a deep respect for our history and an equally strong commitment to the future.

The first year of our Strategic Directions 2025–2027 has been defined by change, adaptation and progress. In a period marked by major reforms to disability, aged care and employment services, a challenging economic environment and growing demand for support, we have remained focused on delivering meaningful outcomes while building a stronger and more sustainable organisation for the years ahead.

Over the past year, MS Plus has continued to support thousands of people living with neurological conditions and their families. Across our services, we have focused on strengthening quality, improving accessibility and ensuring people can access the support they need, when they need it. We have maintained strong service delivery through a period of significant sector uncertainty, while continuing to evolve the way we work to meet changing community needs.

A key focus during the year has been implementing Strategic Directions 2025–2027, our roadmap for strengthening MS Plus and increasing our impact. The strategy focuses on building strong foundations, improving outcomes for clients and strengthening connections with the communities we serve.

Under Leveraging our Foundations, we have made deliberate progress in strengthening the systems, structures and capabilities required to support long-term sustainability. Investments in finance systems and client systems, operating models and organisational integration have improved efficiency and enhanced our ability to respond to future challenges. With the support of our generous donors, we have continued to grow our philanthropy capabilities, we have invested in digital fundraising and strengthened our focus on sustainable revenue and stewardship.

Through Increasing our Impact, we have focused on delivering more consistent, measurable and person-centred services. One of the most significant milestones has been the development and Board endorsement of the MS Plus Person-Centred Framework (see p. 24), which establishes a clear foundation for how we partner with clients, families and communities across all service areas. The framework reinforces our commitment to choice, dignity, inclusion and meaningful outcomes, while ensuring the voices of people with neurological conditions remain central to decision-making.

Alongside this work, we have strengthened our ability to measure impact through outcomes data, including Neuro-QoL and program outcome measures. We have also expanded virtual service delivery, creating more connected and responsive pathways of care and helping us better understand and respond to changing client needs.

Our Activating our Community pillar has focused on strengthening engagement, awareness and connection. We have enhanced our intake processes and improved cross-referrals internally and externally. We have also continued to strengthen our partnerships with neurologists, hospitals, allied health professionals and community organisations. Building stronger referral pathways and working collaboratively across the health, employment, disability and aged sectors is an important part of ensuring people receive timely, coordinated support throughout their life.

During the year, we launched new accessibility-first websites, expanded storytelling initiatives to amplify the voice of people living with neuro conditions, and progressed important work to strengthen the awareness of MS Plus services and programs.

We have continued to engage clients, donors, supporters, volunteers, health professionals and partners in new ways, recognising that collaboration is essential to achieving our mission to support people to live well.

Importantly, as we prepare to celebrate our 70th anniversary, we also looked decisively to the future. Late in the year, MS Plus launched the Future of Neuro Care initiative, creating opportunities for clients, carers, health professionals, researchers and sector leaders to contribute to conversations about the future of neurological support and integrated care. Designed as a thought-leadership platform, Future of Neuro Care reflects our belief that experience, evidence and innovation must work together to shape better outcomes.

The initiative sits naturally alongside important pieces of work that are helping shape the future of MS Plus including our Person-Centred Framework and our Wellbeing model, these and our research into integrated care create a roadmap for delivering and growing client care that is person-centred, coordinated, evidence-informed and focused on whole-of-life outcomes. They reinforce our commitment to integrated care, stronger partnerships and a future where people living with neurological conditions can access the right support, from the right people, at the right time.

Looking ahead

Our focus for the coming year will be centred on strategic workstreams designed to strengthen our person-centred services and programs, increase impact and position MS Plus for the future. These include growing access to:

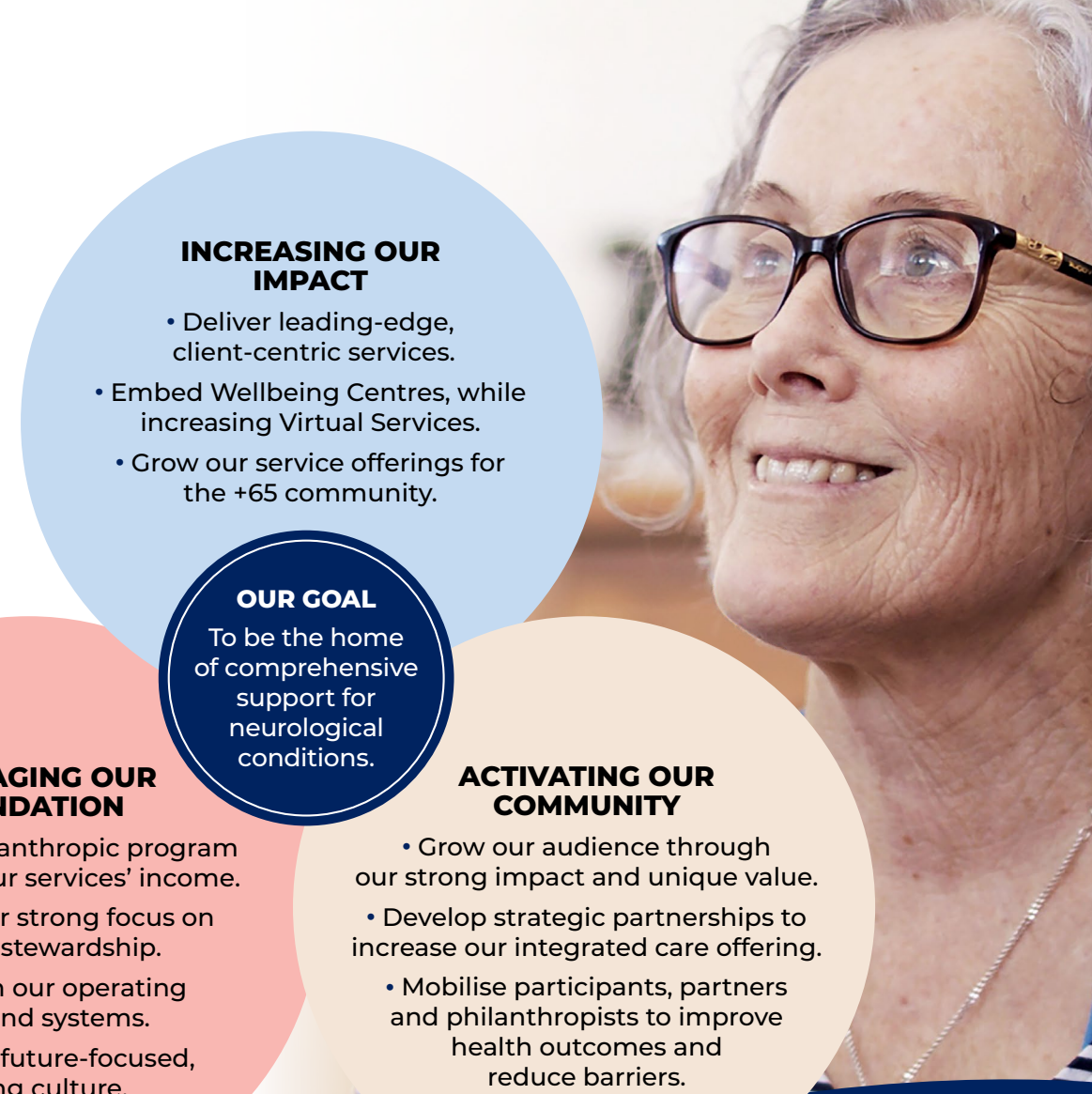
- Our accommodation services at Lidcombe Home, Beverly Hills Home and Watsonia Home, and the care we provide at the Victorian Government-owned Williamstown facility
- Our home-based aged care, veterans care and disability service (Care For You at Home)
- Our Employment Support Service

We will continue expanding collaboration with donors, connecting them with our impact and enabling investment in innovation.

We will improve programs for people newly diagnosed, strengthen referral pathways and service integration, expand our reach, accelerate digital transformation, and use data and artificial intelligence to improve decision-making and outcomes.

We will deepen relationships with hospitals, neurologists, allied health professionals and community partners, creating stronger referral pathways and more integrated client experiences. We will also continue building the Future of Neuro Care platform to showcase innovation and amplify the voices of people living with MS.

Seventy years after our journey began, MS Plus is continuing to help shape the future of care through our connections with MS Australia, MSWA, MS Society SA & NT and the broader neurological alliance. Through innovation, partnership, evidence and person-centred practice, we are building an organisation ready for the future.



INCREASING OUR IMPACT

- Deliver leading-edge, client-centric services.
- Embed Wellbeing Centres, while increasing Virtual Services.
- Grow our service offerings for the +65 community.

OUR GOAL

To be the home of comprehensive support for neurological conditions.

LEVERAGING OUR FOUNDATION

- Grow our philanthropic program and diversify our services' income.
- Maintain our strong focus on effective stewardship.
- Transform our operating model and systems.
- Develop a future-focused, learning culture.

ACTIVATING OUR COMMUNITY

- Grow our audience through our strong impact and unique value.
- Develop strategic partnerships to increase our integrated care offering.
- Mobilise participants, partners and philanthropists to improve health outcomes and reduce barriers.

MS PLUS Neuro Wellbeing 70 CELEBRATING YEARS

Support to keep working: Santo's story

The help Santo has received from MS Plus' Employment Support Service has helped to keep him in work, three decades after he was diagnosed with MS.

"MS is unpredictable and as the years have gone by, my physical functional impacts have deteriorated and the hidden symptoms of cognitive functioning and fatigue have had a huge impact," he says.

"I've been involved with MS Plus' Employment Support Service for around 15 years and the help I've received has been exceptional. Not a week goes by when my occupational therapist Stephanie misses reaching out to me by a phone call, email or text message."

Employment Support Service supports clients with MS and other neurological conditions to navigate every stage of their working life, with available help ranging from the design and implementation of strategies to better manage symptoms through to access to equipment and external supports.



"All of these things have had a role in helping me maintain my independence."

MS Plus client, Santo

For Santo, that support has been constant through the good times, and the challenging times.

"Stephanie has supported me in my workplace with workplace visits and meeting with my managers and team leaders. She's provided me with funding for ergonomic equipment like a specialised computer mouse, and special seating because my right hand side is physically weaker than my left," he says.

"I'm a bit of a perfectionist at work, but I've had periods where I struggle, forgetting things and that has led to inconsistent productivity and quality outcomes. Stephanie has given me all sorts of advice and strategies and organised meetings with managers where we can work out a program to get me back on my feet.

That can look like designing checklists or refining procedures, as well as support to manage cognitive functionality, emotional functionality and fatigue... which all adds up to help maintain my ability to keep my job."

Santo says the service has also helped him access a range of wellbeing supports.

"My right hand is weaker than it used to be, and I used to be a musician, so experiencing this weakness had a significant impact on my emotional wellbeing. I've been provided referrals to and funding for psychological and mental health supports as well as a physiotherapist that specialises in dealing with people with MS.

"All of these things have had a role in helping me maintain my independence."

Santo splits his work week between working from home and a day or two in the office. Help to learn how to manage his physical symptoms, and communicating his needs with his employer, have been two of the biggest benefits he's received from Employment Support Service.

"I experience severe restless leg syndrome and sometimes get neuropathic pain during the day, and if I have a disturbed sleep it is more challenging for me to be up in the morning.

"Stephanie's helped with suggestions and strategies, which might be justification for why I need a 20-minute break instead of a five-minute break in the morning, or an extended lunch break. She's gone above and beyond to get on top of things before it's too late.

"Over the years, as my circumstances and functionality changes, my neurologist, health team and support team like Steph have a major impact on my ability to keep going. I want to continue working for as long as I can, like a lot of people I've got a mortgage and bills to pay, so having this support to keep on top of things is just exceptional."

Building capability, choice and opportunity

Employment Support Services

This year, the Employment Support Services team assisted 889 people, delivering 33,007 hours of support to help individuals secure, maintain and progress in their employment.

Through personalised support tailored to individual goals and circumstances, the team continued to achieve strong outcomes for jobseekers and employees living with MS and other neurological conditions.

As a member of the CoAct Network, MS Plus continued to deliver the Australian Government's Inclusive Employment Australia program, supporting people to access meaningful work through a more inclusive and participant-focused employment system.

MS Plus also provided **more than $1.15 million** in services and supports funded through Employment Assistance Funding and revenue allocation, helping address barriers to workforce participation and supporting people to remain in employment.

Employment Support highlights:

- **210** items of equipment purchased to assist people to gain or maintain employment
- **$147,000** provided in financial assistance to support people to maintain employment
- **889** people received assistance through our Employment Support Service

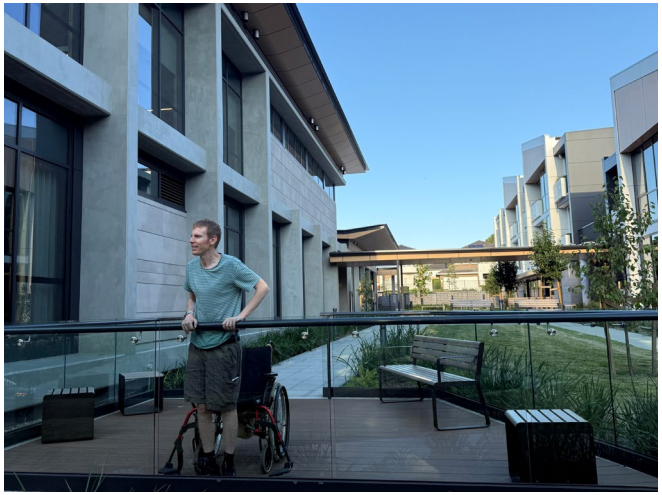
Residential and Respite Services

Residential and Respite Services continued to provide high-quality accommodation and support options for people with neurological conditions and their families throughout FY26. Across Lidcombe and Watsonia, the service delivered **346 completed respite days**, providing planned breaks for carers while supporting participants to maintain independence, build confidence and access support in a safe and welcoming environment.

Short-term respite continued to play an important role in supporting wellbeing and sustainability for participants and families. Many participants returned for repeat stays, while others used respite as an opportunity to build familiarity with services, develop new connections and access services tailored to their individual needs.

The year also saw continued growth in accommodation utilisation at Lidcombe, increasing access to Specialist Disability Accommodation and Supported Independent Living supports. The integration of accommodation, allied health and wellbeing services within the Lidcombe precinct provided participants with coordinated supports that promote independence, community participation and long-term wellbeing. Purpose-built, accessible housing options also support greater choice and control for people with high physical support needs.

Across Lidcombe, Beverly Hills, Watsonia and Williamstown, Residential and Respite Services remained focused on delivering safe, high-quality supports that enable people to achieve their individual goals, maintain community connections and live with greater independence and choice.





From hospital to home: Christine's story

When Christine moved into MS Plus' supported accommodation at Lidcombe Home after an extended hospital stay late last year, it had a profound impact on her health and wellbeing.

"We knew that some of the things Christine had experienced before she came here were quite traumatic, but since she has been here, we've seen she is more motivated to participate in activities and the interests she had in the past are starting to come back alive," says Lidcombe Home's Manager Residential & Respite Services Badri Pokhrel.

"Ever since she moved into MS Plus accommodation, she's had friendly staff around, been able to approach them without any hesitation, and had that sense of security of feeling safe in her home and able to put things wherever she wants in her own apartment."



"My family has been very good in supporting me and helping me to find this place. I was definitely looking forward to getting out of hospital, so it was a very good day when I first came here."

MS Plus client, Christine

Reflecting on how far she's come since a difficult stay in hospital, Christine, who was diagnosed with MS in 2014, says that leaving hospital and moving to the hotel-style, supported independent living accommodation in Sydney's inner west has been life-changing.

"I got dehydrated and ended up in hospital only weighing 41kg after a week without food and water. Now I'm 67kg and feeling much better. I was in hospital for five months before I came here," she says.

"It's been really good so far, it's comfortable and the management are great. I've just started going to the gym. At hospital I didn't have hand dexterity, I was struggling to be able to hold a cup to my mouth even. Now I can take my own jumper off," she says.

Lidcombe Home features modern hotel-style apartments for both respite and long-term accommodation, designed with accessibility in mind. The property adjoins MS Plus' Lidcombe Wellbeing Centre, providing access to a range of services including physiotherapy, dietetics, continence support and NDIS support coordination and plan management under the same roof.

The transition from hospital to Lidcombe Home was a holistic process involving Christine's neurologist and family.

"Christine's sister was responsible for coordinating the transition, she had information from Christine's neurologist to reach out to MS Plus to explore these options. I met with her dad and sister and we began the conversation. When we met with Chris, she had a good look at the pictures and understood the transition and how we could make it successful," says Badri.

The central location means it's also easy for Christine's family to regularly visit, keeping her connected with her family and community.

"My family has been very good in supporting me and helping me to find this place. I was definitely looking forward to getting out of hospital, so it was a very good day when I first came here," she says.

Christine has settled in so well that she's well known for her baking – particularly her famous rocky road.

"I can't walk past the apartment without having a slice of her baking!" says Badri.

"Christine had experienced a lot of psychological distress prior to coming to Lidcombe Home, but seeing her now with a positive mindset, wanting to try things and do things has been a great outcome for all of us."

Building capability, choice and opportunity

Allied Health

Our Allied Health team continued to provide evidence-based services that support our clients to maintain their health, independence and quality of life.

Following the successful transition of services into the purpose-built Lidcombe Wellbeing Centre, the team continued to leverage the expanded facilities, specialised equipment and technology available across our wellbeing network to meet growing demand. Services were delivered by a multidisciplinary team including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, exercise physiologists, dietitians and allied health assistants.

The Allied Health portfolio delivered strong operational outcomes in FY26, including the introduction of online exercise programs and the reintroduction of occupational therapy in Sydney. Growth in Support at Home referrals and provider partnerships also further diversified revenue streams.

The team also continued to support people living with a broad range of neurological conditions, reflecting MS Plus' commitment to providing specialist neurological expertise beyond MS.

Our clinicians also contributed to professional education and engagement activities, helping strengthen relationships with healthcare professionals and raise awareness of the support available through MS Plus.

Allied Health highlights:

- **15,571** hours of service delivery (across all services)
- **879** Allied Health clients
- **7,555** hours of Exercise Physiology provided
- **4,511** hours of Physiotherapy provided (includes 1,338 hours of Allied Health Assistant)
- **3,100** hours of Occupational Therapy provided
- **405** hours of Dietetics support

Plan Management

Our Plan Management team continued to deliver high-quality, person-centred support, helping clients with the financial management of their NDIS plans so they can focus on achieving their goals and maintaining their wellbeing.

By offering a responsive and personalised service, the team continued to distinguish itself in an increasingly competitive market.

During the year, the team processed **73,185** invoices valued at **$34,675,358**, supporting approximately **588 clients** across our regions.

The service maintained steady growth supported by strong referral pathways and excellent client retention.

The service achieved a surplus result despite the removal of budgeted establishment fee revenue, with growth in active client numbers exceeding budget assumptions.

Improving access to services

Allied Health and NDIS Service delivery, including Accommodation, was more than just about the service, it was about the experience. We were determined to make it easier and more accessible to book appointments, understand your needs and provide you with options so that we could help you achieve your goals. Our intake model is supported by skilled client relationship coordinators who help guide clients to the services that best meet their needs.

We also know that many of you prefer digital touch points. To that end, we enhanced our digital offering so that whether you are engaging with us for the first time or returning, you can reach us through whatever means you choose.



Support that changes lives

Peer Support

Our Peer Support Program helps people with MS and other neurological conditions build meaningful connections, share experiences and reduce social isolation.

This year, 182 dedicated peer support volunteers provided support through phone chats and peer groups, creating opportunities for connection, education and mutual understanding. Together, they contributed 2,490 hours of support, helping participants navigate the challenges of living with a neurological condition.

The impact of peer support continues to be felt across our community. In our 2026 outcomes survey, 93% of respondents said peer support helped them gain useful knowledge about managing symptoms, accessing services and finding helpful products. The same proportion reported that peer support improved their health and wellbeing, helped them feel more hopeful about their health and future, and reduced feelings of isolation.

Engagement in the program remains strong, with 81% of respondents attending four or more peer support sessions in the previous six months.

Participants also rated the program highly, with a Net Promoter Score of 86, up from 82 in 2024 and well above recognised not-for-profit benchmarks.

Through every conversation, shared experience and moment of understanding, peer support continues to demonstrate the power of connection in helping people live well with neurological conditions.

"I'm very happy with the support I receive – it's invaluable, holistic, practical and supportive. It goes a very long way to giving me confidence and to feeling seen and understood by someone who appreciates my situation."

Peer Links participant

Client access and support

The MS Connect and Client Relationship Coordinator teams are often the first point of contact with MS Plus, providing trusted information, guidance and support. Together, they help clients navigate their options and connect with relevant MS Plus and external services. This year, MS Connect facilitated 1,275 connections, while Client Relationship Coordinators generated 814 service referrals.

MS Nurse Advisor

MS Nurses are the go-to for many clients, providing free advice on symptoms and relapse management, medication options and side effects and connecting clients to other supports where required.

In FY26, our nurses conducted 1,026 telehealth and in-person consultations.

Programs and education

MS Plus delivered education programs that help people with MS and other neurological conditions make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

Throughout the year, participants accessed webinars, workshops and information sessions covering symptom management, wellbeing, allied health, NDIS supports and living well with a neurological condition.

Strong attendance reflected ongoing demand for trusted, evidence-based information and practical strategies for everyday life.

The Art Therapy Workshop series remained highly popular, with sessions quickly reaching capacity and providing opportunities for creativity, self-expression and wellbeing.

A highlight was The Future of Neuro Health and Wellbeing event featuring Dr Phu Huang, MS Plus Senior Physiotherapist and an internationally recognised leader in neurological physiotherapy. Participants learned how exercise can support MS management, wellbeing and long-term health outcomes.

We also continued to support health professionals through targeted education initiatives that promoted collaboration and person-centred care. A highlight was Integrated Care in Focus, a Tasmanian professional development event. Speakers Dr Yi Chao Foong, Lisa Slade, Michael Mortensen and Jacquay Christie shared insights on multidisciplinary approaches to care for people living with neurological conditions. The event strengthened connections across the disability and community sectors, and we thank our partners Parkinson's Tasmania, Coloplast and the Menzies Institute for Medical Research for their support.

You're not alone: How Mark found his way back from the edge

Mark was at his lowest ebb more than a decade ago. Struggling with a recent MS diagnosis and caring for his mother, who had cancer, Mark says everything was getting too much until three simple words changed everything.

"I found myself on the local bluff ready to jump, I looked over the edge and thought I was finished. But for some reason, I took a photo of the sun coming up, looked at it for a millisecond and thought 'things aren't that bad," he recalls.

"When I got home, I was in a mess again. I remember MS Plus' In Touch magazine was on the floor, it was open and it said, 'if you need help, call now.' So, I called for the first time and there were three warm, caring words at the other end: 'are you okay'?"

Although MS Plus is not a suicide support service, our Connect staff are there to listen, provide practical support and help people access the right services and information to live well with MS.

Mark says that first encounter, with MS Plus' Connect phone line, saved his life.

"I unloaded everything and the lady said, 'I'm going to talk you through this, you're going to be okay.' They provided all the information, direction and positives to keep going. I decided then that when I got better, I wanted to give back to other people in my position."

These days, Mark works as a Peer Support Volunteer, speaking to people with MS as well as their families and carers from across the country.

"To be able to talk to people, offer them some answers, make them feel better and tell them we're all in this together is so powerful. I don't have a clue what the people I speak to look like; you just hear their voice and try to offer them support."

Mark's connection with MS Plus has also helped him explore his lifelong interest in photography, after he was awarded an MS Plus Go for Gold Scholarship. Go for Gold Scholarships are one-off grants that support people living with MS to follow their personal goals, passions or dreams.

"I've always enjoyed taking photos, but all I had was a little old digital camera and an old phone. A few people suggested I apply for a Go for Gold scholarship, I was successful and it allowed me to buy my first DLSR camera.

"I watched a lot of YouTube videos to learn more about techniques and settings, I wrote everything down in a journal and I went out every day and practiced," he says.

"I do everything from nature photography to landscape, portraits and even wedding photography. When I post them on Facebook or Instagram and get comments where my work has brought back a memory for someone, I just feel invincible. It's such a good feeling."

"It's completely changed my life because I'm not far from the ocean and some mornings, I just look down through the lens at the sun rising up above it and it just grounds me."

More than a decade after that first phone call, Mark highly recommends others reach out for support.

"Whether it's a little worry in your mind or something more, there's always a person at the other end to tell you you're going to be okay. Over the course of a phone call you hear someone go from worry and distress to starting to slow down, speak more calmly and by the end they normally say 'thanks, that was just what I needed.'

"There's a whole network of us at MS Plus and help is always only a phone call away if you need it."



If this story brings up difficult feelings, you're not alone and support is available. Speak with someone who understands

MS Plus Connect – 1800 042 138
Lifeline Australia – 13 11 14 (24/7 crisis support)
Beyond Blue – 1300 22 4636
Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467
If you are in immediate danger, please call 000.

Reaching out can feel hard, but there is always someone ready to listen.







“I had wanted to volunteer for a long time, when I saw the program was looking for a Spanish speaker, I felt that was my perfect chance to join.”

MS Plus Volunteer

Volunteers making a difference

MS Plus Op Shops

Over the past year, more than 200 volunteers contributed close to 42,000 hours across our MS Plus Op Shops. Their efforts helped process almost 428,000 donated items, diverting them from landfill and preparing them for sale, while helping us welcome more than 175,000 customers.

Volunteers support every aspect of shop operations, from sorting, cleaning and pricing donations to merchandising stock and assisting customers. Just as importantly, they help create the welcoming atmosphere that makes our shops such valued community spaces. Through their commitment, energy and care, our volunteers play a vital role in the success of our retail operations and the communities they serve.

Events

MS Plus event volunteers play a vital role in delivering fundraising and community events throughout the year. From registrations and participant support to course marshalling, information services and behind-the-scenes logistics, volunteers help ensure events run safely and smoothly.

Throughout FY26, 458 event volunteers contributed 2,163 hours across events in Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania and the ACT. Their support helped create positive experiences for participants, supporters and community members while strengthening engagement with the broader MS Plus community.

Whether assisting at major fundraising events or community activities, event volunteers bring enthusiasm, commitment and a strong willingness to help, making an important contribution to the success of events across the year.

Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS)

MS Plus proudly delivers the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS) on behalf of the Australian Government, helping older people build meaningful social connections and reduce loneliness.

Throughout FY26, the program coordinated 605 volunteer matches across Victoria and New South Wales, connecting older people with volunteers who shared their interests, experiences or cultural backgrounds.

These relationships resulted in 16,704 face-to-face visits, providing companionship, consistency and a sense of belonging for people who may otherwise have limited social contact. The program also exceeded annual Departmental Key Performance Indicators, reflecting the dedication of volunteers and the quality of service delivery across both states.



Creating opportunities and connection

MS Go for Gold Scholarship

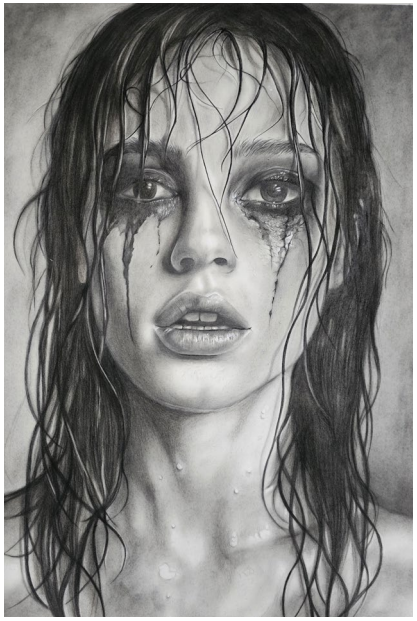
The MS Go for Gold Scholarship program helps people living with MS pursue goals that are meaningful to them, whether that means exploring a creative passion, furthering their education or investing in experiences that support their wellbeing and independence. In 2025, 234 applications were received for the 25 scholarships awarded through the program, highlighting the ongoing enthusiasm for an initiative that helps turn aspirations into reality.

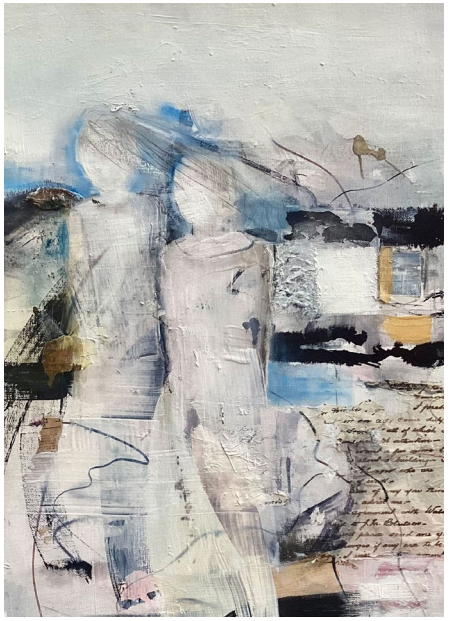
One of 2025's recipients, Suchitha, was awarded a scholarship to purchase specialised camera stabilising equipment, enabling her to reconnect with a lifelong dream of filmmaking.

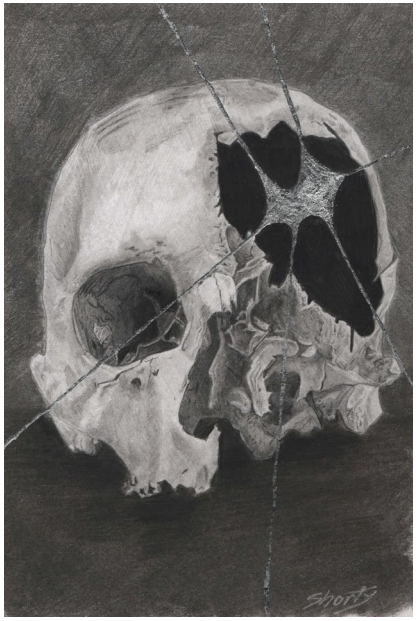
Diagnosed with MS after pursuing a career behind the camera, Suchitha faced challenges that made it difficult to continue working in the film industry. Fatigue and reduced hand stability meant the long hours and physical demands of filming became increasingly difficult, leaving her feeling as though she had lost not only a career path, but a part of her identity.

Determined to remain in the creative industry, Suchitha built a successful business in branding, strategy and design. However, her passion for filmmaking never disappeared. With the support of an MS Go for Gold Scholarship, she can now purchase technology that compensates for some of the physical limitations caused by MS, helping her return to the camera with renewed confidence.

For Suchitha, the scholarship represents more than access to equipment. It is an opportunity to reclaim a passion, share stories that matter and continue pursuing the creative future she had once thought was out of reach.







Left to right: Brie Corser - Portrait (Highly Commended – Drawing/Illustration), Sue Burrows - I Hold you Tight (Carers Award), Georgina Haig - Sparkles on my Brain (Winner – Barry Allen Art Award).

MS Virtual Art Show



As MS Plus celebrates its 70th year, we are also proud to mark the 20th anniversary of the MS Virtual Art Show. For two decades, the show has provided people living with MS and other neurological conditions with a meaningful platform to express their creativity, share their experiences and connect with others.

The Art Show continues to highlight the powerful relationship between creativity and wellbeing. For many participants, creative expression offers a way to process emotions, build confidence and communicate experiences that can be difficult to put into words. More than an art competition, the Virtual Art Show is a celebration of expression, courage and community.

The 2026 show was one of the largest in its history, with 268 submissions received from 132 talented artists across photography, sculpture, drawing, painting and mixed media categories.

Every artwork shared a unique story, reflecting the resilience, creativity and diverse experiences of people living with neurological conditions.

All entries were showcased in our online gallery, with winners announced on 28 May. We thank every artist who contributed their time, talent and creativity to make this milestone year such a success.

70 years of progress. A future of possibility.

For 70 years, MS Plus has stood alongside people living with MS and other neurological conditions. While much has changed over the decades, our purpose remains the same: helping people live well through support, connection, programs, information and advice. As we celebrate the milestones that have shaped our organisation, we're also looking ahead to the future and the opportunities still to come.



70 years of support

What began as a small community determined to support people affected by MS has grown into a leading neurological services organisation supporting thousands of people across Victoria, New South Wales, ACT and Tasmania.

45 years of the MS Gong Ride

The MS Gong Ride has become one of Australia's most recognised community fundraising events, raising millions of dollars to support services and research.

20 years of the MS Art Show

For two decades, artists have come together to celebrate creativity, talent and community connection.





Today

MS Plus supports people through wellbeing centres, allied health, peer support, accommodation, employment support and education programs. Every day, our teams help people build confidence, maintain independence and live life on their own terms.

The future of MS Plus

MS Plus is built on innovation, accessibility and person-centred care. Through contemporary wellbeing centres, expanded service delivery, stronger partnerships and new ways of connecting with our community, we are working toward a future where more people can access the support they need, wherever they are and whatever their goals may be.

Fundraising and events supporting services and research

MS Plus events and fundraising play an important role in raising vital funds for services and programs that support people living with MS today, and for research that seeks a cure for the future. In FY26, our flagship events, including the MS Gong Ride, Walk, Run & Roll and MS Mega Challenges, raised $2,282,974, thanks to the dedication and generosity of our 5,097 amazing fundraisers.These events would not be possible without our incredible volunteers. During the year, 408 event volunteers generously contributed 2,465 hours to help deliver safe, successful and memorable experiences for participants and supporters.



MS Gong Ride

Raised: **$1,286,197**
Participants: **5,561**
Participants who fundraised: **1,911**
Volunteers: **196**

Sam's connection to MS began in 2011 when his wife, Debbie, was diagnosed.

Inspired by friends who had previously participated in the MS Gong Ride, Sam decided to take on the challenge himself. It's now become an annual commitment, with Sam and his team, the Mangled Shins MTB Club, returning for their third year.

A passionate supporter of MS Plus, Sam understands the importance of fundraising to help sustain services, support and research. He's set a personal goal of raising $100,000 for MS Plus during his lifetime. Backed by his community, his fundraising efforts continue to grow, and in 2025 his team was recognised among the event's top 10 teams.



MS Walk Run + Roll

Raised: **$695,645**
Participants: **6,475**
Participants who fundraised: **2,359**
Volunteers: **202**

Dayna was diagnosed with MS in 2023. Wanting to make a difference, Dayna's mother, Desi, became involved in the MS Walk Run + Roll, raising funds and awareness while connecting with the wider MS community. For Desi, the event is an opportunity to come together with others who share a connection to MS and to demonstrate support for people affected by the condition.

Reflecting on the event, Desi said: "The sense of community is incredible. Being surrounded by people who get it and truly understand, whether they live with MS, support someone who does, or simply want to help, it is incredibly powerful and moving to see. Everyone is there for the same reason and with a smile on their face."



MS Mega Challenge

Raised: **$301,134**
Participants: **1,167**
Participants who fundraised: **827**
Volunteers: **60**

"I do the MS Mega Swim every year for my clients and their families who have multiple sclerosis. MS Plus is amazing and I love raising funds for this cause; it is my go-to fundraising event every year. I appreciate everything MS Plus do for the community and I love this event, it's so much fun. It's a lovely festive time and we raise money for a good cause."

Ammy, 2026 Fitzroy MS Mega Swim participant

Turning challenges into finish lines one step at a time: Kate's story

When Kate was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in December 2019, life was already busy. She and her husband were preparing to move house, their children were just two and three years old and Christmas was only weeks away. Looking back, Kate now realises just how unwell she was at the time.

"I look back now and go, wow, I just thought I could keep pushing through like it wasn't that bad," she says. "But compared to how I feel now, I realise I actually was really unwell."

Kate was diagnosed just before the COVID-19 pandemic. She considers herself fortunate that her diagnosis happened quickly and that she felt supported throughout the process.

"My GP was incredible. I was diagnosed within a month, which I now know is very unusual," she says. "I didn't have to fight to be listened to or advocate for myself."

Today, many of Kate's symptoms are invisible to others. She experiences sensory issues, including pins and needles, along with significant fatigue but continues to work full-time and raise her family.

Because she often appears well, remembering her own limits can sometimes be challenging. "I think the trap is that I look fine," she says.

"Sometimes I need to remind myself that I do actually have MS and it is something that needs to be managed."

Kate credits much of her resilience to the support of her family, particularly her husband, mother and extended family. "My husband is amazing," she says.

"If I say, 'I'm done for the day,' there are no questions asked. He just takes over. That support makes such a difference."

Rather than allowing MS to define her life, Kate has focused on what she can control, including her physical and mental wellbeing.

Before her diagnosis, she had always been active and played basketball competitively. After a serious knee injury and her MS diagnosis, she no longer felt like herself physically. Within months, she signed up for a virtual 5km MS fundraising challenge.

What started as a personal goal quickly grew into something much bigger. By the time in-person events returned, Kate had completed her first half marathon, supported by a growing community of friends and family known as "Kate's Crew".

"It became this really beautiful thing where people said, 'You're doing something hard, so we'll do something hard with you,'" she says.

Since then, running has become a major part of her life. She has completed a marathon and continues to encourage others around her to challenge themselves too.

"I ran the marathon to prove to myself that even though I have MS, I can still do hard things," she says.

Alongside her running, Kate remains passionate about supporting MS research through fundraising initiatives such as The May 50K and MS Walk Run + Roll. "I really believe we're living in the era of progress with MS," she says.

"There's so much more hope now than there used to be."

For now, Kate is focused on her family, career, running and the future. "Overall, life is really good," she says.

"I'll keep doing hard things, keep encouraging other people to do hard things, and hopefully MS will just keep sitting quietly in the background."



"There's so much more hope now than there used to be."

MS Plus client, Kate



Do It for MS community fundraising

Community fundraising continues to play an important role in supporting the work of MS Plus. Each year, individuals, families, schools, workplaces and community groups raise funds through a wide range of activities, from physical challenges and special events to celebrations and creative initiatives.

In FY2025-26, our dedicated community fundraisers raised an impressive **$231,829**.

Among them was Desmond, who took on the 2025 TCS Sydney Marathon in support of his father, who lives with multiple sclerosis.

“I’m fundraising for MS Plus because my dad lives with multiple sclerosis. Seeing the impact of MS up close has shown me how challenging and unpredictable this condition can be, not only for those living with it, but also for the people who love and care for them.

“Running a marathon will be a huge challenge, but it is nothing compared with the strength and resilience shown every day by people living with MS. That is why I am doing this, to honour my dad, to support others facing MS, and to raise funds for the vital work MS Plus does.”

The May 50K

The May 50K is a month-long fundraising challenge that encourages participants to walk or run either 50km, 100km or 150km throughout May. In FY2025-26, 7,753 participants took part, raising more than **$1.92 million** to support people living with MS.

“To be part of this MS Community is so empowering. It makes me do the best I possibly can do even on a down day. The community is so supportive that you want to achieve your best no matter how you feel.” Marianne, The May 50K participant

Kiss Goodbye to MS

Like The May 50k, Kiss Goodbye to MS is a national fundraising campaign run on behalf of MS Australia, with funds raised supporting MS research. In FY2025–2026, the campaign raised **$87,629** through the efforts of our generous supporters.

MS Dream Raffle

The MS Dream Raffle program runs throughout the year, giving supporters the chance to win cash prizes while helping raise funds for MS Plus. Four draws offered prizes of up to $20,000, while Dream Club subscribers also had the chance to win $2,000 each month. The program raised **$335,448** in FY2025-26.

“I’m fundraising for MS Plus because my dad lives with multiple sclerosis. Seeing the impact of MS up close has shown me how challenging and unpredictable this condition can be, not only for those living with it, but also for the people who love and care for them.”

MS Plus Community Fundraiser, Desmond

Giving and community impact







MS Plus Op Shops

MS Plus Op Shops continue to play an important role in raising funds while supporting sustainability and local communities. Across our nine shops in Victoria and Tasmania, almost 428,000 items were processed and diverted from waste, giving pre-loved goods a second life and contributing to the circular economy.

Throughout FY26, our shops welcomed more than 175,000 customers, making them valued community destinations as well as retail spaces. Together, the generosity of donors, shoppers, volunteers and staff helped raise more than **$2 million** to support the work of MS Plus.

This year, more than 200 volunteers contributed almost 42,000 hours across our shops, helping ensure donated items reached the shelves and customers continued to enjoy a welcoming shopping experience.

MS Giving

The continued generosity of our donor community plays an important role in supporting the work of MS Plus.

In FY2025-26, more than 5,000 people contributed **$1.484 million** through donor appeals, while almost 700 Regular Givers donated a further **$350,000**.

Together, these contributions help strengthen services, drive innovation and support our commitment to improving outcomes for people living with neurological conditions.

Legacy Giving

The generous donations we receive through our Gifts in Wills program play a vital role in improving the lives of people living with MS and other neurological conditions today, while helping to create a better future for those who will face a diagnosis tomorrow.

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our benefactors, MS Plus received more than **$5 million** through Gifts in Wills in FY26, supporting the development of new and improved services, innovation in care, and, through the fundraising we do for MS Australia, investment in groundbreaking research.

"While waiting for my neurologist appointment to confirm my diagnosis, I scheduled a phone call with an MS nurse. I was distressed, and the nurse put my mind at ease. They validated my symptoms, explained why I might be experiencing them, and gave me practical advice to cope while I waited."

MS Plus Client, Connie (centre)

The foundations of quality care

As MS Plus marks 70 years of supporting people living with MS and other neurological conditions, we continue to strengthen the foundations that guide how we deliver services. Across the organisation, a series of interconnected frameworks helps ensure people receive coordinated, evidence-informed and person-centred support.

Guiding how we work

Supporting this approach are four key frameworks that inform service delivery, decision-making and continuous improvement across MS Plus:

- Wellbeing Model for Service Delivery
- Person-Centred Framework
- Outcomes Framework
- Integrated Care Framework

Together, these frameworks help create a consistent approach to care while ensuring services remain responsive to changing needs and expectations.

Putting wellbeing first

Our Wellbeing Model for Service Delivery recognises that living well extends beyond physical health. It takes a holistic view of wellbeing, encompassing physical, emotional, social and mental health while supporting people to maintain choice and control over the services they receive.

By focusing on the whole person, the model helps guide support that aligns with individual goals, priorities and aspirations.

Keeping people at the centre

The Person-Centred Framework embeds rights-based, evidence-informed practice across the organisation. It ensures the goals, preferences and circumstances of each individual remain central to decision-making and service delivery.

The framework also provides consistency across programs, services and locations, helping create experiences that are coordinated, responsive and tailored to individual needs.

Measuring what matters

The Outcomes Framework shifts the focus from measuring activity to understanding impact. By identifying meaningful indicators of success, it helps us assess how services contribute to positive outcomes for the people we support.

The framework strengthens accountability, informs continuous improvement and provides valuable insights to support service development and organisational planning.

Supporting connected care

The Integrated Care Framework responds to the challenges many people face when navigating healthcare, disability and community support systems.

Developed through consultation with people living with neurological conditions, carers and health professionals, the framework promotes stronger collaboration and communication between providers, helping create more connected, coordinated and equitable experiences of care.

A framework for the future

Together, these frameworks provide a strong foundation for service delivery across MS Plus. They support consistent practice, strengthen quality and help ensure services continue to evolve alongside the needs of the people and communities we serve.

By combining evidence, lived experience and a commitment to continuous improvement, MS Plus is building on 70 years of experience while creating a stronger foundation for the years ahead.





Work, wellness and walking aids: Bec is redefining life with MS

When Bec was diagnosed with MS in 2022, her life changed rapidly, but not her determination to keep doing what matters. Just days after symptoms began, including tingling feet that progressed up both legs, she had a diagnosis.

The shock was real, but so was the relief. 'I knew something was wrong,' she says. 'The fatigue, the weakness. I was so glad someone finally believed me.'

A mother of three and public servant, Bec had always been active – commuting by bike, hiking with her family, restoring furniture. Post-diagnosis, she had to rethink how she moved through the world.

'I can't be spontaneous anymore,' she admits. 'Every outing needs planning. I need to consider the weather, walking aids, how long I'll be out, and whether I'll have the energy for anything else that day.'

One of the most significant supports for Bec has been her connection to MS Plus, particularly through employment and physiotherapy services.

'I got in touch with MS Plus while I was still in hospital. That phone call opened so many doors,' she says. Through the Employment Support Service (ESS), she received equipment for her home office, ergonomic supports, cooling aids and regular remedial massage, all critical in managing fatigue and pain.

'My physio was the one who told me I'd qualify for NDIS,' she adds. 'At first I thought, "I'm not disabled enough." But the way MS affected me day to day, my balance, pain, fatigue and sensitivity to heat, was enough. I just needed someone to show me what support looked like.'

Physiotherapy and exercise physiology have played a major role in helping Bec stay strong and capable.

'I work on muscle groups that help me function day to day, like getting off the floor, reaching top cupboards, or balancing on uneven ground,' she says. 'It's about protecting the strength I still have.'

These efforts have paid off in big ways. 'After 18 months of work, I got back on my bike,' Bec says.

'We went to the velodrome so I could try it somewhere safe, and I just rode in circles, grinning the whole time. Riding was such a joy before MS, and now I've found a way to do it again.'

Fifteen months post-diagnosis, Bec was also able to pick up a bow for the first time and have a go at archery, after watching her son at his practice sessions all year. What started as curiosity became a lifeline.

'It's improved my balance, my strength and it gave me a way to bond with my son,' she says. 'Now we shoot together every week.'

Archery became more than a hobby. It was a statement. 'I want my kids to see that walking aids don't hold me back, they help me live. I may walk slowly and fatigue easily, but I can still be strong, focused, and present.'

With support from an MS Go for Gold Scholarship, Bec is now investing in lessons and equipment so she can continue growing in the sport.

'One day, I'd love to enter competitions with my eldest son,' she says. 'It's not just about goals, it's about showing my boys what resilience looks like.'

Support at work has also made a big difference. 'I used to work full time, but fatigue makes that hard now. My team has been really understanding,' she says.

'It's tricky when new supervisors come on, do I disclose my diagnosis? Will they understand I'm still good at what I do even if I need adjustments?'

Bec says MS has taught her to embrace the things that help, like walking aids, rest breaks, and external support. 'I've got stylish crutches from the UK and a vintage cane from my grandmother. It doesn't have to be clinical to be useful. They give me freedom, not limitations.'



"It's improved my balance, my strength and it gave me a way to bond with my son."

MS Plus client, Bec

Supporting independence at home

For many people, remaining at home is about much more than where they live. It's about maintaining independence, routines and connections to the people and communities that matter most.

For more than 35 years, Care For You at Home (CFYAH) has supported people across Port Stephens and surrounding communities to live independently and confidently in their own homes. It is the trusted local provider for in-home services for older Australians and veterans across the region.

Since becoming part of MS Plus in 2022, CFYAH has continued to build on its strong local reputation while benefiting from the expertise, governance and clinical excellence of one of Australia's most experienced disability organisations, enabling an expansion into disability support and increasing access for people utilising the NDIS, which it is fully accredited to provide.

This strategic focus reflects a growing demand for flexible, person-centred care that supports individuals to achieve their goals, maintain independence and participate fully in their communities whether they are over 65, a veteran or living with a disability. Care For You at Home is your local service, led by locals with the backing of 70 years of experience in disability and health care.

Today, that expertise is benefiting an even wider community. While many clients have age-related support needs or disabilities unrelated to neurological conditions, the same principles remain central to every interaction: listening to people, understanding what matters most to them and delivering care that supports independence, dignity and wellbeing.

Meet registered nurse, Claire

As a Registered Nurse with CFYAH, Claire works closely with clients and their families to assess health needs, coordinate supports and help people continue living safely at home.

Drawing on her community and aged care nursing experience, Claire takes a person-centred approach, tailoring support to each individual's circumstances.

"This is not about taking your independence away from you," Claire said. "This is about supporting you to remain independent for as long as possible."

For Claire, the most rewarding part of her role is building trusted relationships and helping people maintain their health, independence and quality of life. Through nurses like Claire, Care For You at Home empowers people to live life on their own terms.



Care For You at Home highlights

35

years supporting the Port Stephens community

239

clients supported (23% increase from FY25)

19,281

care hours delivered

Service hours by funding type

Veteran Home Care

5,805

Support at Home Packages

7,515

NDIS

4,280

Department of Veterans' Affairs

1,440

Brokered/Private

242

Research for a better future

Research continues to play a critical role in improving the understanding, treatment and management of multiple sclerosis, and in driving progress towards the ultimate goal of preventing and curing the disease.

MS Plus is proud to support the important research work of MS Australia through our fundraising efforts and annual grant contributions. Through the generosity of our community, we help ensure researchers across Australia can continue advancing knowledge, exploring new treatment approaches and improving outcomes for people living with MS.

During FY26, MS Plus fundraising activities contributed **$625,296** towards research, including the May 50K campaign.

In addition to funds raised through these programs, MS Plus provided an annual grant of **$466,740** to MS Australia, bringing our total contribution to MS research to **$1,092,036** for the year.

These funds form part of a national effort led by MS Australia to support innovative research projects, attract emerging research talent and build evidence that can translate into better care, treatments and quality of life for people living with MS.

For decades, investment in research has helped transform the outlook for people diagnosed with MS. Advances in disease-modifying therapies, improved understanding of disease progression and growing knowledge of symptom management have all been made possible through ongoing research and collaboration across the MS sector.

Every dollar raised by the MS Plus community contributes to this progress. Whether through participation in events such as The May 50K, donations from individual supporters, gifts in Wills, workplace giving or community fundraising activities, our supporters play an important role in helping to drive future discoveries.





Through our partnership with MS Australia, funds raised by MS Plus help support a diverse portfolio of research projects. In FY26, these included initiatives focused on:

- Dr Kimberley Parkin, The Kids Research Institute Australia, WA; Exploring the link between gut health and the immune system in MS
- Associate Professor Justin Rubio, The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health, VIC; Does inflammation cause faster mutation of cells located in MS lesions?
- Professor Alexander Klistorner, The University of Sydney, NSW; Real-world study of MS treatments for ongoing inflammation
- Dr Monokesh Sen, The University of Sydney, NSW; How macrophage-derived extracellular vesicles help repair myelin

These projects reflect the breadth of research being undertaken across Australia, spanning areas such as disease prevention, early detection, treatment development, symptom management and quality of life.

We are grateful to every donor, fundraiser, event participant, volunteer and supporter who contributes to these efforts. Their generosity enables MS Australia to continue investing in world-class research and helps bring us closer to a future where no one has to face the uncertainty of an MS diagnosis.

Together, we are helping to create lasting impact, supporting the discoveries that will improve lives today and shape a better future for generations to come.

Concise financials

Summary financial performance

Actual Financial Performance ($'000)	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
MS Plus total income	49,755	43,053	56,271	48,591	44,096
Consolidated net surplus/(deficit)	2,148	(8,331)	10,117	2,770	(5,713)

Growth in direct service delivery to people living with MS

Direct service delivery includes those activities undertaken by the Group which deliver a service to people affected by MS or other neurological conditions and which are primarily funded by fee-for-service arrangements or government grants. Over recent years, the funding environment has changed significantly because of the introduction of the NDIS.

The Group's NDIS service offerings include Support Coordination, Allied Health, Plan Management, Supported Independent Living and Specialised Disability Accommodation. Employment Support Services are government funded through Inclusive Employment Australia.

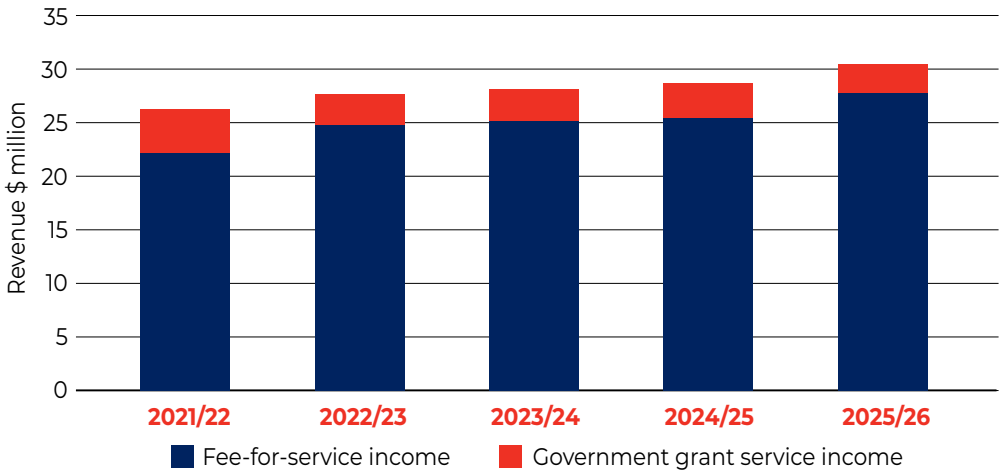
MS Plus' subsidiary, MS Plus Healthy Ageing Pty Ltd (formerly known as Nursing Port Stephens Pty Ltd), provides private nursing, personal care and domestic assistance to aged care clients in the home and community.

The continued growth, despite lack of indexation on NDIS pricing, in service delivery funded by fee-for-service arrangements reflects the Group's continued investment in the scale of these NDIS services.

The chart adjacent highlights the five-year growth in funds available for MS Plus to provide direct services to people affected by MS or other neurological conditions.



Growth in funds to provide services for People living with MS



Fundraising that supports people living with MS

Fundraising plays a vital role in enabling MS Plus to deliver programs, services, supports, information and resources that are highly valued by people living with MS and other neurological conditions, and their communities but are not fully funded or funded by government programs, fee-for-service or other sources.

The fundraising environment remained challenging throughout 2025-26, reflecting broader sector trends and ongoing economic uncertainty. Many traditional fundraising channels experienced reduced participation and lower returns as household cost-of-living pressures continued to influence donor and supporter behaviour. Events, lotteries and community fundraising activities were particularly impacted, with results generally below budget and consistent with performance reported across the charitable sector.

Despite these challenges, MS Plus maintained strong community support and delivered a net fundraising result of $2.8 million. Gifts in Wills continued to be a significant contributor, generating $1.6 million during the year and enabling MS Plus to invest in services and support that would otherwise not be possible.

Performance across fundraising programs was mixed. While several major events experienced lower-than-anticipated participation, resulting in returns below budget, community fundraising activities generally achieved sustainable outcomes. The MS Mega Challenge delivered a particularly strong result, exceeding expectations and demonstrating the value of innovative engagement models. Individual Giving programs, including appeals, performed strongly and exceeded budget expectations, reflecting the ongoing generosity and commitment of the MS Plus' loyal supporters. MS Op Shops also delivered a positive financial contribution and continued to provide opportunities for local community engagement.

Fundraising for research was below target, reflecting lower participation in key campaigns during the year. Nevertheless, the generosity of supporters enabled almost $2 million to be raised to advance vital MS research and improve understanding of neurological conditions.

The 2025-26 financial year marked an important transition in the evolution of fundraising at MS Plus. Following changes in leadership and the implementation of a refreshed fundraising strategy, the organisation has increased its focus on sustainable, long-term growth opportunities, including philanthropy, major giving, partnerships and Gifts in Wills. This strategic shift is designed to diversify revenue sources, strengthen fundraising resilience and ensure MS Plus can continue investing in services, advocacy, research and community programs that improve outcomes for people living with MS and other neurological conditions.



Concise financials

Sources and uses of Funds

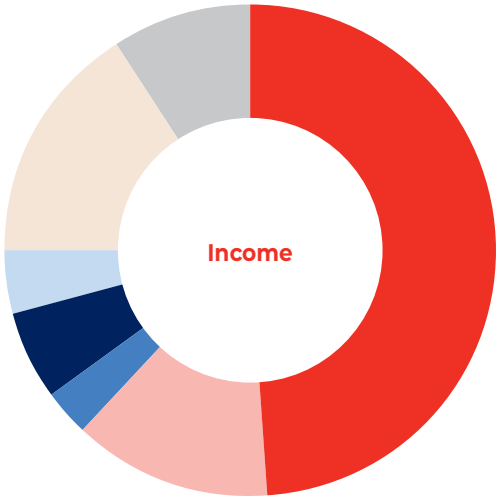
The information presented below is intended to answer common questions about MS Plus' financial performance.

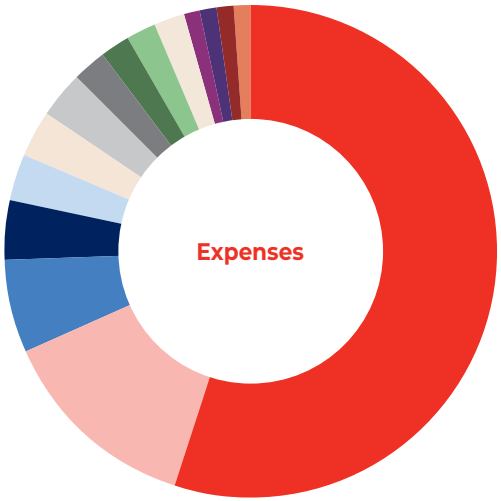
Where the money comes from

MS Plus relies on a broad range of funding sources to deliver its support for people living with MS. In total, MS Plus Group generated **$56.8m** in revenue for the year (2025: **$46.4m**). This income comes from government, fee for services and MS Plus' fundraising activities. The chart opposite shows where the Group derived its income during the 2026 financial year.

How the money was spent

The chart opposite shows how the total expenditure for the 2026 financial year was allocated between the various activities undertaken by MS Plus Group.





Income	$	%
Fee for services	27,730,483	49%
Donation and sponsorship income	7,468,872	13%
Gifts in wills	1,597,547	3%
Sales and lotteries	3,357,143	6%
Government grants for services	2,668,135	4%
Government donation of land	8,934,999	16%
Other income	5,001,897	9%
	56,759,076	

Expenses	$	%
Employment and staffing expenses	29,746,838	54%
Impairment on property plant and equipment	7,156,709	13%
Depreciation and amortisation	3,308,348	6%
ICT expenses	2,382,425	5%
Directly supporting clients with financial assistance	1,742,074	3%
Implementing Strategic Directions 2025-2027	1,629,992	3%
Occupancy expenses	1,610,907	3%
Promoting services and events to the community	1,313,812	2%
Event and fundraising costs	1,335,239	2%
Investment into MS research to find a cure	1,180,066	2%
Interest expense	1,076,687	2%
Net funds raised on behalf of MS Australia and MS state societies	804,018	2%
Administration expenses	542,840	1%
Impairment of goodwill	280,643	1%
Other expenses	500,677	1%
	54,611,275	

MS Plus Ltd and its controlled entities

Consolidated statement of surplus or deficit and other comprehensive income – for the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026 $	2025 $
Revenue		
Government and fee-for-service revenue to deliver programs for people living with MS:		
Fee for services	27,730,483	25,272,577
Government donation of land	8,934,999	-
Government grants for services	2,668,135	3,249,604
Government contributions for capital projects	-	700,000
Funds raised by MS Plus to support the delivery of valued programs not funded by Government:		
Donation and sponsorship income	7,468,872	8,192,443
Sales and lotteries	3,357,143	3,278,299
Gifts in wills	1,597,547	5,051,568
Interest and dividend income	196,307	133,423
Net gain/(loss) on assets classified as fair value through profit or loss	-	(64,683)
Specific purpose funding	55,586	138,513
Surplus / (deficit) from sale of property, plant and equipment	4,011,353	(137,143)
Other income	738,651	564,034
Total revenue	**56,759,076**	**46,378,635**

	2026 $	2025 $
Expenditure		
Employment and staffing expenses	29,746,838	28,923,911
Impairment on property plant and equipment	7,156,709	5,049,315
Depreciation	3,308,348	2,671,687
ICT expenses	2,382,425	2,152,095
Directly supporting clients with financial assistance	1,742,074	2,282,282
Implementing Strategic Directions 2025-2027	1,629,992	1,064,288
Occupancy expenses	1,610,907	1,629,909
Event and fundraising costs	1,335,239	1,526,026
Promoting services and events to the community	1,313,812	1,502,026
Investment into MS research to find a cure	1,180,066	1,246,944
Interest expense	1,076,687	1,083,568
Net funds raised on behalf of MS Australia and MS state societies	804,018	1,526,011
Administration expenses	542,840	675,391
Impairment of goodwill	280,643	2,494,571
Awards and prizes	186,051	254,554
Amortisation	-	163,333
Other expenses	314,626	463,636
Total expenditure	**54,611,275**	**54,709,546**
Total comprehensive income/(deficit) for the year	**2,147,801**	**(8,330,911)**

Consolidated statement of financial position – as at 30 June 2026

	2026 $	2025 $
Assets		
Current assets	12,059,284	12,735,161
Non-current assets	57,722,621	61,738,982
Total assets	**69,781,905**	**74,474,143**

	2026 $	2025 $
Liabilities		
Current liabilities	9,722,735	13,923,835
Non-current liabilities	9,639,442	12,278,381
Total Liabilities	**19,362,177**	**26,202,216**
Net assets	**50,419,728**	**48,271,927**

MS Plus Board



Adriana Zuccala
MS Plus Chair



Alison Brown
Deputy Chair



Jennifer Bennett



Ian Blair



Mathew Cleeve



Danielle Dalby



Corinne Habel



Jeannette Lechner-Scott



John Rowland



Tim Ryan

Our Board Committees

Risk, Audit and Finance

Alison Brown
Chair

Mathew Cleeve

Danielle Dalby

Ally Long
Independent Member

Nominations, Remuneration and Governance

Adriana Zuccala
Chair

Alison Brown

Garry Whatley
Independent Member

Infrastructure

Adriana Zuccala
Chair

John Rowland

Donna-Maree Vinci
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Lance Willie
Independent Member

Program, Policy and Practice

Jeannette Lechner-Scott
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Ian Blair

Fundraising and Marketing

Corinne Habel
Chair

Fern Cargill
Independent Member

Georgia Loudon
Independent Member

Community Engagement

Tim Ryan
Chair

Kellie Yeow
Consumer Representative

Alison Reece
MSCEC Vic - Chair

Our Senior Leadership Team

John Blewonski
Chief Executive Officer

Sally Dale
Senior Manager People & Culture

Alison Dean
Chief Transformation Officer

Kim Farrugia
Executive Officer & Company Secretary

Brook Ferguson
Senior Manager, ICT & Cyber Security

Stephen Jolly
Senior Manager Employment Support Services

Rob McClay
Executive Manager Strategy & Client Impact

Herschel Parker
Senior Manager Retail Operations

Jo Sanders
General Manager Quality, Risk and Residential Services

Natalie Silvestro
General Manager, Client Services

Darren Spooner
Chief Financial Officer

A legacy shaped by lived experience: Marjorie's story

Having witnessed firsthand the impact of MS on individuals and families, Marjorie understands the importance of support, connection and compassionate care. Her decision to leave a gift in her Will reflects a lifelong commitment to ensuring others receive the help they need.

"John, my first husband was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in the 1960s... I did not receive any financial help or other assistance, though I wish I had. That was government policy at the time."

Those were very, very tough times for John and Marjorie.

"In the '60s the role of the-then Multiple Sclerosis Society of NSW was not so well known, and we had little contact. However, family and friends were of tremendous help. Eventually I was able to take six months long service leave to be with him. I am so grateful that I was with him at the time of his death in 1972."



"I learnt how informed, caring and expert support can make a huge difference to the whole family."

MS Plus Gift in Will supporter, Marjorie

Living through that difficult time gave Marjorie a first-hand understanding of the challenges people living with multiple sclerosis (MS) face. "I learnt how informed, caring and expert support can make a huge difference to the whole family."

Marjorie has seen the impact that MS has on everyone. As a social worker, she also saw it with her clients. This personal experience aided her decision to support MS Plus. She decided to help now and well into the future.

Marjorie has also joined the MS Callistemon League. She is leaving a legacy of her love via a gift in her Will to MS Plus.

"I have lived through it.. so MS is a cause close to my heart."

Marjorie comments on how critical support from MS also extends into regional areas. As is the case with Marjorie's niece, who lives in Armidale. She has MS and is benefitting from the services that MS offers.

Marjorie's decision to leave a legacy gift is a very strong statement of her values. She supports the rights of those facing health and other challenges. Marjorie stands for human rights for all. She doesn't want anyone to face MS alone.

Marjorie's legacy will serve as an example for her stepchildren and step-grandchildren, encouraging them to also live by these caring and supportive values.

She tells us: "I have lived through it... so MS is a cause close to my heart."

Marjorie encourages others to join her in her quest to ensure "no one needs to face MS alone."

Join the MS Callistemon League

Marjorie chose to leave a gift in her Will because she wants future generations to receive the support, care and connection that can make such a difference when living with MS. By doing so, she became a member of the MS Callistemon League, a special group of supporters who have chosen to leave a lasting legacy through a gift in their Will.

Membership is our way of recognising and thanking those whose generosity will help ensure that no one has to face MS alone. If you're considering leaving a gift in your Will, we'd be pleased to welcome you to the MS Callistemon League and share more about the difference your future support could make.

Find out more about the MS Callistemon League at www.msplus.org.au/ms-callistemon-league.

Benefactors, trusts and foundations

Our benefactors

We wish to express our heartfelt gratitude for these wonderful gifts that make such an impact in the lives of people living with MS.

Some of our benefactors include:

- Allport Bequest
- ATS Charitable Foundation
- Balliana Constructions
- Philip Bell
- Audrey Campbell
- Centenary Foundation – The Judith Hodge Fund
- Anne Coffey and Robin Sanderson
- Rosemary Dare
- Margaret Dobbin
- Henry Foster
- Greater Melbourne Foundation – Estate Mildred Dorothy Shaw Giving Fund
- Shavano Family Office – Dean Heales
- Wendy & Doug Hammerton
- James N. Kirby Foundation
- Ronald G Kaiser
- Neil Kearney
- Rod Miller
- Paul Okkerse
- Loyd Perin and The Lidia Perin Foundation
- Perpetual Foundation – J & G Bedwell Endowment
- Perpetual Foundation
- Rosemary Pitt
- Rotary Club of Moorabbin
- Skipper-Jacobs Charitable Trust
- Helen Swan
- Victoria Shakespeare Trust

Gifts in Will

We gratefully acknowledge those who have chosen to leave a gift in their Will, helping ensure support, services and research can continue for future generations.

Some of our Gifts in Will supporters include:

- Rita Marion Andre
- Joyce Catherine Annand
- Lindsay James Baldy
- Hildegard Catania Bell
- The Edward Broadhurst Memorial Charitable Fund
- Yvonne Harley Carey
- Arthur and Doris Clayton Trust
- Colin John Gageler
- Isabel E and Francis J Hickmott Charitable Trust
- Phyllis Holman
- Laraine Ann Jennings
- Warren Richard Johnson
- Donald Lambourne
- Kenneth McDonald Martin
- Judith Ann Middlemass
- Norma Rene Minney
- William Thomas Penrose
- Stewart William Reeves
- Helen Elizabeth Reid
- Doris Thelma Rowe Charitable Trust
- Heather Margaret Ryan Charitable Fund
- Elizabeth Ellen Morton Terrell
- Elsie Louise Thomas
- Betty Lilian Agnes Townsend
- Joe White Bequest

MS Plus Ltd is a registered charity and accredited to carry the ACNC (Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission) Tick.

MS Plus Group is appropriately registered and accredited to deliver NDIS and Australian Government-funded aged care services.

MS Plus is also an approved provider of Employment Support Services, funded by the Government's Inclusive Employment Australia through the CoAct network.



Contact MS Plus

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