MARCH 2026

MS + YOU

Stories you'll love about the difference you make

"I have MORE of everything now."

How your support and MS Wellbeing Centres have turned Aaron's life around.

Aaron was the first person to stay at Lidcombe Home supported disability apartments, next door to our MS Plus Wellbeing Centre. It was a life-changing experience.

His MS diagnosis in 2007 was followed by a series of devastating losses.

As he tells it, his symptoms took *"My career as an engineer, my relationships and friendships, my accommodation, my mind (both memory and cognition), and finally my independence."*

But because of your kindness, Aaron's story doesn't end there.

You gave him the chance to experience independent living in a welcoming community.

You also helped provide access to state-of-the-art gym equipment and physiotherapy.

Today, Aaron has a lot to look forward to.

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MS PLUS
Neuro Wellbeing

Stronger Together:

How you're making MORE of a difference for people with MS.

For nearly 70 years, MS Plus has walked alongside Australians living with MS, supporting people to live with confidence, connection, and hope.

As we celebrate this milestone, we can look back with pride and forward with purpose.

Over the next few years, MS Plus hopes to increase our impact.

I hope you'll be part of the work to empower even more people with MS, and give them the support to live well at every stage of life with MS.

I'm inspired by the strength of people living with MS, and by the power of our community of supporters, researchers, family, and carers.

Together, we will continue to drive progress, deliver hope, and change lives.

John Blewonski
CEO, MS Plus

We're not just *saying* things are stronger together - Dr Phu has proved it!

Your support has enabled Dr Phu to focus on MS rehabilitation for the past 25 years. His obsession with specialist exercise therapy has paid off.

He says "80-90% of our patients have shown improvement after receiving our services."

But Dr Phu is not stopping there. He is gathering data that strongly suggests even more gains can be made – by combining exercise therapy with treatments for other MS symptoms such as fatigue.

Essentially, the more aspects of a person's MS that are treated at once, the greater the overall benefit.

> **"Without the support of donors, none of this would have been possible [and] the understanding of MS would be less than it is now."** – Dr Phu

Just look at what you brought to people with MS in 2025. Thanks to you:

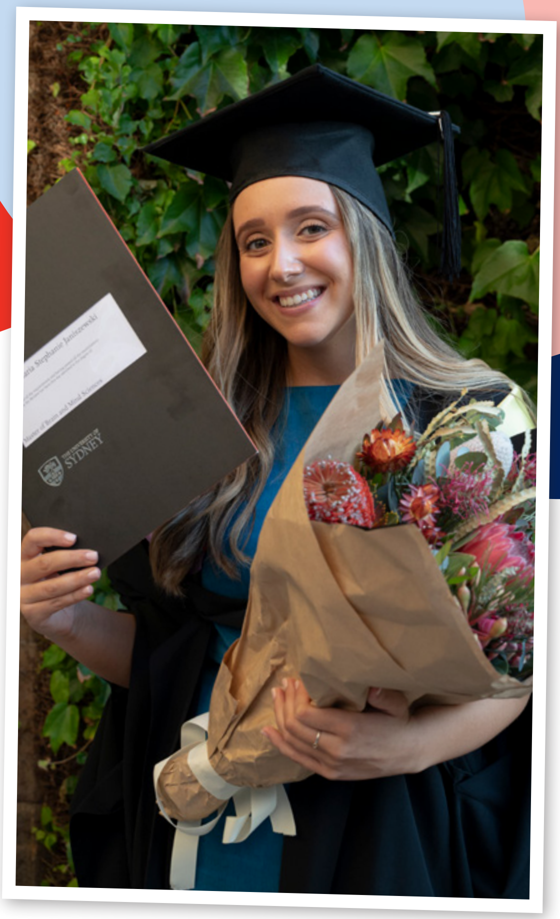
The Plus Connect team provided **more than 10,000 hours** of advice and support to 726 new clients.

The Support Coordination team achieved a major milestone, assisting our first resident to move into Lidcombe Home.

The Plan Management team reduced the admin NDIS load for a record **500 clients**, giving them more time to focus on their health and wellbeing.

"They helped me feel less afraid."

How you helped nurse Connie back to hope.



Connie's vision problems, pain, and fatigue began when she was 12 years old. She had to take a year off school, but doctors couldn't tell her what was wrong.

By the time she went to University, Connie's symptoms were worse. But she had to wait six months to see a neurologist who specialised in MS.

Desperate for answers, Connie sought expert advice and support. An MS Plus Nurse "listened, validated my symptoms, and gave me practical ways to cope."

It was Connie's turning point.

Today, she's pursuing a PhD to help others on their journey to their diagnosis. She hasn't forgotten how your support helped her through a terrifying time.

In 2025, you helped 1,024 people like Connie get expert help from an MS nurse when they needed it most.

> "MS Plus helped me believe in myself again."
> – Connie

Brad's work in progress

He's back at a desk and filled with purpose, thanks to you.

After his MS diagnosis, Brad's symptoms meant he struggled to sit at a desk all day, and he had to leave his job in the finance sector.

When he wanted to return to work, MS Plus Employment Support Service (ESS) was there, thanks to you.

An ESS team member helped Brad find a new role and manage his symptoms.

"I don't think anyone can understand just how much that helps," Brad says.

After being back at work for a while, Brad realised that what he really wanted to do was help others, so he joined the MS Plus ESS team.

Today, he helps other people with MS find and keep the right job for them.

Brad says that the resources you help provide to keep people with MS in the workplace are "Invaluable."

Thanks to your support, **more than 790 people** accessed our Employment Support Service.

More than 90% of them found work within 3 months!

After years of living with less, Aaron is finding joy in MORE!

It's thanks to your support and our MS Plus Wellbeing Centre.

As his disease progressed, Aaron had to move back home and rely on his 70-year-old mum's care.

They live in a regional area where "there are no neurologists, and not many health supports."

The next few years were tough. Aaron says,

"I suffered through anxiety, depression, bladder control, bowel difficulties, the ability to walk, swallow, and converse. Also, the decreased ability of my right arm, right leg."

It's heartbreaking to see everything Aaron – and his mum – had to face. But his story shows that there's a lot more to life with MS, thanks to the generosity of you and others like you.

Physiotherapy sessions boosted Aaron's confidence. "Keeping your body fit improves your mental health," he explains.

"I felt more invigorated after every session."

Staying in a fully adapted apartment at Lidcombe Home, with a kitchen where he could cook for himself and support on hand 24/7, was an eye-opener. It gave Aaron "a more positive outlook on independent living."

Aaron now hopes to become a permanent resident of Lidcombe Home. He's also keen to help others living with MS as a peer support volunteer.

MS takes a lot from people living with it and those who care for them.

But after being confronted with so many losses, your compassionate support has given Aaron "a feeling of new possibilities."

His life didn't end with his diagnosis. It's just starting over. And there's a lot to look forward to.

Lidcombe Home has no waitlists for either respite or long-term accommodation.

To find out more call 1800 042 138 or email home@msplus.org.au

From shy guy to social connector

David talks about the power of the Peer Support program that you make possible.

> "It's not always talking about our disease. For some people, it's more the friendly faces and conversation we all need."
>
> – David

"Seeing people is a very human way of socialising. A lot of people just enjoy the experience of getting out."

David's MS symptoms took a lot of the things that made him happy, like the tennis and cricket he loved, and even his job.

It's no surprise that his mental health took a hit.

Sadly, David isn't alone. People with MS are much more likely to experience depression, but there's very little specialist mental health support for people like David.

MS can also isolate people. A recent MS Plus survey revealed that nearly one-third of respondents said their MS makes it hard to socialise.

The MS Peer Support groups that you help fund give people with MS the chance to meet up and chat with others who 'get it'.

Even though David says he's "on the shy side", he found Peer Support to be so beneficial that after six meetings, he volunteered to run a group himself. "It's the human connection we all need," he says.

In 2025, you helped 176 volunteers like David provide nearly 2,000 hours of life-changing peer support. Thank you!

Luigi's legacy

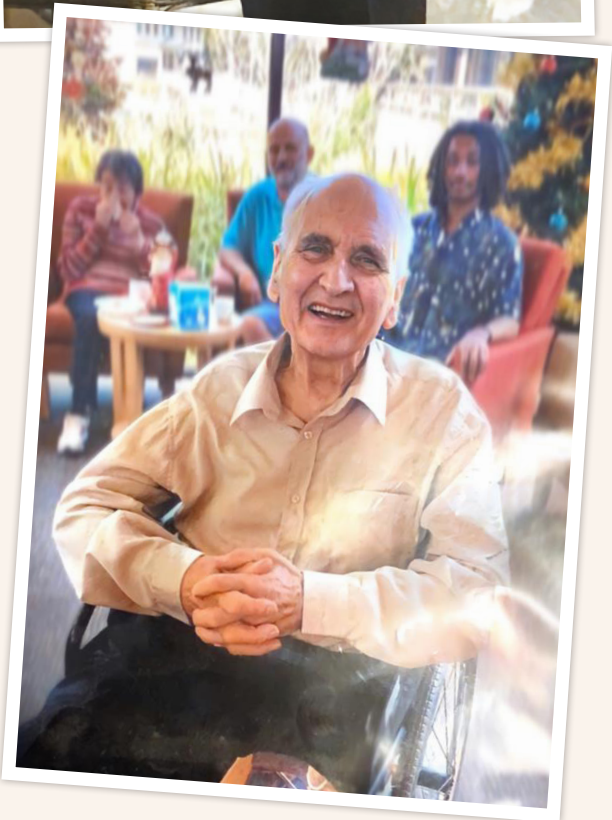
How a gentle craftsman is shaping a better future for people with MS.

During his lifetime, Luigi was a familiar face in the Melbourne suburb of Lilydale.

Every day, he would travel to the Degani Café in the Lilydale Marketplace on his motorised scooter, waving and smiling at everyone he met.

Yet Luigi was unknown to the team at MS Plus until after his passing, when a letter arrived revealing an extraordinary gift in his Will to help people living with MS.

> **"Sometimes we receive beautiful, unexpected gifts like Luigi's.**
>
> **It's a reminder that generosity often comes from the most unassuming places."** – The MS Plus Future Planning team



Luigi was born in 1932 in the picturesque mountain town of Coreglia Antelminelli, in Tuscany

He sailed to Australia in 1952 to make a new life.

He was a skilled cabinet maker who carved out a career in the building industry.

Luigi never married, but he had many friends, who described him as a "humble and kind" man.

We may never know why he chose to help people living with MS, but Luigi's legacy will last for generations.

Want to follow in Luigi's footsteps?

Learn more about leaving a gift in your Will to MS Plus.

Gifts in Wills have contributed more than $5m to improve the lives of people with MS in the 2024/2025 financial year.

Scan the QR code to see how a gift in your Will could help make MS a thing of the past.

Deb spent decades searching for answers

Now you're helping researchers get a groundbreaking early diagnosis tool to others with MS.

Deb began suffering embarrassing incontinence in her teens.

Over the coming years, she experienced an alarming range of symptoms, but doctors couldn't tell her what was wrong.

At one point, she even temporarily lost her eyesight.

Later, she was accused of faking it by a physio who was treating her after her leg gave way.

By the time Deb was diagnosed with MS, she'd begun to question her own sanity.

Deb's story is something we hear all too often.

It takes an average of four years for people to be diagnosed with MS, during which time they face uncertainty, unnecessary treatments, and miss out on early interventions.

Your support helps fund research like that of Dr Lin and his dedicated team in their quest to develop a blood test to help doctors diagnose MS faster.

If Dr Lin is successful, it will give people with MS a better quality of life, thanks to you.

The MS Plus community donated $500,000 in the 2024/2025 financial year to help fund pioneering research like Dr. Lin's.

Thank you!

Lace up your shoes!

The MS Walk Run + Roll is back for 2026!

Scan to sign up!

We are so excited to invite everyone to join us in Sydney, Canberra, or Melbourne once again for one of the best events in the cardio calendar!

By signing up and fundraising, participants help ensure that no one has to face MS alone.

Come down for a day filled with fitness, friends, and fun, all in support of people living with multiple sclerosis.

We are family!

Thanks for bringing us together.

Some proud young artists at the MS Plus family camp

In October 2025, 14 families spent the weekend at Phillip Island learning tips for managing MS, including an MS Nurse-led family education session.

There was plenty of indoor and outdoor fun for all the family, too, and the chance to form lifelong friendships!

> **"We all connected. It was incredible to see how much the kids knew, as well as validating for them that they weren't alone on this journey."** – Participant

So many people with MS can look forward to MORE, thanks to your life-changing support.

Thank you!

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