



**PLUS**  
Neuro Wellbeing

**ACT Newsletter**  
July 2025

*Our Values - Empowerment, Community, Expertise, Creativity and Spirited*

# 2025 MS Mega Swim Canberra

Join us at the Australian Institute of Sport on Saturday 2 August, for the 2025 Canberra MS Mega Swim and make a life-changing impact for people living with multiple sclerosis.

There are over 33,300 people living with MS in Australia and everyone's experience is unique. Living with MS is complex and unpredictable with varied symptoms that range from mild to severe. They may flare up once in a while, or last for long periods of time.

Funds raised contribute to the MS Go for Gold Scholarships the Plus Financial Assistance Program and provide services to directly benefit people living with multiple sclerosis.

**Make a splash this August in the 2025 Canberra MS Mega Swim!**

Register today!! <https://www.msmegachallenge.org.au/>



## Volunteer at the Canberra MS Mega Challenge!

Not a swimmer but still want to be involved in the Canberra MS Mega Challenge? Why not volunteer? We would love to have you join us on the events team on **Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 August**.

Volunteers are a vital part of our events; we couldn't do it without them! They bring the good vibes and ensure that the swimmers have an amazing experience. If you're interested in supporting Australians living with MS a different way, then sign up to volunteer today!



[Click here for more information](#)

# The 2025 MS Go for Gold Scholarships



## How can we help you live your dream?

Our 2025 MS Go for Gold Scholarship applications are opening soon! The scholarships provide one-off grants to follow a personal dream, funded by the supporters of our MS Mega Challenge events.

If you're living with MS or another neurological condition, the scholarships can provide the helping hand you need to follow your passion. We have 25 scholarships worth up to \$2,000 each up for grabs! Keep an eye on the MS Plus website [msplus.org.au/GFG](https://msplus.org.au/GFG)

**Applications open on 15 July 2025**

## The May 50K is completed for 2025!



Our amazing participants have raised over \$2,092,000 for vital MS research!

A **HUGE** thank you to every incredible person who walked, rolled, or ran 50km (or more!) this May to raise funds and awareness for MS Australia.

**We hope to see everyone again in 2026!**

## Congratulations to our 2025 Art Show winners!!

Congratulations to the winners of our MS Virtual Art Show for 2025, officially announced on Friday 30 May for World MS Day.

The **Barry Allen Art Award**: *Chasing Mountains with a Disability* by **Leon Waldhuter**

Highly Commended

- Painting: *It's all in her Head* by **Laura Trapnell**
- Drawing/Illustration: *Suitcases* by **Gwen Rodgers**
- Sculptural/Craft Artwork: *Delicate Fortitude* by **Olivia Taken**
- Digital Artwork and Photography: *Can't catch me now* by **Deanna Renee**

Carers Award: *Discussion* by **Debra Hornby**

Carers Award Special Mention: *Sea Monster* **Ari Benedetti**



[Click here to view the full Virtual Art Show Gallery](#)

# what's on

Exploring the latest programs and updates from client engagement and wellbeing



JULY 2025

## Art therapy guided group program – Supporting mental health, wellbeing and enhance mindfulness

This two part small group session, facilitated by a qualified art therapist, aims to provide opportunities to support mental health and wellbeing. Using creative expression and mindfulness, we can discover ways to ground ourselves, become attuned to our needs, and explore art making and materials to support pain management.

**Book:** <https://www.trybooking.com/DBWJU>

**Cost:** \$120.00



**Experience the benefits of art therapy**  
for mental health, mindfulness and wellbeing

## Peer Links – learning through shared experience

Sharing experiences with peers in similar situations can bring about a deep sense of understanding and connection that's hard to find elsewhere. Peer Links are online facilitated sessions delivered over three or four weeks. Guest speakers will join throughout the program to share tips and strategies on topics such as managing MS symptoms, lifestyle, stress management and emotional wellbeing.

Coming up over the next few months we have sessions on Women's Health, Men's Health and employment. Program dates and times can be find through the booking link.

**Register at:** <https://www.trybooking.com/CUJNM>

**Cost:** Free

## Learn MS for family & friends

Plus Navigate MS: Family & Friends is a two part program designed for people who support someone with MS. You'll learn about the condition, engage in informative discussions with experts and connect with a supportive community.

**When:** Programs starting in both July and November

**Time:** 7.00pm – 8.15pm

**Register:** [www.trybooking.com/CKEQH](http://www.trybooking.com/CKEQH)

**Cost:** Free

## Live well with a new diagnosis of MS – Join Navigate MS

With the right information, tools and strategies you can live well with a diagnosis of MS. Specifically tailored for people newly diagnosed (first two years), we'll cover topics such as: Understanding MS, health strategies, navigating the health system, building resilience and accessing support. This four-week program is designed to build knowledge and empower, allowing time to share experiences and ask questions.

**When:** Programs starting in both July and November, 6.30pm - 8.00pm Four weeks, online, once a week

**Cost:** Free! Navigate MS is free for people within the first two years of diagnosis.

**Register:** <https://www.trybooking.com/CUIEL>

**Included:** Receive a workbook, ongoing support from an MS nurse, a set of brain health cards for future reference and access to an optional \*Allied Health Advisor appointment.

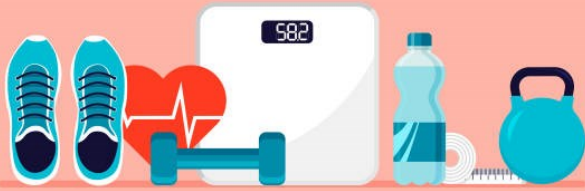
### \*Allied Health Advisor appointments

Specifically designed for newly diagnosed clients completing the Navigate MS program, we offer individual 30-minute telehealth appointments. These appointments focus on providing preventative health strategies to help you live well with MS.

**Cost:** \$80 for a 30min telehealth appointment with an exercise physiologist or dietitian.



## Exercise Classes at Gloria McKerrow House



### Be Better Balanced

A combination of chair and circuit-based exercises designed for individuals who can still walk but have challenges with balance, stamina, and overall mobility. Classes are comprehensive and well-paced, ensuring they are enjoyable for everyone.

**When:** Tuesdays 9:30am — 10:30am

Thursdays 10:00am – 11.00am (online available)

### Wheels in Motion

A class designed for people in wheelchairs or who are having difficulty walking. In this class the focus is on upper body mobility as well as making use of a motorised exercise bike for those it suits. This is a small group and where possible individual work is done on each person to mobilise leg movement.

**When:** Thursdays 11.00am – 12.00pm

**Cost :** 10 classes for \$130.00

*Please call 1800 042 138 to register*



## Online Mindfulness Meditation

*...for people with Multiple Sclerosis and other neurological conditions.*

Join us every Friday afternoon, from 3:30pm - 4:30pm and experience the relaxing benefits of meditation.

Email Helen Woodbridge ([woodbridgehelen@hotmail.com](mailto:woodbridgehelen@hotmail.com)) and she'll send you a Zoom link for the session every Friday. Carers and family also welcome!

## Peer Support

We have two Peer Support Groups available in the ACT, and new members are welcome at any time.

### People with MS (PwMS) Taking Control Group

Our group meets twice a month and seeks to connect people living with MS in the Canberra region, for friendship and information sharing, with a focus on living well with MS.

**Meets:** 1. 12.30 to 2.00pm - 2nd Friday, 11 July 2025 **Venue:** Zoom only

2. 12.30 to 2.00pm - Last Friday, 25 July 2025 **Venue:** Gloria McKerrow House, Deakin

Contact Vanessa Fanning/Mary Webb at [pwmstcg@gmail.com](mailto:pwmstcg@gmail.com) to be added to our email list, and/or join our Facebook group 'Canberra Region MSers'. In line with privacy principles, you can unsubscribe at any time.

### ACT Weekend MS Peer Support Group

**Meets:** 10am, 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month

**Venue:** ACT Café, Canberra

Contact Plus Connect on 1800 042 138

# Trailblazer. Storyteller. Legacy Giver.



## Celebrating the Remarkable Life and Legacy of Betty Stewart (Lillian Hollis)

**Betty Stewart (Lillian Hollis) lived a life that defied expectations — a vibrant force of ambition, creativity, and compassion whose legacy continues to inspire.**

The extraordinary life of Betty Stewart (**Lillian Hollis**) is a story of energy, ambition, and inspiration. Betty passed away at the remarkable age of 99 — still sharp, vibrant, and full of the same drive that defined her life. She lived each moment to the fullest, forging her own path and leaving behind a powerful legacy.



Betty Stewart & her husband Ray

Raised in a loving and supportive home by her devoted mother, Betty was instilled with strong values from an early age. *“Mother taught me that to achieve success in my life and career, I would have to work hard,”* Betty once said. It was this foundation that shaped her tenacity, ambition, and independence — qualities that would take her further than most women of her time.

*“She was born before her time,”* says her cousin Barbara. *“Betty lived and worked in a man’s world — and did tremendously well despite the challenges.”*

Betty began her career humbly as a temp at 3AW Radio Station. But she had big dreams — and the grit to make them real. Overcoming the many barriers faced by women in business, she eventually started her own PR firm—becoming one of the first women in Australian show business to own and run a company of her own. **Over the decades, she worked with international stars including The Trapp Family, Shirley Bassey, Jane Russell, and most notably, The Beatles.**

Betty worked well into her 70s, only retiring in 1992 to “smell the flowers” and spend more time with her beloved husband, Ray. Retirement didn’t slow her down. Instead, she turned her energy to writing, penning her memoir *A Survivor in a Star-Spangled World*, which she proudly self-published in 2000 — a reflection on her vibrant, six-decade-long career.

Barbara remembers Betty as *“a very caring and generous person,”* always ready to lend a hand to those in need. True to her generous spirit, **Betty chose to leave a gift in her Will to MS Plus.** Multiple sclerosis became a cause close to her heart after a family member was diagnosed more than 20 years ago.

Betty’s life was a shining example of dedication, trailblazing energy, and compassion. **Through her gift, her legacy lives on — helping others live their lives to the fullest, just as she did.**

Since 1956, MS Plus has supported thousands of people living with multiple sclerosis and their loved ones.

By leaving even 1% or 2% of your estate — after taking care of family and friends — you can protect future generations from MS.

Find out more from Laura at MS Plus. Call **1800 443 867**, visit [www.mymslegacy.org.au](http://www.mymslegacy.org.au) or email [futureplanning@msplus.org.au](mailto:futureplanning@msplus.org.au)

*Fast-track a cure for MS, care until we’re there*

**Protect future generations from MS**

# Conquer the Camino to Fight MS

On 24 May, 17 incredible fundraisers including our very own Events Campaign Manager Sophie Drummond set off on a 5 day trek to complete the final 117.3kms of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage taking in the breathtaking Spanish countryside, including fields of wildflowers, local cows, many historical villages churches and villages along the way to Santiago.

Together they have raised over \$100,000 for MS and made a huge difference to the lives of people living with MS.



**Ageing Well with MS** is a free online course that explores what ageing is and how it intersects with multiple sclerosis. The course provides physical, mental and emotional strategies for healthy ageing and looks at planning for the future. Across three course modules you will hear from a range of MS experts, including clinical professionals, researchers and people living with MS. The course was developed by the MS Research Flagship, Menzies Institute for Medical Research in collaboration with the MS community.

## Key details

**Duration:** Self-paced

**Effort:** 1.5-2 hours per module

**Completion certificate:** Yes

**Cost:** FREE

**Enrol now:** <https://ms.mooc.utas.edu.au/i/ageingt>

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**MENZIES**  
Institute for Medical Research

MOOC

**AGEING WELL  
WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS**

massive open online course



ENROL TODAY — FREE

## MS GENETICS STUDY - Give a little, change a lot

Researchers at the Menzies Institute for Medical Research need your help to advance our understanding of multiple sclerosis (MS) in an Australia-wide study.

*We urgently need People diagnosed with MS or People without MS (YOU can still contribute!)*

### Why participate?

We're investigating the connection between the Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) and MS, and your contribution could lead to improved diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of MS. This study is recruiting a broad group of people with and without MS from across Australia to donate saliva samples. However, we are particularly interested to hear from people with MS in Tasmania and Queensland who are either newly diagnosed or not taking disease modifying therapies. Your participation and a small blood sample is critical to understanding how EBV impact the immune systems in MS development.

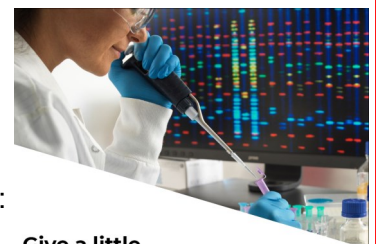
- Participation is easy!
- Complete a brief questionnaire
- Provide three saliva samples (postal submissions are welcome!)
- Optionally, give a blood sample

Find out if you're eligible by completing our screening survey via this link:

[Menzies- MS Genetics Study - Screening survey](#)

For more information contact: Chavi Asthana, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Menzies Institute for Medical Research t: (03) 6226 4226;

e: [Chhavi.Asthana@utas.edu.au](mailto:Chhavi.Asthana@utas.edu.au)



Give a little,  
change a lot

JOIN THE MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS GENETICS STUDY

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