



PLUS
Neuro Wellbeing

ACT Region Newsletter
August 2024

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

The 2024 MS Go for Gold Scholarships applications are now open



The MS Mega Challenge has supported over 900 Go for Gold Scholarship recipients in fulfilling a dream and this year we want to help you achieve your dreams!

The scholarships provide one-off grants to follow a personal dream.

If you're living with multiple sclerosis, the scholarships can provide the helping hand you need to follow your passion.

Categories include:

- Personal expression: arts, crafts, music - includes materials or participation costs
- Education: academic or lifestyle courses and directly associated costs
- Living your best life: wellbeing activities such as yoga, alternative therapies, travel, or sports equipment/participation fees

No project, dream, goal or hobby is too big or too small.

Applications close 5:00pm Tuesday, 17 September 2024.



[Find out more](#)

Claim your free swim cap and tote bag at the Canberra Mega Swim!

Join us at the [MS Mega Swim Canberra](#) and help make dreams come true! Join in a 24-hour swimming relay that brings together friends, families, colleagues, and neighbours all united in raising crucial funds for people living with MS. Whether it's a team of 5 or 25, everyone is welcome!

Taking place on Saturday 3 August at 2pm and running for 24 hours, you'll be swimming in the very pool that our incredible Olympic athletes have been training in! The Olympics will be on the big screen, there will be entertainment, music, movies and yummy food to fuel your swim! Join in our trivia games and get your best fancy dress outfits ready!

Every lap your team swims contributes to funding the incredible MS Plus Go for Gold Scholarship program. These scholarships provide one-off grants, enabling individuals living with MS to pursue their dreams. You really can make dreams come true by jumping in and joining the MS Mega Swim!

So, build your team, kick-start your fundraising efforts, and get ready to make waves at the [MS Mega Swim Canberra](#)! We're can't wait to see you!



what's on

Exploring the latest programs and updates from client engagement and wellbeing



August 2024

Upcoming MS Plus webinars and programs



Managing MS in the workplace

Many people are diagnosed with MS while they are in the prime of their careers, and this can make navigating the workplace with MS challenging. Symptoms such as cognitive and physical fatigue, bladder difficulties and mobility changes can impact people in the workplace, and without support, may put people at risk of leaving the workplace or stepping down in their career prematurely. Join occupational therapist, Jacqueline Webster, from the MS Plus Employment Support Service as she explores how you can manage symptoms at work, and what supports may be available.

Date: Tuesday 20 August

Time: 12:00pm–1.00pm AEST

[Register Now!](#)

Navigate MS: Newly Diagnosed Program

We know people newly diagnosed with MS can have many questions and are seeking support and reassurance. Run by MS Nurses, the **Navigate MS: Newly Diagnosed program** is specifically tailored for people who have been diagnosed with MS within the past two years. This free four-week program aims to build knowledge, provide practical advice and strategies, share experiences and learning with peers and empower people to take control of their health to live well with MS.

We'll cover topics including:

- brain health strategies
- understanding MS
- navigating the health system
- building resilience and accessing help and

Date: Wednesday 7 August 2024, with more dates coming

Time: 6:30pm–8.00pm AEST

To register: Contact Plus Connect on 1800 042 138 or connect@msplus.org.au

What's new:



Tips from a dietician to navigate menopause and the impact of diet

In this podcast, MS dietician Julie discusses the impact of diet on menopause and provides practical tips for managing menopausal symptoms through nutrition. Julie discusses hot topics such as soy, foods that can worsen or ease symptoms like hot flashes, and why weight gain occurs during this time. Julie provides evidence-based information and simple tips to improve your eating habits.

[Listen here!](#)



Managing fatigue in teens with MS

For teens living with MS and their families, managing fatigue is important for maintaining everyday activities both at home and at school. In this three-part series, senior occupational therapist Ashlee Cruz from the Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, offers practical strategies to support teens with MS in managing fatigue.

Part one provides an overview of fatigue in teens with MS and how this can impact on daily activities. In part two, Ashlee provides practical strategies for teens manage fatigue in a sustainable way, and finally in part three, she provides an overview of the various lifestyle changes and strategies that teens and families can implement to help improve quality of life for teens with MS who are dealing with fatigue. **[Watch now!](#)**

Get the latest

- Follow [MS Podcasts](#) for the latest episode
- Watch on demand webinars and podcasts, and read the transcripts on the [Resource Hub](#)
- You can now find resources tailored to young people with MS [here](#).
- Want to know more about our dietician service, employment support service or just want more information? Get in touch with Plus Connect on 1800 042 138 or connect@msplus.org.au

Information for people supporting someone with MS

The **Plus Navigate: Friends & Family** program is for people who support someone with MS.

Over two 75-minute sessions, an MS expert will guide discussions, provide information, links to resources and answer any questions. We'll cover a range of topics including:

- understanding MS
- navigating the health system
- where to access help and
- how to take care of yourself



Dates: Thursday 8 and 15 August 2024

Time: 7:00pm to 8:15pm AEST

To register: [visit here](#)

Peer Support

We have two Peer Support Groups available in ACT who welcome new members any time. If you're interested in joining a group, contact details are below.

People with MS Group

Meets: 1. 12.30 to 2.00pm - 2nd Friday, 9 August 2024

Venue: Zoom only

2. 12.30 to 2.00pm - Last Friday, 23 August 2024

Venue: Gloria McKerrow House, Deakin

Contact Vanessa Fanning/Mary Webb at 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: 10:00am, 3rd Saturday of each month

Venue: ACT Café, Canberra

Contact Plus Connect on 1800 042 138



Information for people supporting someone with MS

Young Carers: Navigating Responsibilities and Wellbeing

Young carers play a significant role in our society, often shouldering responsibilities beyond their years. Each young carer has unique circumstances and responsibilities. Clinical Psychologist, Nicola Palfrey from headspace National talks about the world of young carers, their challenges, and the importance of looking after themselves to manage their daily life. [Watch here!](#)

Carers, Family & Friends Toolkit

This online resource provides a range of information and practical tips specifically designed for people who are supporting someone with MS.

Topics include:

Explore the toolkit [here](#)



Understanding MS for Carers



Looking after yourself



Finances, legal & work



Understanding emotions



Talking about MS



Young Carers



Parents of teens with MS



Navigating support systems



Preparing for emergencies

MS PLUS EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

Our FREE Employment Support Service is dedicated to assisting people with MS or other neurological conditions. We can help you achieve your career goals and thrive in the workplace. From resume building to interview preparation, workplace adjustments, and symptoms management at work, our expert team is here to support you every step of the way. Why choose us?

Need help finding a job or excelling in your current role? **WE CAN HELP!**

FREE
EMPLOYMENT
SUPPORT SERVICE



MS PLUS
Neuro Wellbeing

- Tailored support for people with MS or other neuro conditions
- Experienced allied health professionals dedicated to your work success
- Free of charge – because everyone deserves access to career support

We're here to help you succeed and achieve your career goals. Reach out to us today! Call 1800 042 138 or email connect@msplus.org.au

Vacancies on the ACT MS Community Engagement Council

The ACT MS Community Engagement Council currently has four vacancies to fill and would welcome any expressions of interest from individuals that might like to join the Council. Meetings of the Council occur bi-monthly either in person at Gloria McKerrow House or via zoom attendance at 5.30pm on a Wednesday evening.

The Engagement Council represents the local voice and views regarding the collective needs and concerns of people affected by multiple sclerosis (*people diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, their families and carers and others in the community who support or are supported by people diagnosed with multiple sclerosis*).

Any expressions of interest or questions can be emailed to Advisory.Council@msplus.org.au and they will be forwarded to the Council Chair.

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:** \$10.00 per class or 10 classes for \$90.00

Please call 1800 042 138 to register

A NEW ART and CRAFT SUPPORT GROUP

will commence from Thursday 15 August at 12:30pm until 2:30pm to be held fortnightly at Gloria McKerrow House.

Hi my name is Brigitte and for many years I have been a member of the Friday Art Support group.

I have an arts degree and now with MS I use my art and creativity as a relaxing meditative thing to do. My skills to contribute to the group are watercolour and acrylic painting, jelly mould printing, journaling, basic crochet and jewellery making. I also do tapestry, embroidery, sewing and quilting.

Mirroring the Friday group, the participants, be they a novice or with experience, have a say in what we do and learn. All are welcome to share their creative skills, ideas if and whenever they are comfortable. We are also self funding with a gold coin donation.

If you are interested in joining us or have any questions please ring the group coordinator, Brigitte on 0428 122 466 as our space is limited.



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) and a Zoom link will be send to you for the session every Friday. Carers and family also welcome!

Tabletop Games

This year the group will be operating every second month — No prior knowledge required!

When: Saturday 8 August 2024

Where: Gloria McKerrow House, 117 Denison St, Deakin ACT

Time: 1:30—4:00pm, come and go at your leisure

Please register your interest at pwmstabletop@gmail.com for updates.

** Family, friends and carers are also welcome **

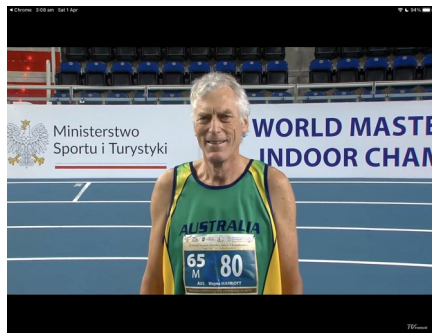


Real estate CEO puts his house in order with gift to MS Plus



Wayne Marriott wants people to remember him as "a good person who did good things."

From childhood, Wayne's Methodist parents encouraged him to be kind and compassionate. His school further reinforced the importance of generosity, shaping his worldview.



Wayne competing at the World Masters Indoor Championships in Toruń, Poland. He's a keen hurdler.

Wayne opened a real estate agency after successful careers in sound engineering and marketing. As principal, he established a culture that expected his staff to be ethical in every transaction. Three decades later, the Sydney-based business is flourishing. Wayne is also considered an industry leader in best practice.

At 70, Wayne feels grateful for his thriving business, good health and loving family. A keen hurdler, he participates in Masters Athletics events for the over 35s in Australia and overseas. He plays bridge and enjoys walks in the Sydney CBD, where he lives with his wife, Ety. They also travel frequently.

"I'm fortunate in life, so I want to give back to the community," he says. While considering causes to support, Wayne took an 'intellectual' approach. This philosophy was in keeping with his science and engineering background. **He eventually settled on youth homelessness and multiple sclerosis (MS) as his focus areas.**

"These causes aren't glamorous," he notes.

*"There are sexier charities like breast cancer with their test cricket days. There are better-known humanitarian causes. But for me, shelter is critical because I work in real estate. Youth homelessness is often a hidden problem that needs more attention. **As for MS, it's a disease that could be cured with greater investment in research,**"* he explains.

Wayne became interested in MS when his neighbour, Melinda, developed the condition.

"It was tragic because Melinda was only in her early 30s and had just given birth to a daughter. Initially, the effect was small, but there was an uncertain future for her," he recalls.

"I found out it's often younger people, especially women, who get the disease. They have their lives turned upside down, and their support needs are varied, escalating and long term," he adds.

Recently, Wayne decided to extend that support beyond his lifetime. He updated his Will to include a gift to MS Plus.

He says his adult children will be okay with the decision as they're already provided for generously and are in his Will. Ety also shares her husband's philanthropic spirit and supports his choice.

"I'm not fussed about how MS Plus uses my gift. I trust the experts will allocate it where it's needed most. That could be research or support. I went to one of their bequestor events recently and saw the impact of their work. They're dedicated to their community, but they need more resources," he says.

"I can feel happier knowing the money I leave behind will help people with MS to live better."

Gifts in Wills from people like Wayne ensure the work of MS Plus can continue until scientists find a cure. To explore giving options, contact Laura from the MS Plus Future Planning team on **1800 443 867**. You can also email futureplanning@ms.org.au or visit www.mymslegacy.org.au.



Wayne Marriott and Ety Matalon