



Stronger Together

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



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



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



As Chair of MS Plus, I am proud to reflect on a year defined by resilience, collaboration, progress and financial prudence. The theme of this Annual Report – “Stronger Together” – speaks not only to the determination of individuals living with multiple sclerosis, but also to the power of a community united in purpose.

This year has in many ways reinforced the vital role MS Plus plays in connecting people with the support they need. Our Board remains committed to ensuring that the organisation remains financially strong, strategically focused, and guided by the voices of those we serve. We continue to invest in services that are innovative, sustainable, and responsive to the evolving needs of people with MS, their families, and carers.

Importantly, we have strengthened our partnerships – with our clients, with MS Australia and the research community, with government and funders, and with the thousands of supporters and volunteers who give so generously of their time and resources. Together, these partnerships drive both the immediate impact of our programs and the

long-term progress toward improved treatments and, ultimately, a cure.

Early in 2025, we also had to weigh up significant external uncertainties: disability and aged-care reform, the upcoming Federal Election, and major tenders critical to our revenue. With this challenging external environment and the need to consolidate our financial position, the Board developed a two-year strategy, *Strategic Directions 2025-2027*. Our new strategy gives us the flexibility to respond to reform outcomes, build a roadmap to rebuild reserves, and prepare for longer-term investment.

During the year, Des Graham retired from the Board having served as a Director and member of the Program Policy and Practice Committee since 2016. Des was also the MS Plus nominee on the MS Australia Board, where he also served as Chair until his retirement. Sharlene Brown also completed her term as a Director having served across a range of portfolios including Risk Audit and Finance, Community Engagement and Fundraising. We thank both Des and Sharlene for the energy and commitment they have brought to improving the lives of people living

with multiple sclerosis and other neurological conditions, and we thank them for their contribution to our work.

The Board was very pleased to welcome two outstanding members. Ian Blair, who brings Extensive Senior leadership experience in the aged care and the not-for-profit sector, and Tim Ryan, an accomplished executive with deep experience across the community, government and social enterprise sectors. We also welcomed Georgia Loudon as an Independent member of the Fundraising Committee who has brought with her solid experience in philanthropy and corporate fundraising, both in Australia and the UK.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to extend our gratitude to our CEO, leadership team, staff, and volunteers for their extraordinary commitment. To our clients and their families, thank you for your trust. To our supporters and partners, thank you for your belief in our vision.

Adriana Zuccala
Chair



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Stronger Together

This year, our theme “Stronger Together” captures the very essence of MS Plus – a community united by resilience, collaboration, and hope. Every day, I see the strength of individuals living with multiple sclerosis, and I see how much stronger we all become when we work together – clients, families, friends, staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters – to create a better future for people with MS.

At MS Plus, our mission is not only to provide care but to walk alongside our clients as partners and allies. Whether it's helping someone access their full NDIS entitlement, providing allied health and continence support, offering dedicated nursing and social work services or delivering respite, residential care and employment advice, our services are tailored for each individual. By connecting people with the right support at the right time, we help them live well with MS – today and into the future.

Through our Client and Education Wellbeing programs, we also empower people to take control of their own health and lives. We connect them with their communities, provide education, and most importantly,

create opportunities to meet others living with MS. These connections remind us all that no one needs to face their MS journey alone.

Equally inspiring is the passion of our fundraising community. Together with our partners at MS Australia, the funds raised through our events, gifts in wills, appeals, and community fundraising initiatives continue to fuel vital MS research. Every dollar raised represents a shared determination to improve care, support and treatments for people living with multiple sclerosis as well as, accelerating research to find a cure.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our staff and volunteers. Their tireless efforts ensure our clients are connected with the very best services and supports available. They embody “stronger together”, transforming collaboration into tangible impact.

Our staff and our managers also understand the need to carefully steward our finances while continuing to evolve and invest to meet the needs of our clients. Our intent is to ensure continuity of client-centric service long into the future and we believe we have the right balance.

Looking back on the past year, I am proud of what we have achieved as a united community. Looking forward, I am confident that by standing strong together – individuals, families, supporters, researchers, and our MS Plus team – we will continue to drive progress, deliver hope, and change lives.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to our Board. The support and strategic guidance of our Directors have been central to advancing our vision and purpose, while fostering a culture of innovation and excellence.

My deepest thanks also go to our dedicated team for your energy, passion, and resilience. Together with our donors, volunteers, and supporters, you are the driving force that brings our vision to life. It is your collective effort that not only makes a difference today but also builds the foundation for even greater impact tomorrow. United in purpose, we are stronger than ever and ready to embrace the opportunities ahead.

John Blewonski
Chief Executive Officer

MS Plus in numbers

605 hours of bowel and bladder health support provided by clinical nurses

170,279 NDIS services delivered (across all services)

408 event volunteers donated **2,465** hours of their time to MS Plus

31,655 followers across Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn

10,097 hours of support provided by exercise physiologists

1,448 people generously volunteer their time to support MS Plus

11,617 people participated in an MS Plus event



MS Plus in numbers

47,088 hours of Support Coordination provided to clients

240 MS Plus Op Shop volunteers donated **40,000** hours of their time.

726 new clients supported through Connect

200 artist submissions received for the MS Virtual Art Show 2024

792 people received assistance from our Employment Support Service

183 applications for MS Go For Gold Scholarships

1,024 clients received support from our Nurse Advisors

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Delivering on our *Strategic Directions 2020–2025*

YEAR FIVE

Looking Back: Strategic Directions 2020–2025

As we reflect on the past year and indeed the journey from 2020, the *Strategic Directions 2020–2025* has shaped MS Plus into a more client-focused, forward-focussed organisation. Together, we have navigated challenges, embraced opportunities and delivered outcomes that will leave a lasting legacy for people living with MS and other neurological conditions.

Consolidating growth and impact

The past financial year has been defined by both growth and consolidation:

- Our Plan Management team reached a milestone of supporting 500 clients and processed more than \$28 million in NDIS funding, directly improving lives
- Our allied health professionals delivered over 17,000 hours of support and expanded services into Port Stephens
- Our nurses provided more than 1,000 consultations.

We continued to invest in connection and community:

- The Plus Connect team responded to more than 10,000 enquiries
- Almost 2,000 hours of peer support helped people find strength in shared experiences

- Employment Support Service achieved remarkable results, with 91% of participants finding work within three months
- Employment Support Services expanded to support the needs of MS and other acquired neurological conditions
- Our community of donors rallied, raising more than \$2.27 million for services and research.

Milestones on the strategic journey

This year's achievements build on a strong foundation laid across the strategic cycle.

The opening in January of the state-of-the-art Lidcombe Wellbeing Centre in NSW — with its adjacent supported accommodation — exemplifies our commitment to holistic, person-centred support. Lidcombe Home offers long-

term accommodation and respite, with the respite set to enable clients in NSW and ACT, and other states to come and stay, setting goals with our experienced neuro practitioners at the Wellbeing Centre and linking in with services and a community that they can then keep in touch with when they get home. Lidcombe follows the opening of other wellbeing centres in Hobart, Blackburn and Footscray during the life of the strategy.

Our new connections across our neuro network demonstrated the power of collaboration to extend reach and impact, and improve our integrated care model. The early signs seen in the last strategy gave us confidence that partnerships are vital in ensuring even better care for our clients and sensible stewarding of our finances; because together we are stronger.

Delivering on our *Strategic Directions 2020–2025*

Earlier milestones were equally significant, including:

- launching the MS Plus brand
- refreshing our service offerings
- introduction of Care for You at Home to the MS Plus group and extending our reach to the over 65 community
- implementing a new Peer Support Program delivery model
- implementing our Carers strategy
- delivery of our new Clinical Governance and Quality Frameworks ensured that our services remain safe, sustainable, and of the highest standard
- importantly, we also embedded our Purpose, Aspiration, and Values across all areas of the organisation, strengthening a culture of accountability and compassion.

Navigating change with resilience

The period from 2020 onwards was not without challenge. The COVID-19 pandemic demanded a swift pivot to virtual service delivery and fundraising. This experience reinforced our adaptability and underscored the importance of connection — both digital and personal — in supporting people when they need us most.

We also marked significant anniversaries, including 30 years of the Community Visitors Scheme, and expanded our service offerings into dietetics, fee-for-service models, and research fundraising. Each of these steps has broadened our ability to deliver on our promise of whole-person wellbeing.

Closing one chapter, opening the next

Strategic Directions 2020–2025 has guided us through a time of great challenge, learnings and strategic investment. We close this chapter with a sense of pride in our collective achievements — achievements made possible by the dedication of our staff, the trust of our clients, the leadership of our Board, and the generosity of our supporters.

As we look ahead to our new *Strategic Directions 2025–2027*, we carry forward the lessons, relationships, and impact of the past five years. With renewed focus and determination, MS Plus will continue to be here for people — today, tomorrow, and into the future.

Stronger Together: building the future

Our new *Strategic Direction 2025–2027* was created through a collaborative process involving our Board and staff. We began by reflecting on the achievements of Strategic Directions 2020–2025 and then looked forward, considering the challenges and opportunities ahead.

We listened closely to our people and assessed the shifting external environment, including national reforms in NDIS, Employment and Aged Care, funding uncertainties and community needs. This shaped a practical, focused plan designed to ensure financial sustainability; adapt to change; and grow our impact where it matters most, supporting people with neurological conditions to live well at every stage of life.

The strategy rests on three pillars:

- Leveraging our Foundations
- Increasing our Impact
- Activating our Community

Together, they strengthen our services, partnerships and stewardship of resources.

Most importantly, this strategy is about being stronger together — with clients, donors and partners — as we create lasting impact into the future.



Leveraging our Foundations

This pillar focuses on our commitment to financial sustainability, improving our operational model and ensuring we bring our staff along with us — building a future-focused culture.

Key success indicators

- By 2027 MS Plus will realign and grow our philanthropic fundraising program.
- We will grow and diversify our services income.
- We will re-establish a corpus, while maintaining our strong focus on effective stewardship.

We will transform our operating model and systems to ensure improved efficiency and productivity, and build a united, future-focused culture.

Stronger Together: building the future



Increasing our Impact

In this pillar, we agree to consolidate our services to grow. In Increasing our Impact, we will ensure our services are evidence-informed, strategically directed and genuinely impactful — empowering people with neurological conditions to access our services at every stage of life.

Key success indicators

- By 2027 we will have established a leading-edge, integrated, client-centred program delivery across NDIS, Employment and Aged Care services to help clients reach their goals.
- We will have embedded Wellbeing Centres and grown our virtual services.
- We will have consolidated Care for You at Home and sought opportunities to grow the provision of services to the +65 community.
- We will have developed a mature business development and sales program.

Activating our Community

This pillar holds our commitment to grow and strengthen the community of individual Australians and organisations who connect with our aspiration, our purpose and our values, and/or who choose our services.

Key success indicators

- By 2027, clients will experience better service integration, demonstrated through improved referral pathways and service navigation to and from partner agencies.
- Our value proposition (what we do better than anyone else) will be defined and begin to deliver measurable uplift.
- We have a defined Impact Goal, showing the success of our services.
- Our active clients, partners and philanthropists (audiences) have increased.

Finding a community of support: Chris' story

For Chris, having his full support system available under one roof at Lidcombe Wellbeing Centre has meant easy and convenient access to the therapies that keep him active.

“I’ll be at the centre every week this year. Having my team in one place is amazing. The new space is also just so lovely to be in.

“It’s so great to have somewhere like that to go — not only for my exercise needs each week but it’s the kind of space that you can have a chill out session afterwards, to meet and chat with others.

“The new space is more conducive to meeting and making connections with others who are going through the same journey as you,” Chris says.

Chris now regularly sees his allied health team at the new centre, where they can liaise easily with each other on Chris’ progress.

“My Physiotherapist Dr Phu Hoang and I have been working together for more than a year, improving my walking distance and strength. I also see an exercise physiologist (EP) and through that service I have been able to get a walking aid to reduce the pain around my knees, which has been so helpful to help me to

build my strength back up. Dr Phu recommended my current EP Tasha Dunn and she and I now do sessions twice a week. Tasha is amazing and really gets me moving — which has a really positive impact on my mobility and gait.

“EP really helps my mobility, greasing the joints so to speak, general pain management and that sort of stuff.

“You want to be working with someone who genuinely enjoys what they do and understands the unique challenges of MS and that’s Tasha and Dr Phu. I also do regular reviews with Dr Phu and adjust my program as needed.

“Initially I did also see an occupational therapist (OT). I’m considering a mobility scooter for a trip overseas in a few months’ time. I think it’s good time for me to consider that to help me to get around. I did get in touch with my OT to recommend a few options,” Chris says.

“I was a perfect example of someone who lived with MS for 10 years and never really utilised the services on offer and now I don’t know where I would be without them.”

To read more client stories, visit msplus.org.au



Nurturing strength with comprehensive service delivery, education and connection

Employment Support Services

This year our Employment Support Services team assisted **792** people, providing a total of **30,569** hours of support.

The team achieved strong outcomes, with **91%** of people who accessed employment support securing employment **within three months**.

Our team will be one of 83 providers working to support the Australian Government's new Inclusive Employment Australia program, as part of the CoAct Network, when the government transitions away from the existing Disability Employment Services program.

MS Plus also provided **\$1,541,805** in financial assistance to MS communities in its regions, with Employment Assistance Funding and revenue allocation.

- **825** individual items of equipment purchased to assist individuals to maintain or gain employment with a total value of **\$524,262**
- financial assistance to individuals to maintain their employment a total of **\$1,017,543**

Plan Management

Our Plan Management team provide vital assistance to reduce the NDIS' administrative load on our clients, freeing them up to focus on their health and wellbeing. We differentiate our service in the market by providing a small, high-quality, person-centred program — unlike many larger competitors.

The team processed an incredible **56,119** invoices valued at **\$28,152,322** and reached a milestone of **500 clients**. This strong, sustained growth over the past year necessitated the recruitment of a new growth plan manager role.

Support Coordination

The service maintained a strong, united, and highly skilled team delivering quality outcomes for clients amid sector changes. This year the Support Coordination team achieved a major milestone, playing a pivotal role in supporting a participant to become the first resident in our newly-built Lidcombe SDA — an example of how our team empowers participants to achieve their goals. Overall, the team provided **47,088** hours of support to clients.

Continence Support

We transitioned our service this year by partnering with Coloplast Australia, whose Continence Nurses are now available onsite and via telehealth to support our clients. The change has meant our clients will now benefit from in-person consultation options across all our wellbeing centres, together with phone and online consultations, enabling a more accessible service for all those who need it.

In FY2024–2025, our continence nurses provided **605** hours of direct bladder and bowel health support to clients.

Nurturing strength with comprehensive service delivery, education and connection

Allied Health

This was a big year for our allied health team, particularly across NSW, as we transitioned the Lidcombe Allied Health services into our new state-of-the-art Lidcombe Wellbeing Centre, featuring an expanded gym and advanced technology (including ceiling hoists) to support more clients.

Our team of physiotherapists, occupational therapists, dietitians and exercise physiologists also partnered with the MS Plus Partnerships and Community Team to deliver several health professional networking events across wellbeing centres, showcasing our allied health expertise as well as these incredible new facilities in both Lidcombe and Hobart.

The team continued to broaden the service offering to support people living with a variety of neurological conditions beyond MS.

- **17,446** hours of service delivery across all clients
- **706** allied health clients
- **10,669** hours of exercise physiology provided
- **2,790** hours of physiotherapy provided
- **2,049** hours of occupational therapy provided
- **407** hours of dietetic support



Residential and Respite

MS Plus provides supported disability accommodation at our locations in Lidcombe and Beverly Hills, NSW, Watsonia in Victoria and Supported Independent Living services in Williamstown, Victoria.

In addition to the milestone in opening our MS Plus' new state-of-the-art apartments in Lidcombe, this year the team has navigated through a period of unprecedented reform across NDIS and Aged Care, and ensured full compliance and consistently strong audit results,

embedded risk governance aligned with board-endorsed strategic priorities and delivered over 100 internal assessments and 40 Continuous Quality Improvement projects to drive service improvement.

We have also strengthened consumer safeguards, complaints management, and service quality and positioned the organisation as reform-ready and resilient with measurable improvements in client safety and service outcomes.



Lidcombe Wellbeing Centre and Lidcombe Home open their doors



MS Plus celebrated the opening of our new Lidcombe Wellbeing Centre in February, with an open day where current and potential clients could tour the facilities and sample MS Plus services.

One hundred and eighty-nine people attended the opening, with some clients travelling up to three hours away to see the incredible new facility. That evening, MS Plus also hosted a special education event for 65 health professionals in the new centre, with panellists Neurologist Dr Justin Garber, Service Delivery Manager Jeffrey Lawrence and Geriatrician

and CMO Dr Des Graham presenting on the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to patient care.

An official opening was held in March, and included our health professional and client community, our generous donors and government officials.

The Lidcombe Wellbeing Centre is a state-of-the-art home for neurological support, providing all the standard MS Plus services, offering everything you need for neuro wellbeing and connection in one place. Our services are tailored to meet your unique needs, whether you are living with MS, Parkinson's, stroke, MND, muscular dystrophy, epilepsy, dementia and other neuro conditions.

MS Plus also opened its new hotel-style accommodation, Lidcombe Home, which is adjacent to the Lidcombe Wellbeing Centre and provides two bedroom, long and short-term apartments catering for people with high physical needs.

Easy access to the centre also enables residents to enjoy the full suite of MS Plus allied health supports, including the state-of-the-art neuro gym, housed under the same roof.

We welcomed our first respite residents from May, and permanent residents from July 2025.

Connecting residents to their village

Lidcombe Home residents, much like residents in our Watsonia and Beverly Hills facilities, enjoy regular community activities designed to encourage connection and a fun, friendly environment for them to call home. As we began welcoming residents to our Lidcombe Home facility, we also launched our new Social Support Volunteer role. The role is located onsite, specifically to facilitate activities such as board games and to provide companionship.

Our volunteer, Margaret, is onsite every Tuesday.

Supporting regional clients to access vital neurological care: Aaron's story

For many people living in regional areas, accessing the right healthcare and support services can be a significant challenge.

This was the reality for Aaron, who was diagnosed with MS in 2007. Facing limited medical resources and growing frustration at the lack of specialist care in his hometown, Aaron recently became the first to stay at the newly developed Lidcombe Home supported disability apartments.

His experience was life changing.

"Staying at Lidcombe Home was amazing. There are so many opportunities available to you when you are staying in a bigger city," Aaron shared. "I live in a regional area where there are no neurologists and not many health supports."

"When I was first diagnosed, I was a naive young man. Over the years, I relocated to a regional town, and I endured some really difficult experiences — losing my career as an engineer, my relationships, friendships, my accommodation, my mind (both memory and cognition), and finally my independence.



For Aaron, having easy access to neuro-specialised physiotherapy and tailored gym equipment during his stay was a game-changer — with a range of supports available just next door at the Lidcombe Wellbeing Centre.

"I was able to see Physiotherapist Dr. Phu Hoang, and I knew right away he was drawing on a huge pool of experience. I had three sessions in the gym while I was there, which was great. He was very concise and confident in his advice, and I trusted

that what he recommended would work for me," Aaron says. Beyond healthcare, Lidcombe Home offered Aaron a sense of independence and security he hadn't experienced before.

"Each apartment is fully independent, with an easily accessible kitchen where I could prepare my own meals. I'm in a wheelchair, and the accessible features — like adjustable benches. It gave me a more positive outlook on independent living."

For Aaron, the move to Lidcombe Home isn't just about better healthcare — it's about reclaiming his independence and finding a community where he belongs.

"Where I live now, it's very isolating. At Lidcombe, I know I'll have the chance to meet, and help, others in the same situation as me. Seeing other people with MS doing awesome things would be so motivating."



Peer Support

Our Peer Support Program is a way for people living with neurological conditions to create important connections.

Our **176** Peer Support Facilitators host phone chats and online groups that are an important lifeline and source of information sharing and education for participants.

During the year, facilitators provided **1,932** hours of support.

“I loved the specialist speakers, I felt they all contributed some really important points to the session but were also able to reinforce information, that maybe we already knew (like the dietitian), but may have needed a refresher on.”

Peer Links participant



Plus Connect

The MS Connect team is the first point of contact with the organisation, providing trusted advice and connecting clients with all other relevant services. This year they supported **726** new clients and closed **10,667** cases.



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 FY2024–2025, our nurses conducted **1,024** telehealth and in person consultations.



Education

This year MS Plus redeveloped and expanded its education program, with a greater focus on in-person, holistic learning, a broadened scope of online learning opportunities reaching more key demographics and more dedicated resources for health professionals. Course ranged from understanding the NDIS, to accessing SDA funding, the benefits of exercise physiology, fatigue management, carer and newly diagnosed supports, dedicated over **65** supports and more.

A particular standout was the new Art Therapy Workshop conceptualised and delivered in the lead up to our annual MS Virtual Art Show. Eighty-two people enjoyed the inaugural session, which included a live art workshop.

In FY2024–2025, we developed and delivered **47** resources and live education programs and eight live health professional education sessions.

This included a session bringing **50** health professionals together to learn about the importance and practical implementation of multidisciplinary approaches for people with neurological conditions,

held in partnership with Parkinsons Tasmania, Tasmania Health Service and Menzies. The dinner event was supported by Coloplast and featured presentations from Neurologist Dr Foong Yi Chao and Professor Michelle Callisaya.

Special thanks to Neurologist Dr Justin Garber and Geriatrician and Chief Medical Officer Dr Desmond Graham for keynote presentations we hosted a similar event at Lidcombe.

“This course was excellent, and I enjoyed it much more than I expected to. It was a beautiful mix of educational content and sharing our experiences. Jane is absolutely incredible in the way she delivers the content and holds space for some very big things shared by participants.”

Navigate: Newly Diagnosed participant

MS Plus Family Camps

MS Plus hosted two MS Plus Family Camps in FY2024–2025, one in Collaroy, NSW from 20–22 September, which hosted nine families: 17 adults and 21 children and a second in Dodges Ferry Tasmania from 25–27 October, which hosted five families: eight adults and nine children.

The camps are free to attend, with all accommodation, meals and activities provided with fundraising from the MS Readathon covering the cost of the camps.

Families spend the weekend learning strategies to manage MS, tips for care givers, available services and supports and participate in fun indoor and outdoor activities.

It is also an opportunity to connect with others who have the same lived experience and form lifelong friendships.

“It was a wonderful camp, so blessed to have been selected and the families that were with us. We all connected. It was great for the partners and kids to try and understand what it’s like to live with MS. I felt very seen when we were discussing symptoms and it wasn’t just me talking but all the others who have MS. It was incredible to see how much the kids knew and understood of the disease as well and validating for them they weren’t alone in this journey.”

MS Family Camp participant



MS Go for Gold Scholarship

The MS Go for Gold Scholarship program provides 25 scholarships of up to \$2,000, to help people living with MS to achieve a long-held dream. Funding is awarded under three categories, Personal Expression, Education and Living Your Best Life.

The program is always a popular one with clients, and in 2024 we received **183** applications for the 25 scholarships.

Louise believes exercise is essential to keeping her MS and her mental health in check. Diagnosed in 2020, Louise says her MS has been a wake-up call and has pushed her to look after herself and listen to what her body is telling her. With her MS Go for Gold Scholarship funds, Louise purchased the hiking and camping equipment she needed to tackle the Grampians Peak Trail.

“As a mother of four active children, I want to be a role model to them. I want them to see that MS doesn’t control my life or define who I am. I really feel a sense of achievement when I stand on top of a mountain. Every moment I climb, I do it for my MS warrior friends and I never take that moment for granted.”



MS Virtual Art Show

The MS Virtual Art Show, now in its 19th year, is a celebration of creative expression as a therapeutic tool and a way to explore the impact of living with a chronic condition. Anyone living with MS or another neurological condition can submit up to three pieces of artwork in categories including photography, sculpture, drawing and painting. The full gallery of submissions is showcased online, and winners are announced for World MS Day on 30 May.

In 2025, MS Plus received an incredible **200** submissions — one of the largest art shows to date.



The 2025 Barry Allen Award winning artwork

A trip to Japan made possible with the right supports

Cara, who loves to travel, was excited to book the family's dream trip to Japan, meant as a well-deserved reward for them all after enduring years of pandemic lockdowns. Then, four months before Cara and her family were scheduled to leave, she received her MS diagnosis.

"I was diagnosed in March 2023, and we had booked to leave in July. I was suddenly unsure about whether I would be able to go, and what a holiday might look like for me now. I had done a lot of travel before being diagnosed but I knew this would be different, there was a lot of uncertainty," Cara says.

Reaching out to an MS nurse turned out to be a lifesaver, helping Cara to navigate her new diagnosis and giving her hope the trip could go ahead.

"It was all very overwhelming initially but with my Nurse Advisor, Jane Gilliland's guidance, I felt I could implement strategies to manage my MS symptoms," Cara says.

Although her family could now look forward to the trip of a lifetime, Cara knew there would need to be some changes made.

"Jane suggested booking a wheelchair at the airport and to also take a portable chair with me, and she was absolutely right. Once I got to Japan, I found I couldn't walk to get off the plane, and the wheelchair was vital to get me through customs and to the taxi.

"When I got to the hotel, I had difficulty standing up and at that point I realised my trip to Japan was going to look very different, and I would

need to implement the strategies the nurses had given me to get through.

"A lot of my symptoms are triggered by heat, and we knew it would be very hot in Japan. Thanks to Jane, I remembered to have a portable fan, a spray bottle and wet piece of material and a cold compress."

Cara knew that information was power when it came to her MS diagnosis.

"When you're first diagnosed with a disease that you don't know much about, it's very confronting and my first urge was to get more information about the drugs I would be taking and how things might progress.

"The MS nurse advisor helped me with all of that. Jane educated me about what to expect and how to best manage my symptoms — ultimately, she put my mind at ease."



MS Integrated Care Framework

The MS Integrated Care Project was set up to better understand how people with MS find and use healthcare in New South Wales. It was funded by NSW Health and led by MS Plus, in partnership with Westmead Hospital.

People with MS, carers, and health professionals helped shape the project. They shared their experiences, highlighted common problems, and worked together to suggest solutions. Their input led to a new framework to help improve MS care across the system.

More than 380 people with MS contributed through surveys and focus groups. Health professionals from over seven MS centres also provided input, offering critical insights into workforce pressures, systemic barriers, and service gaps.

Key findings from the report include:

- Fragmentation places the burden on people with MS. PwMS often coordinate disconnected health, disability, and social supports themselves, relaying information between providers due to siloed communication
- GP-Neurologist collaboration is beneficial but is inconsistent. Where collaboration is strong, PwMS feel more supported and confident, report higher
- 44% of PwMS were rarely or never offered emotional or mental support when they requested or clearly needed it
- 39% of PwMS rarely or never received helpful lifestyle and wellbeing information from either their neurologist or GP
- MS Nurses are vital to MS care, but not every PwMS has access to this support. MS Nurses provide continuity and extensive non-clinical support, including assistance with NDIS and housing documentation. However, access varies by clinic and location, and are at capacity with demanding workloads
- 1 in 2 PwMS were not fully confident in knowing who to contact when they had new or changing symptoms



satisfaction with neurologist care, better mental health support, and more useful sharing of allied health updates, yet 54% of PwMS felt there was little or no collaboration between their neurologist and GP

Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS)

MS Plus is one of many Aged Care Volunteer Visitor (ACVVS) scheme providers on behalf of the Australian Government. The scheme provides vital companionship to isolated older members of our community. In FY2024–2025, we grew the volunteer program significantly through a dedicated marketing campaign — matching 500 volunteer visitors with 900 older people.



“I think I just miss my grandma so much that I just wanted to visit someone else who may want some company. They just have so many stories to tell you; they have so much life experience and I think they really like having a younger person come in and all the things we might talk about. The MS Plus program they just hope you visit once a fortnight for a few hours, and if it means giving companionship and positivity to someone else — that’s the main reason I do it.”

ACVVS volunteer, Michelle



Finding a new career path: Brad's story

Brad's MS symptoms can make working at a desk for a full workday difficult without supportive intervention.

After leaving his job in the finance sector and remaining unemployed while he focused on his health, Brad was keen to find the right role to get him back in the workplace.

"I was completely lost for many years before I found out about my MS, but I soon realised that I needed to take ownership of my life and my body and not leave it up to someone else."

Brad reached out to MS Plus early on, through Plus Connect. He was given information about the Employment Support Service (ESS) and put in touch with Employment Development Manager, Chris – who helped Brad to find a new role. He also works with an Occupational Therapist to help manage his symptoms and make sure they don't impact his performance at work.

"My OT helped by assessing and organising funding for specialised ergonomic equipment and now my set up at both my home and office are perfect for what I need. This helps me to manage my fatigue and my spasticity.

"Having that weekly support with an OT, to run through any challenges during your week at work — I don't think anyone can understand just how much that helps you. Exercise physiology, massage and other similar supports are just so beneficial for someone with any neuro condition.

"It becomes about setting up these routines that help you to keep your daily life ticking along, which your OT can keep on track with as little as a 10 minute catch up," Brad says.

After working in the finance sector again for a while, Brad realised his passions really lay in helping others. He reached out to Chris again later that year. Brad told Chris what he really wanted was to help people like him. Chris mentioned there might be a role available with the MS Plus Employment Support Service (ESS) team. Brad has just celebrated his two-year anniversary with MS Plus.

"I know sometimes the idea of working full time can seem pretty tough if you have a chronic condition but if you can link into those resources that will continue to keep you in the workplace, it's invaluable," Brad says.

Strength for the future: fundraising and events to support services and research

MS Plus events and fundraising play an important role in supporting people like Steven and Tina, raising crucial funds for MS research and supports.

In FY2024–2025, our events, including our flagship MS Gong Ride, Walk, Run & Roll and MS Mega Challenges raised **\$2,727,390**, thanks to the help of our **5,953** amazing fundraisers.

We also acknowledge that our events could not happen without the hard work and dedication of our **408** event volunteers, who donated **2,465** hours of their time to ensuring our events ran smoothly.



MS Gong Ride

Total raised: **\$1,463,163**
 Total participants: **6,535**
 Total participants who fundraised: **2,776**
 Volunteers: **191**

Back for her 16th year at the MS Gong Ride, Tina Ruhs rides for her brother, Steven, who was diagnosed with MS when he was 21 years old.

Tina watched as her happy-go-lucky brother went from playing sports every weekend to not being able to move or walk. It was incredibly hard and overwhelming for Steven, Tina, and their entire family.

Despite Steven's hard journey with MS, Tina describes him as "the most resilient, courageous, and positive person you will ever meet". She says he is her hero and inspiration to signing up to the MS Gong Ride and starting her team, Gong Ballistic.

"I am so proud of having been involved over the last 16 years and the money that we have fundraised for people living with MS. It is amazing what you can really do if you set your mind to it."

MS Walk Run + Roll

Total raised: **\$904,013**
 Total participants: **7,687**
 Total participants who fundraised: **2,295**
 Volunteers: **170**



MS Mega Challenge

Total raised: **\$360,214**
 Total participants: **1,154**
 Total participants who fundraised: **882**
 Volunteers: **47**



"It's about taking part in a great team environment, supporting others with neurological conditions and having fun. Every time I have taken part, it blows me away all the support that is out there, such as local businesses donating products or services towards fundraising. Many people in Tasmania are impacted by MS or other neurological conditions in some way, whether it's themselves, or their loved ones."

2025 Hobart Mega Swim participant, Melissa

Do It for MS community fundraising

Each year our community fundraises on our behalf across a wide range of activities, whether it be a physical challenge like a run or walk, in lieu of a gift for a special occasion such as a wedding or birthday, a morning tea or luncheon or any other creative idea.

This year, our dedicated fundraising community raised an impressive **\$361,160**. Part of this community

fundraising is an annual trek to challenge and inspire participants and their supporters to conquer difficult terrain. This year dedicated trekkers took on the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage, walking over 120km in five days across Spain. On 31 May, 17 incredible fundraisers walked into Santiago from their starting point in Sarria, completing their Camino de Santiago Trek!

The group raised more than **\$100,000** (part of the \$361,160 total) for people living with MS.



The May 50K

The May 50K is a month-long challenge to run or walk either 50km, 100km or 150km. The challenge raised more than **\$2.1 million** for people living with MS, with **7,776** people taking part.

Kiss Goodbye to MS

Like The May 50K, Kiss Goodbye to MS is a campaign run on behalf of MS Australia and all funds raised benefit MS research. In FY2024–2025, we raised **\$151,890**.



MS Dream Raffle

The MS Dream Raffle program is run throughout the year, in partnership with external organisation Royal Life Saving Society WA. The raffle gives entrants the chance to win tens-of-thousands-of-dollars in gold. The raffle raised **\$450,000** in FY2024–2025.



MS Community Shops

MS Plus' incredible **240** op shop volunteers donated close to **40,000** hours of their time to supporting the running of our nine community shops across Victoria and Tasmania.

The shops are a popular feature of their communities, with more than **450,000** pre-loved items sold. Not only are the shops an important part of the circular economy but in FY2024–2025 MS Community Shops

raised almost **\$2 million** to support people living with MS and other neurological conditions.



The generosity of our donors and fundraisers means the world to those who benefit directly from those crucial funds.

Deb understands the importance of an early diagnosis, unfortunately she didn't get one. When her symptoms started back in 1980, there were no real treatments available, and research was still in its early days.

"It took months to get an appointment. Then I remember being hooked up to machines with a bunch of electrodes on my head. The results came back as normal, and I started thinking the problem was that there was something wrong with my mind." recalls Deb.



MS Giving

The generosity and kindness of over **5,200** individual donors contributed more than **\$2.184 million** to support our goal of continued service improvement and to provide much-needed funding for research through our direct marketing appeals and regular giving programs.



MS Future Planning

The generous donations we receive through our Gifts in Wills program play a vital role in improving the lives of those currently living with MS, as well as those yet to be diagnosed. Thanks to our benefactors' generosity, we received an incredible **\$5,051,568** towards the development of new and improved services and to support groundbreaking research.





Our commitment to funding research

MS Plus has been a long-time supporter of the important work MS Australia do in their search to better understand, manage and one day cure MS.

Our fundraising programs raised **\$1,474,594** for research, including:

- through the May 50K: **\$733,946**
- other streams: **\$760,648**

MS Plus also provides a further grant to MS Australia each year, in addition to funds raised through donations and events. In FY 2024–2025, MS Plus gifted **\$453,666** to MS Australia to help to fund groundbreaking MS research projects.

Some of the research projects we have recently helped to fund include:

- Associate Professor Litza Kiropoulos, The University of Melbourne, VIC; *A tailored online intervention for depression in MS: ACTION-MS Online*
- Dr Seyhan Yazar, Garvan Institute of Medical Research and University of New South Wales, NSW; *Mining cells and medical records for early signs of MS*
- Dr Nicholas Blackburn, Menzies Institute for Medical Research, University of Tasmania, TAS; *Studying families that have multiple relatives with MS to learn how MS develops*
- Professor Adam Vogel, The University of Melbourne, VIC; *Language function in multiple sclerosis*





Nursing a desire to help: a generous gift that will keep on giving

In 2015, 21-year-old Cass David was working in a Melbourne dental clinic and considering a career in nursing. But then, she began to feel unwell.

"It started with headaches, and then my speech changed. My motor skills deteriorated next. I struggled to play my guitar," she recalls. "The maxillofacial surgeon I worked with at the clinic told me to get an MRI. I did, and soon found out I had MS."

Cass tried to stay positive.

"Negativity and anger drain your energy and push people away. We all face challenges, and I thought, this is mine, but I'll do my best to manage it."

Her best meant pursuing her nursing degree and using her experience to help others.

While Cass doesn't usually share her diagnosis with patients, she knows that her dual role as a patient and a nurse gives her a unique perspective on pain management and resilience.

In the early stages, Cass's MS was aggressive, leading to frequent hospital stays. But thanks to new

medications and self-care measures like a good diet, aerial yoga, massage and osteopathy, her condition improved.

In 2021, Cass and her partner moved to Alice Springs for "the adventure of a lifetime."

She became a flight nurse with the Royal Flying Doctors Service, flying thousands of kilometres across Australia to provide urgent care to patients in remote communities. Cass also works as an emergency care nurse at Alice Springs Hospital.

Throughout her MS journey, Cass has received support from MS Plus. The team helped her understand her condition, navigate the NDIS for equipment and connect with others living with MS.

Grateful for their assistance, Cass, now 30, has regularly donated to MS Plus. Recently, she took her commitment a step further by leaving a gift to MS Plus in her Will.

"I've received so much help from MS Plus. The research and services they provide wouldn't be possible without funding. My gift can go where it's most needed," she says.

Strength at every age: caring for you at home

For 34 years, Care For You at Home (CFYAH) has proudly served the people of Port Stephens and surrounding areas in New South Wales, delivering trusted, professional and compassionate in-home care. In 2022, MS Plus acquired CFYAH to continue the organisation's strong community connection and to expand its services, including the introduction of a skilled, specialist neuro-physiotherapist to the region.

This alignment brings together 70 years of MS Plus expertise in neurological health with the locally grounded, client-centred home care operations of CFYAH.

Care For You at Home employs 26 staff who, in FY2024–2025 provided **23,317** hours of care for **274** people.

“Recently my wife, who provides all my other caring needs, decided that she needed a long overdue visit to her homeland in Barbados. As I am severely disabled, and as she would be away for four weeks, I was very concerned about how I would manage — but my Care Coordinator has done an outstanding job. She has stayed on top of every issue and has been an excellent communicator. My carers have also been unfailingly helpful, cooperative and pleasant. I was extremely worried before my wife left but now she has returned, I can say that my apprehension was unwarranted.”

CFYAH client

Service hours by type of client funding

- Home Care Packages: **9,326**
- NDIS: **2,008**
- Department of Veterans Affairs: **3,728**
- Veteran Home Care: **5,378**
- Brokered/Private: **2,877**

What distinguishes Care For You at Home

- deep local roots with wide support: a long-standing service in the Port Stephens region and beyond, with strong understanding of local needs, including those of older people, veterans and people with disabilities.

- full spectrum care: from short-term or private recovery support, veterans' affairs support, domestic assistance, respite and home maintenance, through to clinical nursing, and with the inclusion of NDIS, we now care for the whole community.

- commitment to quality and compliance: the combined team successfully retained re-accreditation under the Aged Care Quality & Safety Standards and the NDIS Practice Standards, with ongoing audits ensuring client safety, wellbeing and outcomes are consistently monitored.

FY2024–2025 highlights

- we welcomed a dedicated Physiotherapist to the team, with a background in supporting those over 65 to maintain their strength and mobility. The appointment represents the first expansion of the MS Plus allied health team into the aged care space and has been an important care resource for our CFYAH clients.
- following successful integration of People & Culture and ICT, we consolidated finance support and processes.
- strong policy and clinical governance from MS Plus have supported CFYAH to ensure alignment with quality and compliance frameworks.
- research and preparation undertaken for alignment with the Government's new Supported Home programme, rescheduled to commence on 1 November 2025.
- appointment of Senior Manager, Jeanine Loudoun, to strengthen staff support, deliver excellent service to existing clients, and drive business development so more people can access the care they need.
- recruitment started for two new Registered Nurses to provide high-quality care, including wound care, bowel and bladder care, and oversight of care plans.
- expansion of the care-worker team to meet growing demand.
- active participation in a range of community engagement activities and working alongside other health professionals to enhance integrated care for our community.



Concise Financials

Growth in direct service delivery to people living with MS

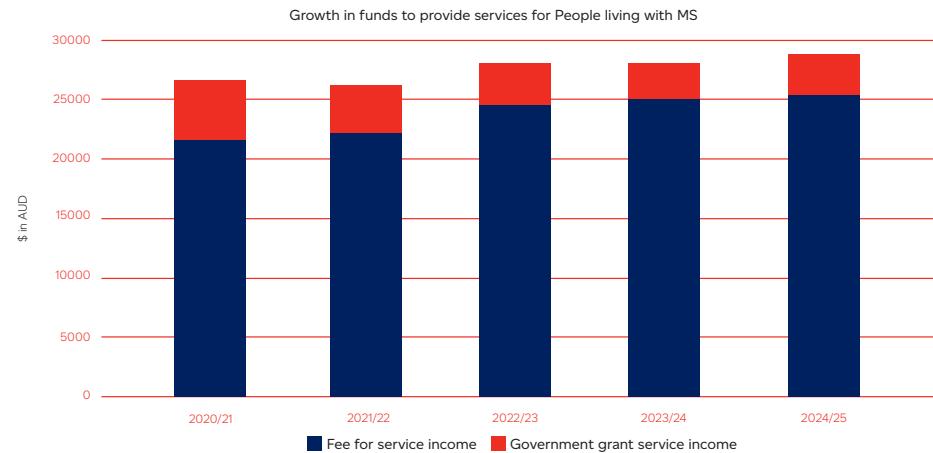
Direct service delivery includes those activities undertaken by the Group which deliver a service to people affected by MS or other neurological conditions and which are primarily funded by fee-for-service arrangements or government grants. Over recent years, the funding environment has changed significantly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

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 reflect 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. Government grant funding excludes JobKeeper payments received in 2020-21.



MS Plus Ltd sources and uses of funds

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

Summary Financial Performance

Actual Financial Performance (\$'000)

	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
MS Plus total income	43,053	56,271	48,591	44,096	58,236
MS Plus net surplus/(deficit)	(7,965)	9,527	2,180	(5,830)	9,396
Subsidiary net surplus/(deficit)	(366)	590	589	117	99
Consolidated net surplus/(deficit)	(8,331)	10,117	2,770	(5,713)	9,495

Concise financials

Fundraising to support people living with MS

MS Plus benefits from its fundraising program, which supports the provision of those activities valued by its clients, but which cannot be funded by fee-for-service or other sources.

The financial year ended 30 June 2025 delivered a mixture of fundraising success across various channels. What the Group experienced is further weak performances in our traditional mass fundraising areas and was reflected across the sector. Fundraising events and lotteries performed below expectation throughout the year. Most events returned reduced fundraising vs budget of around 28%, which again is aligned with sector benchmarking.

The background of an uncertain economic outlook with consequent changes to the behaviour of events participants and lottery ticket buyers, continued from the previous year. In the previous year, in response to this, MS Plus reduced the size of the events team throughout the

year, and cancelled the delivery of the Dream Car Lotteries, leaving only the MS Dream Raffles.

Including income from Gifts in Wills, the overall net fundraising result was better than budget, at \$5.1 million versus a budget of \$4 million – an improvement of \$1.1 million. However, most of this improvement resulted from an outstanding year for Gifts in Wills. In 2024-25, MS Plus received \$5.05 million of bequest donations. Without Gifts in Wills the operating surplus would have been \$1.05 million below budget. Therefore, MS Plus remain overdependent on Gifts in Wills income, which is less predictable, although the maturity of our program enables us to predict revenue one to two years out with reasonable accuracy.

MS Plus Events generated a net surplus of \$220,865, versus a budget of \$1.3 million, caused by the consistent underperformance of live events. MS Gong Ride attracted 6,535 participants versus a target of 8,000, which signified a deficit. Other physical events, such as MS Walk Run Roll and MS Mega Challenge,

also experienced lower participation levels, however they delivered surpluses. Our community fundraising programs performed better than expected, donations exceeded budget by \$133,000.

Individual Giving (excluding Gifts in Wills) performed better than budget, achieving a \$1.08 million surplus, showcasing the continued support of our Appeals donors. We were especially pleased with the performance of our MS Community Shops, which made a surplus of \$74,000 against a budgeted deficit of \$19,000.

Fundraising for research was under budget, with The May 50K not reaching its participation and profit target, with fundraising being just under \$2.2 million.

In summary, this past year can be described as a transition year, where we leveraged MS Plus' traditional channels of events, shops and appeals, while building a new strategy. With changes in the fundraising leadership team, the refreshed strategy focuses

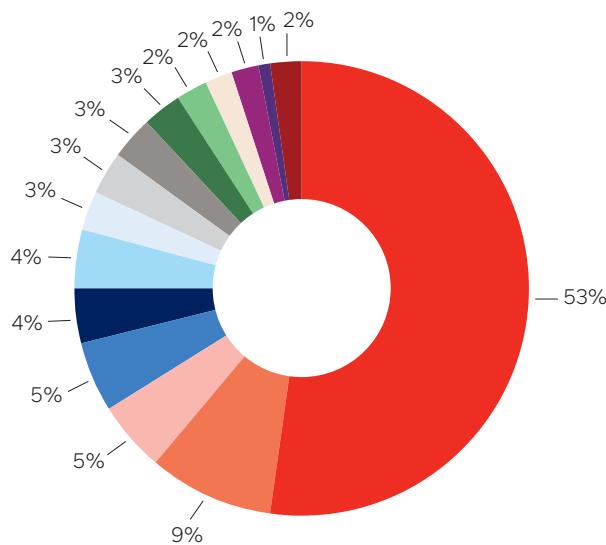
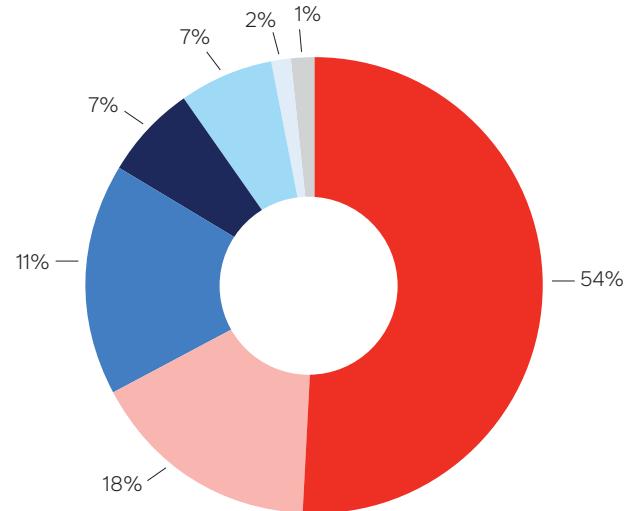
on high-growth, more profitable opportunities, such as a major donor program, to enable MS Plus to continue delivering activities that foster valuable community engagement. The results for the year ended 30 June 2025 validate this strategic shift, although significant growth is expected to unfold over several years.

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 **\$46.5m** in revenue for the year (2024: **\$61.2m**, which included a \$11.4m capital grant). This income comes from government, fee for service and MS Plus' fundraising activities. The chart opposite shows where the Group derived its income during the 2025 financial year.

How the money was spent

The chart opposite shows how total expenditure for the 2025 financial year was allocated between the various activities undertaken by MS Plus Group.



Income

- Fee for services
- Donation and sponsorship income
- Gifts in wills
- Sales and lotteries
- Government grants for services
- Government grant for capital project
- Other income

Expenses

- Employment and staffing expenses
- Impairment on property plant and equipment
- Depreciation and amortisation
- Occupancy expenses
- Net funds raised on behalf of MS Australia and MS state societies
- Event and fundraising costs
- Promoting services and events to the community
- Investment into MS research to find a cure
- Interest expense
- Implementing Strategic Directions 2020-2025
- Administration expenses
- Other expenses

MS Plus Ltd and its controlled entities

Consolidated statement of surplus or deficit and other comprehensive income — for the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025 (\$)	2024 (\$)	2025 (\$)	2024 (\$)
Revenue				
Government and fee for service revenue to deliver programs for people living with MS:				
Fee for services	25,272,577	25,121,298	Employment and staffing expenses	28,923,911
Government grant for capital project	700,000	11,387,204	Impairment on property plant and equipment	5,049,315
Government grants for services	3,249,604	3,016,894	Depreciation	2,671,687
Funds raised by MS Plus to support the delivery of valued programs not funded by Government:				
Donation and sponsorship income	8,192,443	10,043,772	Impairment of goodwill	2,494,571
Sales and lotteries	3,278,299	4,478,395	Directly supporting clients with financial assistance	2,282,282
Gifts in Wills	5,051,568	4,939,860	ICT expenses	2,152,095
Interest and dividend income	133,423	599,396	Occupancy expenses	1,629,909
Net gain/(loss) on assets classified as fair value through profit or loss	(64,683)	502,132	Event and fundraising costs	1,526,026
Specific purpose funding	138,513	192,002	Net funds raised on behalf of MS Australia and MS state societies	1,526,011
Other income	564,034	898,690	Promoting services and events to the community	1,502,026
Total revenue	46,515,778	61,179,644	Investment into MS research to find a cure	1,246,944
			Interest expense	1,083,568
			Implementing Strategic Directions 2020-2025	1,064,288
			Administration expenses	675,391
			Awards and prizes	254,554
			Amortisation	163,333
			Other expenses	600,779
			Total expenditure	54,846,689
			Total comprehensive income / (deficit) for the year	(8,330,911)
				10,116,702

Consolidated statement of financial position — as at 30 June 2025

	2025 (\$)	2024 (\$)	2025 (\$)	2024 (\$)
Assets				
Assets				
Current assets	12,735,161	11,150,751	Current liabilities	13,923,835
Non-current assets	61,738,982	61,883,726	Non-current liabilities	12,278,381
Total assets	74,474,143	73,034,477	Total Liabilities	26,202,216
			Net assets	48,271,927
				56,602,838

MS PLUS BOARD



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MS Plus Chair



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Deputy Chair



Sharlene Brown



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Corinne Habel



Jeannette Lechner-Scott



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Donna-Maree Vinci



John Blewonski
Chief Executive Officer



Kim Farrugia
Company Secretary

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Mathew Cleeve
Ally Long (Independent member)

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Garry Whatley (Independent Member from November 2024)
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Health Services

Darren Spooner

Chief Financial Officer

Special thanks

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 Department of Family & Community Services – Ageing, Disability & Home Care
 Department of Health & Human Services
 Department of Premier & Cabinet
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 The Victorian Government
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 Western Sydney Local Health District

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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:

- Joyce Catherine Annand
- Lindsay James Baldy
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- Balliana Constructions
- In loving memory of Denise Anne Braddon
- Beryl Margaret Charles
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- Graeme R Dunn
- Robin Eden
- Energy Power Systems Australia
- Annemaree Foley
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Contact MS Plus

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