



PLUS
Neuro Wellbeing

Tasmania Newsletter
June 2023

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



MS Go for Gold scholarships
Applications opening soon!

msplus.org.au/GoforGold



THE MS PLUS SOUTHERN ALPS ADVENTURE

Join us for the journey of a lifetime on a scenically spectacular adventure through the Southern Alps of Aotearoa New Zealand's South Island to support Australians living with multiple sclerosis.

From Christchurch to Queenstown, over six days, you'll experience the history and majesty of the Southern Alps region in equal measure. Travelling north to south, by day you'll trek through awe-inspiring landscapes, from native bushland and expansive plains to cities, canyons, countryside and coast. You'll gaze upon the turquoise waters of Lake Tekapo and explore vast wilderness areas of beech forest and enjoy inimitable views of Aotearoa New Zealand's highest peaks.

By joining this adventure, you can make a life-changing impact for people living with MS, and we don't want you to miss out so, get in quick, only 18 spots available!

[Get information pack now - click here](#)



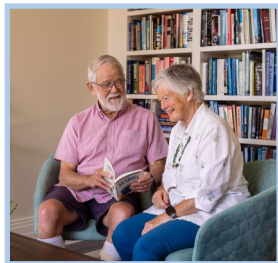
Engineering a way to help people with MS

MS GIFT PLANNING

Nigel Caswell wasn't sure about attending his first multiple sclerosis (MS) conference. *"I was afraid, wondering if I'd see what my future held," said Nigel, who was diagnosed with MS in 1993.*

But the former civil engineer was glad he went because it changed his life. More than two decades later, the 78-year-old Bentleigh resident received MS Australia's John Studdy Award for his service to others living with the neurological condition.

Nigel's volunteer work for the MS community began when he came across an ambassador's stall at the conference. ***"They were recruiting people who were willing to go out into the community and talk about MS. I like public speaking, and I'm a blue sky kind of person. I felt I could help," he said.*** Nigel has been an MS Plus ambassador and MS Australia advocate for 28 years., He speaks to community groups, schools and other organisations. His advocacy work involves lobbying politicians. He's also given time to other causes. In 2013, Nigel received a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for his varied contributions. *"I'm not the sort to let the grass grow under my feet.*



"Volunteering has helped me to live with MS and turn something that might seem like bad luck into an advantage. I'm sure I get more attention because some people don't expect someone in a wheelchair to have intelligent remarks to make."

When Nigel started having health issues, it took years to get an accurate diagnosis. He underwent several unpleasant tests and a complicated operation that didn't solve the mystery. **Five years later, MRI technology provided the answer: progressive MS.** In some ways, the diagnosis was a relief. At least Nigel knew what he was dealing with and could access support and treatment.

After his diagnosis, Nigel was able to continue working as a senior executive at Parks Victoria for several years. He later became a marriage and funeral celebrant. Now retired, Nigel enjoys caravan touring with Stevie, his wife. He also likes painting watercolours and spending time with his two sons and four granddaughters.



These days, he gets around in a walker at home and a wheelchair when he goes out. Despite this, he feels lucky. **Being an MS ambassador and donor are two ways Nigel has thanked MS Plus staff for their support.** Now he's adding something else: **a gift in his Will.**

"A bequest is a logical extension of my MS ambassador role. It will help keep my work going after I'm gone. It's important to help fund research that will lead to better treatments. The current drugs have unpleasant side effects. It would be great to have better ones available."

But a cure would be even better. "It might not be there in time to help me, but if my gift can help others receive a cure, that's a good thing in my book," he said.

Fast-track a cure for MS, care until we're there. Protect future generations from MS. Could you be like Nigel and help others with MS?

It's easy to leave a gift in your Will. Even 1% of what is left after taking care of family and friends. Ask Laura or Rebecca at MS Plus. Call 1800 443 867, email futureplanning@ms.org.au or visit www.mymslegacy.org.au





Join Project Wellbeing with a gift today.

Help others living with multiple sclerosis, like Alison, to regain strength, mobility, and confidence.

Alison was determined that there must be a way — and she found it at MS Plus.



msplusdonate.org.au

[Click here to view Alison's story**](#)**

EDUCATION & WELLBEING

Men, MS, intimacy and sexuality

Wednesday 14 June, 2:00pm – 3:00pm

To coincide with Men's Health Week 12 to 18 June, we will be exploring some possibly uncomfortable, but very important men's health and sexuality issues in MS. Join our expert guest, Dr. Aaron Boster, Medical Chief for Neuroimmunology at OhioHealth as we talk about men's health issues and the conversations that can sometimes be difficult to have. We will also be joined by Silas, who will share his lived experience of men's health challenges in MS.

Tai Chi by Webinar (6-week series)

**Wednesdays 21 June to 26 July,
1:00pm – 1:45pm**



Tai Chi is a centuries-old mind-body practice that involves performing sequences of slow, flowing motions. Its main focus is on health and wellbeing rather than on fitness and it incorporates the use of

the smaller muscle groups. Tai Chi is usually done standing, but many of the movements can also be done while seated. Presented by Josephine Couper, this program is suitable for people with moderate ability and those wishing to improve their balance and strengthen muscle tone in a gentle and relaxing way.

Working with multiple sclerosis

Webinar on demand – Watch anytime!

What are your rights and responsibilities and your employer's obligations in your workplace? This program is led by MS Plus employment support consultants, Maria Nguyen and Jacqueline Efthimiou and will include topics such as who to contact regarding work issues, strategies for symptom management in the workplace and disclosure of MS at work.

Brain health and cognition

Webinar on demand – Watch anytime!

Are you curious about brain health and what that means for someone living with multiple sclerosis? Join Executive Manager, Client Engagement and Wellbeing, Jodi Haartsen as she outlines some strategies to improve your brain health. Jodi will also provide a background on how the MS Brain Health Initiative began and what they do for people with MS.

Men, MS, sex and sexuality: all you need to know

Podcast – Listen anytime!

Join relationship counsellor and sex therapist Darren Radley as he shares his wisdom on managing common sexual concerns and difficulties when you have MS. Darren is a member of the [Australian Society of Sex Educators, Researchers, and Therapists](#).

Learn from Me: Connecting with mates

Podcast – Listen anytime!

As part of the 'Learn from Me' series, MS Plus Peer Support Coordinator, Kim Repcak speaks with the inspirational and very honest, Mark Wilson. They chat about the importance of staying connected with friends and how to stop letting things get in the way of catching up with your mates.



Men and mental resilience with Gus Worland

Podcast – Listen anytime!

Men's mental health is an often-overlooked subject. Nine Australians die every day from suicide and 75% of them are male, and this is preventable! Gus Worland offers some great tips for improving your mental health. Gus Worland is a well-known personality who has appeared on television and [Triple M radio](#). He is founder of [Gotcha4life](#) mental health charity.

Learn from me: Being a dad with MS

Podcast – Listen anytime!

Parenting can be hectic at the best of times. If you're living with MS, trying to juggle your needs and those of your partner and your children brings additional challenges. Join Silas on this 'Learn from Me' podcast as he shares his experience of being a busy dad living with MS. Silas describes the various strategies he has put in place that support him and his family to enjoy life and live well.



Telling your MS story – the Australian MS Longitudinal Study

The Australian MS Longitudinal Study (AMSLS) is a survey-based research study designed to provide a comprehensive picture of all Australians living with MS.

Our current survey — the *2023 Health Economic Impact of MS* study — gathers in-depth information on quality of life and the direct and indirect costs of MS to both individuals and Australia as a whole. Some costs associated with MS, such as medications, equipment, and health professional appointments, can be easily identified, understood and estimated. These costs, however, only represent a small percentage of the true cost of MS, which can include significant financial and life costs such as lost wages and professional or unpaid family help with tasks impacted by fatigue associated with everyday life.

Repeated every 5-10 years, the *Health Economic Impact of MS* study captures the most accurate picture of life with MS in Australia and ensures the most important issues can be monitored, updated and addressed on a regular basis. There have been some big wins since the previous report in 2010, with the newer higher efficacy disease modifying therapies directly translating to better employment outcomes and, subsequently, a significant decrease in the indirect cost of lost wages. However, the prevalence of MS is still on the rise and the overall cost of MS per person has also risen, indicating MS remains a significant challenge to both individuals and Australia as a whole.

About 3000 people now participate in the AMSLS — a partnership between the Menzies Institute for Medical Research and MS Australia — and if you're living with MS in Australia and aged 18 or older you're eligible to join.

The more participants we have the greater the impact of our research, so consider joining today.

Want to share your MS story? Join the AMSLS today <https://bit.ly/joinAMSLS>



**JOIN THE
AUSTRALIAN MS
LONGITUDINAL
STUDY TODAY**

Together we can help improve the
quality of life for people living with MS.

Visit msaustralia.org.au/amsls

UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA
MENZIES 
Institute for Medical Research


MS
AUSTRALIA



Peer Support Groups

CIRCULAR HEAD

Meets: First Monday of the month, 7:00-8:30pm

Next Meeting: Monday 5 June

Venue: Circular Head Rural Health Centre, Smithton

Guest Speaker: Andrew Palmer
Impact of MS on Australia

EASTERN SHORE

Meets: Second Friday of the month,
10:30am-12noon

Next Meeting: Friday 9 June

Venue: Mornington Inn

GLENORCHY

Meets: Last Monday of the month, 6:00-8:00pm

Next Meeting: Monday 26 June

Venue: Glenorchy

Social gathering, meals at own cost

NEW NORFOLK

Meets: First Wednesday of the month,
10:30am-12noon

Next Meeting: Wednesday 7 June

Venue: New Norfolk

Social gathering, coffees, cake etc. at own cost

MENS GROUP

Meets: Third Friday of the month,
12 noon - 2:00 pm

Next Meeting: Friday 16 June

Venue: Dr Syntax, Sandy Bay
Socialising

LAUNCESTON

Meets: Last Saturday of the month,
11 am onwards

Next meeting: Saturday 24 June

Venue: Library Café
Socialising

SHEFFIELD

Meets: First Monday of the month,
1:00 pm onwards

Next Meeting: Monday 5 June

Venue: Sheffield Rural Health
Guest speaker: TBC

WYNYARD

Meets: Third Wednesday of the month,
Midday onwards

Next Meeting: Wednesday 27 June

Venue: Bruce's Café, Wynyard
Coffee catch up

ULVERSTONE

Meets: Fourth Wednesday of the month,
11:00am - 1:00pm

Next Meeting: Wednesday 28 June

Venue: Ulverstone Life Saving Club

Guest speaker: Kim Repcak - Managing Stress &
Building Resilience

KINGSTON

Meetings on hold until further notice.

All welcome to other Tassie groups

RSVP: msconnect@ms.org.au

MS Plus Photo ID Card



MS Plus free Photo ID Card is available to all people who are registered with MS in ACT, NSW, Tasmania or Victoria, who have a confirmed diagnosis of multiple sclerosis.

The card can be useful for telling others that you have multiple sclerosis.

For example, it can be used at a bank to explain why a person's registered signature may have changed. Sometimes it's also useful to explain why you may have difficulty with vision, balance, coordination or slurring of speech.

To obtain an MS Photo ID Card, you need to download and complete an [application form](#) or [contact Plus Connect](#) Freecall 1800 042 138 Email connect@msplus.org.au and ask them to post an application to you.