MS PLUS
Neuro Wellbeing

Tasmania Newsletter
July 2024

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

The 2024 MS Go for Gold Scholarships applications open this month!

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 open on the 11 July 2024.

Find out more

2024 MS Mega Swim Hobart

Get ready to ignite your competitive spirit at the 2024 MS Mega Swim Hobart. Join us on Saturday 21 September for an exhilarating 12 hours of swimming, fun and camaraderie at the Doone Kennedy Hobart Aquatic Centre, all in support of a great cause. Whether you're a seasoned athlete or a weekend warrior, there's something for everyone in this ultimate test of endurance. Each moment promises to push your limits and create unforgettable memories. So, gather your friends, pull on your bathers and get ready to make a difference as we come together to raise funds and awareness for multiple sclerosis research and support. Get ready to conquer the challenge and leave a lasting impact!

More Information Here

Congratulations to our 2024 Art Show winners!!

Congratulations to the winners of our 2024 MS Plus Virtual Art Show! This year 58 people submitted 88 pieces of artwork, all exploring this year's World MS Day theme: 'It Takes a Village'.

The MS Plus Virtual Art Show, now in its 18th year, provides people living with neurological conditions an opportunity to express their creativity and their unique experience of MS through art.

For World MS Day 2024, MS Plus explored the importance of finding your support network, or 'village' after an MS diagnosis — and all the forms a village can take. The theme is a celebration of the people, systems and services that support people with MS.

View the full Virtual Art Show Gallery

Congratulations goes to:

The Barry Allen Art Award, winner: Robert Barnes 'Long View from a Long Hill'

Paintings/Illustrations, winner: Peter Spies: 'Inter Connectivity' ***Special mention:*** John Ellison 'Bridge'

Sculptural/Craft Artwork, winner: Rikki Butinar 'Village Offering' ***Special mention:*** Jade Warner 'My School in the Depths'

Digital Artwork and Photography, winner: Deanna Renee 'Healing Isn't Linear'

Special mention: Annie Probert 'It Takes a Village'

Carers Award, winner: Summer Archilles 'Reaching for Help'

MS Readathon

HELPING KIDS, ONE STORY AT A TIME

Reading transports you to whole new worlds. Every page holds the promise of a wonderful adventure. And in August, reading is extra special. It's when you can join the MS Readathon. For the whole month, every time you read and log your books, you'll help raise money for families impacted by multiple sclerosis.

Are you ready to unleash your imagination for an incredible cause?

Sign up today

A travel agent's journey to support the MS community

For over 30 years, travel agent Lois Marshall has helped people explore new horizons. But her particular journey extends beyond travel — it's about making a difference for people with multiple sclerosis (MS).

Lois realised long ago that people with MS often didn't go on holidays. As their disease progresses, their world shrinks. It's harder to leave the house, let alone travel. Seeing the struggle of friends and clients with MS, Lois felt moved by their courage. This is another reason she began making annual donations to MS Plus 43 years ago.

"I knew people with MS and saw how it affected them and their families," she explains. "Right now, it's a disease with no cure and no light at the end of the tunnel."

In 1981, Lois got a letter about a new MS Plus initiative: *The Key to MS Treatment and Research.* The organisation was close to her then-home in Artarmon, on Sydney's north shore. The local appeal and urgent need piqued her interest.

"MS was a cause that needed my support, so I signed up," she recalls.

For her kindness, Lois received a little gold key from MS Plus — which she has kept for over 40 years in her jewellery box. She also received a certificate of appreciation signed by the late Betty Cuthbert, the champion track runner and beloved MS advocate. But Lois thinks certain diseases are better known and funded these days.

"Currently, there's a lot of generosity for well-publicised causes like breast and prostate cancer. They're certainly worthy. But in contrast, MS often gets overlooked and put in the "too-hard basket". Yet MS needs as much, if not more, financial support for research and treatment," she says.

"People don't understand that MS affects not only the patient but also their loved ones. I'm for the underdog and will always consider causes that aren't so popular. That's why I support MS," says Lois.

Ten years ago, Lois extended her generosity by including a gift in her Will to MS Plus. She says the process was straightforward. She wrote instructions and discussed her intention with her solicitor. Lois remains 'cautiously optimistic' that her gift could make a difference.

"While treatments are important, research should be the priority. I don't mind if research happens in Australia or overseas. Scientists everywhere can learn from each other and share ideas. By working together, they can accelerate the discovery of a cure," she says.

The key in Lois's jewellery box remains her reminder that "research is always the key to a cure." Lois hopes more people will learn about MS in the future. She believes education might lead to increased funding and support.

"MS sufferers and their families need and deserve hope," she concludes.

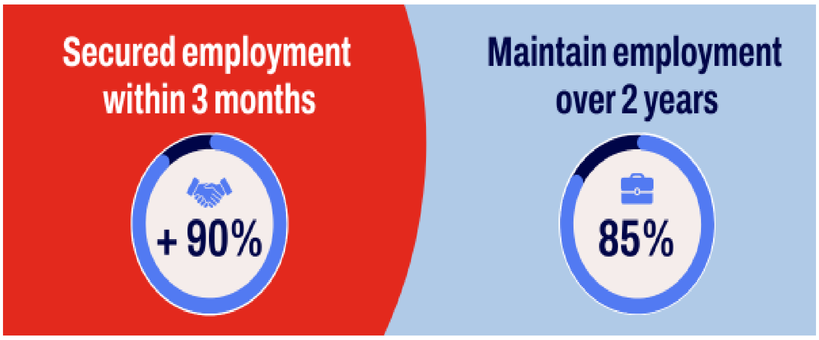
Currently, 33,335 people in Australia have MS. Like Lois, you can be a beacon of hope for them. Since 1956, MS Plus has supported thousands of clients and their loved ones. Gifts in Wills can fund research, treatments, peer support programs and well-being centres. Find out more from Laura or Rebecca at MS Plus. Call **1800 443 867** visit www.mymslegacy.org.au or email futureplanning@msplus.org.au

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

Free employment support

Did you know? Our free Plus Employment Support Service boasts a remarkable 91% success rate in securing jobs within 3 months. Even better, 85% of clients are still thriving in their roles 2 years later!

We can meet you face-to-face at our Hobart wellbeing centre or provide support via telehealth. Your job success matters, **Get in touch today!**



MS PLUS
Neuro Wellbeing

what's on

Exploring the latest programs and updates from client engagement and wellbeing

JULY 2024

Upcoming MS Plus webinars

Managing uncertainty and anxiety
29 July 2024, 12.30 pm – 1.30 pm AEDT

Living with a diagnosis of MS also means living with a degree of uncertainty and unpredictability. This often manifests as wondering when symptoms might appear, when they might subside, and what the next day or even year will entail. Coping with the uncertainty and anxiety that MS can bring is vital for people managing the condition. In this webinar, psychologist Seona Ilalio will discuss how people living with a chronic condition can maintain their mental wellbeing and provide practical strategies for managing the inevitable uncertainty. Seona offers a unique perspective as someone living with a chronic condition.
Register Now!

Podcast spotlight:

MS Nursing in Tasmania: Talking with Michael Mortensen about his time as an MS Nurse

MS nurse Michael Mortenson discusses his career and experiences in MS nursing, and being awarded the MS Nurse Australasian, Inc. Association's Lifetime Membership. Michael talks about the changes in the MS landscape, the impact of new medications on MS management, the role of an MS nurse, the challenges and rewards of being an MS nurse in Tasmania, and the importance of a supportive MS community. Michael also shares his advice for people living with MS. **Listen here!**

Talking men's health, diagnosis and the journey of living with MS with David and Andrew

In this episode of the MS podcast series, in recognition of Men's Health Week, David and Andrew share their personal experiences of being diagnosed with MS and its impact on their lives and mental health. David and Andrew have a deeply personal conversation about their initial symptoms, the diagnostic process, and the mental and emotional challenges they faced. The discussion also covers the societal pressures that men still face regarding toughness and emotional openness, as well as the importance of support systems, both professional and personal. They highlight the crucial role of communication with healthcare providers and the benefits of mental health support. David and Andrew both share their coping strategies and offer advice for other men living with MS, stressing the importance of self-care, listening to your body and seeing the GP, as well as reaching out for support. **Listen here!**

TAS Family Camp – 25 – 27 October - Hobart

Expressions of interest are now open for our next Family Camp in beautiful Hobart. The camp is available for families with school aged children. Camp costs are funded through the MS Readathon. This is a unique opportunity to share time together as a family and meet other families living with MS…and a great chance for children to meet peers who also have a parent with MS.

Express your interest here!

what's on ...

Catch up on recent podcasts:

Men's Health Matters: Tackling Erectile Dysfunction with Nurse Practitioner Luke Mitchell

In this episode of The MS Boost, we interview Luke, a nurse practitioner specialising in sexual health to discuss erectile dysfunction (ED), its prevalence in the population, misconceptions and links with mental health. Luke provides insight and practical advice for managing ED discussing holistic treatment options, the importance of trusting your health care practitioner and broader health and relationship implications. **Listen here!**

The MS Boost will be in addition to our current series, so make sure you're following **MS Podcasts** on your preferred player like **Apple Podcasts** or **Spotify** to be the first to know when new episodes are released

You can find previously recorded webinars and podcasts on the Resource Hub.

If you need further information or would like to speak to our MS Nurse, please contact the Plus Connect team

Peer Support Groups

We have several Peer Support Groups available in Tasmania that welcome new members any time. If you're interested in joining a group contact Plus Connect on 1800 042 138.

CIRCULAR HEAD
Meets: First Monday of the month,

7:00-8:30pm

Venue: Circular Head Rural Health

EASTERN SHORE
Meets: Second Friday of the month, 10:30am-12noon, followed by lunch
Venue: Mornington Inn

GLENORCHY *
Meets: Last Tuesday of the month, 6:00-8:00pm
Venue: Glenorchy or Moonah

NEW NORFOLK
Meets: First Wednesday of the month, 10:30am-12noon
Venue: New Norfolk

LAUNCESTON
Meets: Third Saturday of the month,

11 am onwards
Venue: Various café's in Launceston

WYNYARD
Meets: Third Wednesday of the month Mid-day onwards
Venue: Bruce's Café, Wynyard

ULVERSTONE
Meets: Fourth Wednesday of the month, 11:00am-1:00pm
Venue: Ulverstone Life Saving Club

MENS GROUP
Meets: Third Friday of the month,

12 midday -2pm
Venue: Dr Syntax, Sandy Bay

CHANGE OF DAY

***GLENORCHY Now meeting LAST Tuesday of the month**

what's on ...

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

Register Here!

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:

- Understanding MS for Carers
- Understanding emotions
- Parents of teens with MS
- Looking after yourself
- Talking about MS
- Navigating support systems
- Finances, legal & work
- Young Carers
- Preparing for emergencies

Explore the toolkit here

Meet Samantha

Are you feeling overwhelmed by the complexities of managing your NDIS plan while also navigating life with MS or other neurological conditions? We understand the challenges you face, which is why we're excited to introduce our new NDIS Plan Manager, Samantha, who is dedicated to helping you achieve your goals with ease and confidence. Read more >