



**PLUS**  
Neuro Wellbeing

**Tasmania Newsletter**  
November 2024

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



## **Need help managing your MS symptoms?**

**Our neuro-specialised physiotherapists  
offer tailored support to help you:**

- **Improve your strength and balance**
- **Manage symptoms such as fatigue, weakness, stiffness and pain**
- **Move more freely and confidently**

**Book your appointment today**

**1800 042 138**  
**[connect@msplus.org.au](mailto:connect@msplus.org.au)**  
**[msplus.org.au/plusphysio](https://msplus.org.au/plusphysio)**

## Do you notice any of these signs?



- Are you waking up two or more times at night to use the bathroom?
- Do you sometimes feel an urgent need to go, and worry you might not make it in time?
- Are you finding yourself needing to go to the toilet more often during the day?
- Do you have trouble starting to urinate, even when you feel the urge?
- Do you leak a little when you laugh, sneeze or lift something heavy?
- Are you struggling with constipation or feeling like you haven't fully emptied your bowels?
- Have you had sudden bowel urges or leaks that are difficult to control?

If you answered 'yes' to any of these questions, it's time to speak with a health professional. These could be signs of continence issues related to MS, but the good news is, in many cases these symptoms can be prevented and better managed.

Reach out to our MS Plus continence nurses for a confidential, thorough review. We're here to support and empower you to overcome these challenges, so you can take back control.

Book your appointment with Plus Connect today: 1800 042 138

Email: [connect@msplus.org.au](mailto:connect@msplus.org.au) [Learn more](#)

## A MEGA thank you!

MS Plus wrapped up the last of the MS Mega Swim challenges for 2024 in Hobart in September! These incredible events are held around Australia and see participants form a team and swim consecutively for 12 or 24 hours, all while raising funds for the MS Go for Gold scholarships.



The 2024 Hobart MS Mega Swim was such great fun! With over \$22,000 raised and 306kms swum, we are so proud of our amazing participants and all their hard work. The funds raised will help people living with MS chase a personal dream.

Our lucky MS Go for Gold scholarship winners for 2024 will be announced in November and then listed on our website, check them out here: [MS Go for Gold Winner Stories](#)

A huge thank you to everyone who participated or volunteered on the day, we can't wait to be back next year!



**'Pottery became my lifeline,  
and with the support of MS  
Plus, I'm turning my passion  
into a career.'**



Clare's story of resilience, passion and finding support through our FREE Employment Support Service is truly inspiring. Discover how she's overcoming challenges and embracing her "perfectly imperfect" life with MS. [Read more.](#)

## MS Plus Shop



**Reduce Reuse Recycle** is a term we often hear from groups who sell preloved items.

We continue to be amazed at the amount of new and near new items we receive each week and offer for sale at fair prices.

Collectors visit our stores looking for pieces to add to their collection, whether it be a designer handbag or a royal Doulton figurine, and others are looking to reduce landfill by purchasing pre-loved items with lots of life left in them.

For whatever reason you choose to buy from community shops, remember not only are you reducing landfill and saving resources but you are supporting an amazing charity just like MS Plus.

Don't forget to visit us and say hi, drop in donations and maybe find a pre-loved item you must have.

**145 Hobart Road, Kings Meadows, Launceston**

**Monday - Friday: 9.00am – 5.00pm**

**Saturday: 9.00am – 2.00pm**

**Phone: 03 6285 2088**



# what's on

Exploring the latest programs and updates from client engagement and wellbeing



**NOVEMBER 2024**

## Upcoming programs

### Peer Talk - Speak with someone who understands

Peer talk is a one-to-one peer support program. Trained peer volunteers who have lived with MS and understand the challenges you might be facing are available to speak with you. You'll be matched with a peer volunteer who has a specific interest or experience that matches closely to your circumstance.

Peer Talk is available anytime. For some people just one phone chat is enough, for others a few conversations might be better suited.

**Book a Peer Talk appointment or learn more:**

1800 042 138 | [connect@msplus.org.au](mailto:connect@msplus.org.au)

**Cost:** Free

### Peer Support Peer Talk

Connect with a peer volunteer one-on-one



### Manage your MS related fatigue at work

Register for FACETS



### Managing fatigue at work

Fatigue is a very common symptom of MS and can significantly impact your work, but there are strategies you can learn to help.

**FACETS** (Fatigue: Applying Cognitive behavioural and Energy Effectiveness Techniques to LifeStyle) is an evidence-based program designed for people living with MS to help manage fatigue using 'energy effectiveness' techniques and cognitive behavioural therapy strategies.

Developed by researchers from Bournemouth University and Poole Hospital in the UK, the group program is delivered by trained professionals with no more than 12 participants. The program involves weekly 90min sessions over 6 weeks.

**When:** FACETS for work – Lunchtime session 5 February 2025, 12.00 - 1.30

**Learn more:** [msplus.org.au/FACETS](https://msplus.org.au/FACETS)

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

**Cost:** \$150



## Learn MS for family & friends

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

**When:** Next online program starts 12 November 2024

**Time:** 7.00pm – 8.15pm

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

**Cost:** Free



## Deanna: an artful advocate for MS



When she was just 17, Deanna was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) during her VCE exams. **Her first symptom was sudden blindness in her left eye.** "I couldn't see colour. It was like staring at a black-and-white canvas," Deanna recalls. **An ophthalmologist diagnosed optic neuritis, often associated with early MS.** A neurologist later confirmed Deanna had it.

Back then, Deanna knew little about the neurological condition. "It was 2007. I knew about the MS Readathon for kids, but I didn't receive much support or education," she says. Deanna went online looking for information. **However, she felt overwhelmed by the negative portrayals of people with MS.** "The lack of positive representation left me thinking my life was over before it had begun," she says.



Friends distanced themselves, mistakenly fearing her condition was contagious. **Some people told her to forget about university, travel, or romance.** Despite regaining her eyesight and completing her VCE, Deanna became depressed. For two years, she worked at low-paying jobs. She endured vertigo during MS relapses. **A pivotal moment came during a routine health check. Deanna told her new GP she couldn't attend uni or travel because of her MS. The elegant-looking doctor told her: "I have MS and a great life. So can you."**

**Inspired, Deanna pursued higher education.** She earned degrees in social sciences, sexual health and social work. **She travelled overseas, found love and built a career as a mental health clinician.** Now 34, Deanna is happier. Improved drug treatments, mental health support and a solid social network have helped.

**Along her journey, she discovered MS Plus.** The staff supported her with assessments and in navigating social services. Today, she serves as one of their ambassadors, advocating for better peer support for younger people with MS. "It would have helped to connect with people my age facing similar experiences," she reflects.

**She also participates in MS Plus fundraising events.** In 2022, Deanna raised \$8,000 through the MS Walk, Run + Roll and the MS Tuscany Trek, a 100-kilometre journey. She also curated their charity art show, showcasing artists with 'invisible illnesses.' In her spare time, Deanna creates digital art. With her *Circular Blooms* project, she turns her MRI scans into colourful works of art. **"I turn anxiety-inducing MRIs into something positive," she explains.** Through her art, she hopes to challenge misconceptions about MS.



**Recently, Deanna decided to write her Will, making MS Plus a beneficiary.**

"I'm grateful for MS Plus support and want to help further their mission. I want to bring hope to others," she says. Ideally, she'd like her gift to support the MS Plus Art Show. "It gave me a creative outlet and helped me process my diagnosis," she says. While her journey has been challenging, Deanna remains optimistic. "Medication, support groups and representation have improved. They're moving in the right direction."



**Like Deanna, you can leave a legacy of hope for people living with MS, through a gift in your Will. Any gift, large or small, even 1-2% of what is left, after gifts for family and friends, can go to research or support services.**

Want to know more?

Contact Laura, Future Planning Manager, on **1800 443 867**.

You can also email [futureplanning@msplus.org.au](mailto:futureplanning@msplus.org.au) or visit [www.mymslegacy.org.au](http://www.mymslegacy.org.au).

Link to Deanna's story: <https://www.msplus.org.au/news/deanna-an-artful-advocate-for-ms>