



PLUS
Neuro Wellbeing

Tasmania Newsletter
November 2022

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

Mega MS Plus Swim Success in Tasmania

The recent hosting of a feature Mega Swim event in Tasmania provided a welcome opportunity to engage with passionate participants from across the apple-isle and raise over \$25k. There were ninety-two fundraisers and 7 teams actively contributing towards a successful result and enjoying MS camaraderie together at the Doone Kennedy Hobart Aquatic Centre over a momentous 12-hour timeframe.



The overall winning team and highest fundraiser accolade was awarded to 'Tomatoes Swim Club', whilst a standout team was 'Purple Turtles'.

One Tomatoes Swim Club participant was overheard saying that *'he enjoyed the opportunity to raise funds for such a worthy cause – and the challenge of lap-swimming with his team was much better than him being at home mowing the lawns!'*

Purple Turtles team captain Nathaniel Payne said *'my mother has MS and the team competes with her as their key motivational driver. As an active swim-teacher she would move young children around in the water attached to her back – hence she then became known as Mrs Turtle, who also had a strong affection for the colour purple... and there you go – a unique and popular team evolved and has been participating in this event for several years. Her namesake the Purple Turtles.'*

It was especially pleasing to welcome local Lord Mayor of Hobart, Anna Reynolds to the event where she officially opened proceedings alongside MS Ambassador Bill Pegus and MS Plus CEO John Blewonski. For the event to receive significant media coverage via the TV news channel was testament to its significance in the community.

The venue and event provided a platform for solid participant fundraising, engagement and enhancing relationships with the entire community. Preparations on the back of event success are already occurring for 2023.



****Visit the MS Mega Challenge Facebook page to review the complete results summary.**

Celebrating our Scholarship Recipients

Congratulations to the 25 recipients of our 2022 MS Go for Gold Scholarships! We once again had an overwhelming response to the program, receiving 165 applications this year, all for a variety of inspiring goals. The judges found it extremely difficult to award only 25 applicants, as there were so many deserving candidates. The scholarships provide up to \$2,000 for people living with MS to fulfill a dream or goal they would otherwise be unable to pursue.



Until now, scholarship recipient Ben's symptoms and his commitments at home meant he didn't have the time or energy to complete an art class and, being unable to work meant he was unable to afford good art supplies. Since the pandemic, more online art classes have opened up, providing Ben with the opportunity to pursue his dream.

'The ultimate dream is that, by learning some painting and art techniques, it will also turn what is about connecting with my daughters and having a form of therapy for my pain and fatigue into the possibility of even selling paintings and contributing more to my family,' Ben said.

We would like to say a special thank you to all our MS Mega Challenge fundraisers, whose hard work provides the funding for our Go for Gold scholarships each year, as well as other critical MS supports and services.

We encourage anyone unsuccessful in the current round to please apply again in 2023. If you need additional help to live well with MS — we are here for you. Contact our **Plus Connect team** on **1800 042 138** to find out how we can help you or your loved ones.

You can read our recipient stories on the MS Plus website: msplus.org.au/GoforGoldstories2022

The MS Mega Challenge has gone virtual!

The 2022 MY MEGA CHALLENGE FOR MS is a fun and FREE 12- or 24-hour event where you can choose your own challenge, both physical and recreational to raise funds and awareness for Australians living with MS.

We'll see people complete virtual 12 or 24hour challenges all over Australia in sports such as swimming, running, tennis, cycling, badminton, squash & racquetball, netball and more.

And, it's not just sports! From knitting to video games, you can choose an endurance recreational activity too.

Take on a feat of endurance and make a life-changing impact for people with MS!

Location: You decide where to complete your challenge

Date: Saturday 26 - Sunday 27 November 2022

Will you take on the My Mega Challenge for MS?

<https://www.msmechallenge.org.au/event/my-mega-challenge>



Education & Wellbeing



How can I support someone with a recent diagnosis of MS?

Friday 4 November 10:30am—11:15am

We all want the best for those we care about. But knowing how to best support someone after a diagnosis of MS can be difficult. Join MS Plus Nurse Advisor, Jane Gilliland as she provides insights into the role you can play, and the helpful and not so helpful things you can do following the diagnosis.

Chair Yoga by Webinar

**Tuesdays 8 November to 13 December
10:00am – 10:45am**

Chair Yoga is a practice which applies modified yoga postures using a chair for support. It is suitable for those who find getting onto the floor difficult. It offers the same benefits a traditional yoga practice entails including mental stillness and deep relaxation. This program can assist you to achieve the flexibility, health and mobility benefits.

Breaking Down Barriers to Exercise with Paralympic Bronze Medalist, Janine Watson

On demand – Watch anytime!

Join Paralympic bronze medallist, Janine Watson as she shares her inspiring story of taking up Taekwondo after being diagnosed with MS at the age of 25. Janine will describe how she has managed to stay active throughout her MS journey, and how she motivates herself to break down barriers that people with MS face every day.

Sleep well with multiple sclerosis

On demand – Watch anytime!

Sleep is incredibly important to a person's quality of life. Many people living with multiple sclerosis do not sleep well for a variety of reasons. Join us as we explore different sleep issues, their relationship to fatigue and, best of all, look at strategies to assist you get a better night's sleep.

Live well with multiple sclerosis

On demand – Watch anytime!

Join MS Nurse Advisor, Jane Bridgman as she presents on the essential elements of living well with multiple sclerosis. This webinar is suited to those who are newly diagnosed as well as those who have been living with the disease for some time.

In partnership with you!

Our **Plus Connect** team wants to hear your unique story and help you overcome any barriers. Whether you know exactly what you want or you're not sure where to start, we're here.

That's why we're changing the way we operate so we can better partner with you! While you can still reach out to the Plus Connect team anytime you need without an appointment, during November you may notice a small change when you call.

We will be introducing our new Key Worker initiative. Your Key Worker will be a dedicated partner you can trust who knows a little bit about you – so you won't have to start from the beginning every time you call.



Our Key Workers understand the impact neurological conditions can have on you and your loved ones. They'll help you access the services you need, when you need them, so you can focus on living well and stay in touch to ensure you're getting what you need.

We'll match all new clients with a dedicated Key Worker from day one. We'll also gradually transition our existing clients over to having a dedicated Key Worker too. We'll be in touch with more information about your new Key Worker in the coming months as we transition to a new way of supporting you!

The power of music, and the pursuit of a passion, have helped Simon stay positive while learning to live with his MS.

When he started having symptoms in 2003, Simon was diagnosed with a number of conditions including repetitive strain injuries and carpal tunnel syndrome. The possibility he had Multiple Sclerosis (MS) didn't even come up. It took three years to be accurately diagnosed. Then Simon faced medical retirement at just 49. He struggled to process this sudden end to his computer software career. *"I resisted and tried to continue working, only to have a nervous breakdown at work,"* Simon says.

Over the next 18 months he regained control of his life. Simon is now a recording artist.

Simon has always loved music. While growing up in The Netherlands, he played bass in a high-school rock band called Anacrusis. As he came to terms with having MS, Simon decided to reconnect with his creative side. He was bringing Anacrusis back! It was hard to play instruments because of MS, so Simon learned to make music with software instead. He set up a studio at his home in Canberra and began to experiment with digital art.

He moved to Thailand in 2019 with his partner Nan, and two dogs Clem and Mi. He is mixing, mastering and recording tracks at his second home studio. He released his first EP, and within months he'd made a whole album, *Sounds from Many Scars*. These days, Simon sees his MS in a positive light, because it gave him time to focus on music. His new motto, *Think Positive*, is tattooed on his arm. But he acknowledges the journey's been hard.

He's grateful for the care and support of the MS community. After his diagnosis, Simon's neurologist suggested he visit a nearby MS Plus branch. He learned how to administer injectable treatments, but he also connected with a wonderful counsellor who he says saved him.

"The counsellor helped me learn to live with an incurable illness and accept my new normal." He says it was also helpful and uplifting to get regular updates about MS research that was being funded by the MS community.

Now Simon is paying it forward.

Simon's mother, Brenda, included MS Plus in her Will, and inspired Simon to do the same. He says the process itself was very straightforward. He talked about his gift with his adult children — who fully support his decision — and gave his instructions to the solicitor. That's it. Most importantly, including a gift in his Will to MS Plus has given Simon a great sense of satisfaction. He says, *"If my gift can help current and future people living with MS, in some small way to better manage their condition, I'll be happy."*

You can help fast-track a cure as well. You can fund more brilliant research, and make sure services and support continue to give people like Simon the best possible quality of life — by leaving a gift in your Will. Even 1% or 2% of what is left after gifts to family and friends can make a huge difference. It costs nothing now, but changes so many lives into the future.

For a no-obligation chat, please contact our friendly Gift in Wills Manager, Laura, at futureplanning@ms.org.au, visit mymslegacy.org.au or call 1800 443 867 today.



Join us...

on **The MS Plus Ikara-Flinders Ranges Adventure** and discover a beautifully rugged and colourful landscape in a timeless land of history and wonder.

Experience the geological grandeur forged over more than 540 million years. Ancient gorges invite exploration, beauty reveals itself at every turn, and sunsets look like they have been painted on to the uninterrupted horizons.

Millions of years have carved beauty that will stay etched in your memory forever. And walk away knowing you have been part of something life-changing! Request more information on:

<https://soulfulconcepts.com/ms-flinders-ranges/#wpcf7-f360057-o1>

Stay connected



Peer Support Groups

RSVP: msconnect@ms.org.au

CIRCULAR HEAD

Meets: First Monday of the month, 7:00-8:30pm
Venue: Circular Head Rural Health Centre, Smithton
Next Meeting: No meeting in November & Christmas function TBA

EASTERN SHORE

Meets: Second Friday of the month from 12noon
Venue: Note new venue, Mornington Inn
Next Meeting: 11 November
Note: Lunch only, so meeting from midday

GLENORCHY

Meets: Last Monday of the month, 6:00-8:00pm
Venue: Glenorchy
Next Meetings: 31 October and 28 November
Social gathering, meals own cost

NEW NORFOLK

Meets: First Wednesday of the month, 10:30am-12noon
Venue: New Norfolk
Next Meeting: To be confirmed
Social gathering, coffees and cake etc at own cost

MENS GROUP

Meets: Third Friday of the month 12 midday-2:00pm
Venue: Hobart
Next Meeting: 18 November
Guest speaker: Socialising

LAUNCESTON

Meets: Last Saturday of the month, 12 midday onwards
Venue: Note new venue, Peckish Café
Next Meetings: 29 October & 26 November
Guest Speaker: Socialising

SHEFFIELD

Meets: First Monday of the month, 1:00pm onwards
Venue: Sheffield Rural Health
Next Meeting: 7 November
Guest speaker: TBA

WYNYARD

Meets: Third Wednesday of the month, Midday onwards
Venue: Bruce's Café, Wynyard
Next Meeting: To be confirmed
Coffee catch up

ULVERSTONE

Meets: Fourth Wednesday of the month, 11:00am-1:00pm
Venue: Ulverstone Life Saving Club
Next Meeting: 23 November
Guest speaker: TBA

KINGSTON

Meetings on hold until further notice.
All welcome to other Tassie groups



North West Coast

Christmas Lunch
Wednesday, 14 December
11:30am
Devonport Country Club
More details soon

Launceston / Northern

Christmas Lunch
Circular Head & Surrounds
Christmas Dinner
Both to be advised



Southern Tassie

Christmas Lunch
Saturday, 10 December
12 midday
Maypole Hotel
More details soon