



PLUS
Neuro Wellbeing

Tasmania Newsletter
February 2023

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

National Disability Insurance Scheme updates in Tassie

In November 2022, the NDIS commenced testing for an Australia-wide improvement program. Before beginning the testing, the team at NDIA (National Disability Insurance Agency, who are the government department that administers the NDIS) did extensive background research and consultation with NDIS participants and many other relevant people and organisations, identifying key issues for people in the scheme and how they could improve experience and outcomes.

Here's what's been tested in Tassie so far:

- A new NDIS computer system including a new participant portal.
- Improved processes and better connections.
- Increased support for people with disability including children and families.

Find out more about [What is being tested in Tasmania? | NDIS](#)

The purpose of the test is to pilot the program to ensure it works better and delivers what it aims to achieve. The new system aims to help people with the processes and systems which includes support to apply for the NDIS, create a plan and use that plan effectively, as well as support for people to access help to find and use community services if they have already have a plan. This isn't changing the way the NDIS works or the rule of the NDIS.

The people taking part in the test in Tasmania are participants who have a plan due to finish before April 2023, those who want to change their plan after 14 November 2022 and those who are applying for NDIS access. You can still take part in the test if you contact the NDIS to find out about support.

We know that it can still be daunting to consider NDIS application and what it may mean for you, and we are here to help you navigate and get the support you need. Our Key Workers in Tassie, Michael and Annette, have helped many local people access the NDIS.



The rest of the Key Worker team in Plus Connect also understand the challenges people with MS can face and are always there to listen and help with personalised and practical information and advice.



Plus Connect: 1800 042 138

Having the will to help out at work

MS Plus employee Ben Holgate says he wants to give something back to the charity where he's worked for the past five years. "It's the clients and people I work with that make it a special place," said Ben, executive manager of strategic fundraising. "Before I came to work here, I didn't know many people living with MS. Since then, I've met plenty of wonderful men and women living with the condition. Our clients are remarkable people doing amazing things despite the massive challenges they often face daily.

Ben said MS Plus was doing exceptional work through support services to help people cope and funding research. It was another reason he was planning to leave a gift in his Will to his employer.

When he started working for MS Plus, Ben was surprised to learn that multiple sclerosis was the most common disease of the central nervous system. It affects more young people than any other neurological condition. This made him think about how he could do more to help.



He did what he could in his role. He helped hone fundraising events like the well-loved MS Sydney to the Gong bike ride and introduced the charity's lottery program to help keep dollars rolling in. The much-loved MS Readathon was also relaunched and was once again a great success.

In his own time, Ben participated in the "Conquer Cradle Mountain to Beat MS" challenge in Tasmania, where he raised over \$3,000 through peer-to-peer fundraising. Then he got another idea from his future strategic planning manager. Laura Henschke, originally from Peru, told him about her plan to leave a gift in her Will to MS Plus as a thank you for a great life in Australia. After thinking about it, Ben decided he would do the same. When he turned 61, he went to a lawyer to update his will and, after making provisions for his family, included a gift to MS Plus. "I'm committed to helping the cause," he said.

Wants to help keep the lights on

As for where Ben would like his gift to go, he's thinking outside the box. "So many people want to put a gift in their Will towards research to find a cure for MS, which is excellent. I understand why they would do that. But I'm going to do something different. It's important to leave something in the general pot to help the organisation keep the lights on. Also to pay bills and staff. All charities need offices, furniture, accountants, program managers and IT people to function," he said.

A gift in your Will costs nothing right now, but will have a profound impact on the future for people who live with MS. Like Ben, you can leave a legacy of care and lifechanging kindness.

If you're thinking about leaving a gift to MS Plus in your Will, our friendly Gifts in Wills Manager Laura Henschke will happily answer any questions you may have.

You can contact Laura by calling 1800 443 867 or send Laura an email at Laura.Henschke@ms.org.au

You can find more information here, at <https://mymlegacy.org.au>



GIFT PLANNING

EDUCATION & WELLBEING



Exercise and Multiple Sclerosis

Wednesday 22 February, 10.30am – 11.30am

In addition to being essential to general health and well-being, exercise and physical activity are helpful in managing many MS symptoms. MS Exercise Physiologist, Caitlin Jerkovic will take us through some practical ways to get active. She will also cover exercise types for differing levels of fitness and function, barriers and challenges, and exercise and heat sensitivity.

Bladder and bowel changes in multiple sclerosis

Webinar on demand – Watch anytime!

Many people living with multiple sclerosis experience changes to their bowel and bladder function because of their MS and other symptoms. Join MS Continence Nurse Advisor, Fiona Easton and learn about the issues relating to continence, whilst hearing tips and strategies that will help you manage your symptoms.

Understanding your superannuation and disability entitlements

Webinar on demand – Watch anytime!

In this practical session, you will learn more about superannuation and your disability entitlements. John Berrill, an insurance and superannuation lawyer of Berrill Watson Lawyers will provide advice on how you can maximise your superannuation and insurance benefits.



Building healthy relationships

Podcast – Listen anytime!

A chat with counsellor, Helen Diamond. Helen shares her wisdom on building better relationships for you and your partner. She covers lots of helpful information, including understanding through "love language". Understanding the ways we show and give love can really help build positive relationships.

Sex, sexuality and multiple sclerosis

Podcast – Listen anytime!

This podcast is presented by Dr Margaret Redelman who discusses sex and sexuality for people living with multiple sclerosis. She talks in depth about the importance of sexuality for wellbeing and finding what works for you in the bedroom.

MS PLUS
Neuro Wellbeing

FIND OUT MORE

JOIN US ON THE MS PLUS IKARA-FLINDERS RANGES ADVENTURE 28 MAY - 2 JUNE 2023



Feeling overwhelmed by
how best to maximise
your NDIS funding?

We can help.

CONTACT US

- Our Plan Managers can help you stay on top of your NDIS budget and manage NDIS financial transactions on your behalf, so that you can focus on living well.
- We're here to ease your load and ensure your funds are in control and working for you.
- This service is available via telehealth



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 Meetings: 6 February & 6 March

EASTERN SHORE

Meets: Second Friday of the month,
10:30am-12noon
Venue: Note new venue, Mornington Inn
Next Meetings: 10 February & 10 March

GLENORCHY

Meets: Last Monday of the month, 6:00-8:00pm
Venue: Glenorchy
Next Meetings: 27 February & 27 March
Social gathering, meals at own cost

NEW NORFOLK

Meets: First Wednesday of the month,
10:30am-12noon
Venue: New Norfolk
Next Meetings: 1 February & 1 March
Social gathering, coffees and cake etc at own cost

MENS GROUP

Meets: Third Friday of the month, 12noon-2:00pm
Venue: Hobart
Next Meetings: 17 February & 17 March

LAUNCESTON

Meets: Last Saturday of the month,
12noon-2:00pm
Venue: Now various cafes
Next Meetings: 25 February & 25 March
Guest Speaker: TBA

SHEFFIELD

Meets: First Monday of the month,
1:00pm onwards
Venue: Sheffield Rural Health
Next Meetings: 6 February & 6 March
Socialising

WYNYARD

Meets: Third Wednesday of the month,
12noon onwards
Venue: Bruce's Café, Wynyard
Next Meetings: 15 February & 15 March
Coffee catch up

ULVERSTONE

Meets: 11:00am-1:00pm
Venue: Ulverstone
Next Meetings: 27 February & 27 March
planning for 2023

MS Photo ID Card



MS ID Card is available free of charge to any registered client of MS Plus in ACT, NSW, Tasmania or Victoria who has 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 msconnect@ms.org.au and ask them to post an application to you.

MS Plus Shop

MS Plus would like to thank all volunteers, customers and donors for your ongoing support of our community shop in Launceston.

We are always grateful for the large variety of items donated and are continually on the lookout for clean, intact saleable items. Unfortunately, not all donated items are suitable for re-sale and it costs charities tens of thousands of dollars to remove dumped and unsaleable items. **A good rule of thumb for donations is, "would I give that to a friend?"**

If you have not visited the MS Plus Community Shop, pop in to



say hello and spread the word amongst your friends that we are always accepting items in good condition for resale.

Do you follow MS Plus Shops on Facebook? If not, have a look, like us, follow us, comment and share. We always showcase a range of wonderful and unusual items from the 11 shops.



145 Hobart Road, Kings Meadows, Launceston

Monday - Friday: 9.00am – 5.00pm

Saturday: 9.00am – 2.00pm

Phone: 03 6285 2088

Understanding **Multiple Sclerosis**

FREE COURSE OPENS 13 MARCH 2023



MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSE

Understanding MS free online course: enrol today!

Understanding Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a free online course available to people worldwide that aims to improve understanding and awareness of MS. This dynamic course is delivered via a series of videos featuring MS experts (both academic and people with lived experience), and includes quizzes, activities, and discussions. In doing this course you will increase your knowledge of MS-related issues and be empowered to create and contribute to personalised MS management plans.

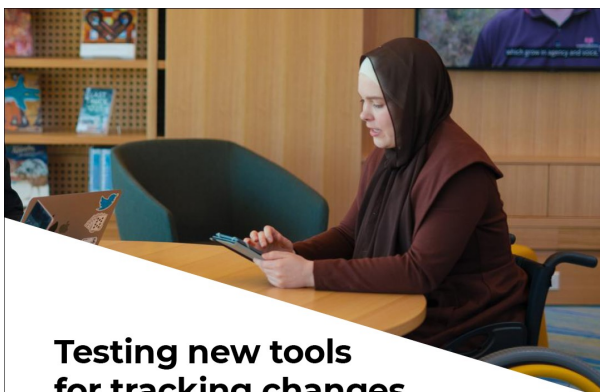
Feedback from people who have completed Understanding MS is overwhelmingly positive, with participants finding it informative and useful. Not only do course completers improve their knowledge of MS, nearly two-thirds (63%) say they applied their learnings from the course in their everyday lives, and almost all (97%) report that they will recommend the course to someone else.

The next course opens on 13 March, so enrol here today: ms.mooc.utas.edu.au

Menzies smartphone study now recruiting

Do you want to participate in a research study to develop new tools for tracking changes in multiple sclerosis?

Researchers at Menzies Institute for Medical Research are using game-like smartphone tests to monitor simple changes in memory function, movement and speech in people with MS.



Testing new tools for tracking changes in Multiple Sclerosis

CALL FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

In order to enrol you need to:

- Be older than 18 years
- Have a diagnosis of MS and be a patient at a neurology clinic in Tasmania
- Be able to complete tests at home using your own phone and internet connection for at least 12 months
- Be willing to complete some of the tests in the clinic around your routine MS appointments

Also agree to participate in other linked research studies

For more information or to get involved, please contact:

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Email: Chhavi.Asthana@utas.edu.au