



PLUS
Neuro Wellbeing

Tasmania Newsletter
December 2024

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

FREE disability insurance benefits info session with superannuation expert Tom Cobban

Come along for a chat with Tom Cobban, a lawyer and super expert with Berrill & Watson Superannuation and Insurance Lawyers. Tom specialises in helping people understand and claim disability Insurance benefits from their superannuation (and outside super). Berrill & Watson are a specialist law firm based out of Melbourne who have run education sessions and webinars for MS Plus for many years and offer free information and advice around superannuation insurances for our clients with MS and other neurological conditions.

Tom can help you understand your insurance entitlements and the impact that changing your work habits can have on those entitlements. This can include confirming what cover you currently have and the impact on that if you change hours, change employers or stop work. The benefits that people usually have are called Income Protection and/or TPD, and they can make a big difference financially if your health has impacted your work capacity.

Book your FREE 30-minute appointment with Tom and **don't forget to bring a super statement with you!**

MS Plus Launceston
145 Hobart Rd, Kings Meadows
Wednesday 12 February, 8am-4pm

OR

MS Plus Hobart
246 Murray Street, Hobart
Thursday 13 February, 8am-5pm

Book now <https://www.trybooking.com/CWZGP>

<https://www.trybooking.com/CWZGI>



As we bid farewell to 2024, we'd like to wish everyone a safe and happy festive season and new year!

The MS Plus offices will close from 1.00pm on Monday 24 December
and will reopen on Thursday 2 January 2025.

A limited number of staff will be available on Plus Connect on 27, 30 and 31 December,
they will be working between 9am and 5pm.

If you have urgent concerns about your health, please contact your doctor or your
local hospital's Emergency Department.

You can reach the team on **1800 042 138** or email connect@msplus.org.au

If you need support for your mental health help is available through **Lifeline** on **13 11 14**.

Please also note **NDIS information** is available on **1800 800 110**.

A PATHWAY BEYOND PAIN



Pain. It's something that we've all experienced in one way or another – from the sharp pain of burning your hand on a stovetop to the throbbing ache of muscle pain.

But for an estimated two-thirds of Australians living with MS, pain is an invisible but very real symptom that can have a significant impact on so many aspects of their life.

And for people like 49-year-old mum, Emma, who's been living with MS for 23 years, the pain also comes without warning: **“Nerve pain is just**

horrendous. It's like a really bad toothache but in a bigger area of the body. It just stops you in your path.”

While there are many options for treating pain, such as medications and physiotherapy, not everyone reports effective relief.

We know there are different types of pain, but we don't yet fully understand the nature of MS-related pain, or how it's experienced by those living with it – because it can vary so greatly from one person to the next. Some people experience aching and burning sensations, while others experience excruciating nerve pain. It can be pain that comes and goes, or chronic pain that never leaves – in some cases, people can experience several types of MS-related pain at once. Whatever form the pain takes, you and we must continue our efforts to end it.

A couple of months ago, Emma was out walking with her husband when the pain struck without warning:

“Out of the blue – all the way down my left leg – the nerve pain just hit me all of a sudden and I fell to the ground. I sat there for about 10 minutes because I couldn't get up.”

“I always think what would happen to me if I'm out by myself? Or driving a car? I don't know what I'd do. I've had to withdraw myself from a lot of things I used to do... It breaks my heart because I miss being able to be a good mum for my girls and take them out to go do things.”

The pain on its own is more than anyone should have to bear.

Dr Alice Saul is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Menzies Institute for Medical Research at the University of Tasmania. Dr Alice Saul and her team are working hard to better understand the pain people with MS experience, so more effective and targeted treatments can be found. Dr Saul's research focuses on understanding the different types of pain experienced by people with MS by using data from the Australian MS Longitudinal Study (AMSLS), which has tracked over 2,000 people with MS since 2002. Dr Saul and her team are analysing the prevalence, severity, duration, and triggers of pain and investigating which pain management strategies are most effective overall and for specific pain types. And for people like Emma, finding better treatments, would mean everything:



“We need to give people living with MS hope for medicines that mean you don't have to worry or doubt your body. You don't have to cancel appointments or not be able to go out or take your children places.”

“Pain management would be everything. It would give me freedom and confidence.”

It's why Dr Saul is so motivated and inspired to progress her research at the Menzies Institute for Medical Research. So, they may get a better understanding of the different ways that pain impacts the quality of life for people living with MS.

A vast majority of people living with MS will experience its unique pain – but its causes and best treatments are still little understood. Please support research with a gift this Christmas to help accelerate the development of treatments that will help people like Emma live pain free.

To donate online

QR Code

<https://donate.msplus.org.au/christmas-appeal-2024>





I'm really happy to be working with Talita and the whole team. I've improved so much and I wish I had started sooner!



"I've found our sessions both challenging and rewarding – which I think is great! I also realised that I've spent two years on a program that never changed, so it's been refreshing to work with Talita. She carefully watches my technique and makes sure I'm doing exercises correctly. I really appreciate how she finds different ways to challenge the same muscle groups. I really appreciate the variety and feedback provided.

I'm really happy to be working with Talita and the whole team. I've improved so much and I wish I had started sooner!" – MS Plus client

Want to see how our tailored support can help you?

Contact us today!

2024 MS GONG RIDE—THE RIDE TO FIGHT MS

The 2024 MS Gong Ride was an absolutely incredible event! With 6,531 riders registered and over \$1.3 million raised, the involvement of participants and supporters alike made a huge impact, making the day a great success. The beautiful weather and tailwind was a great bonus for the riders, helping them push through the challenge, which took them through the pristine Royal National Park and across the spectacular Sea Cliff Bridge. The Event Village with live entertainment, food vendors, and a DJ announcing the riders as they crossed the finish line created an exciting atmosphere for both the riders and their supporters as they celebrated the incredible effort and accomplishment.

Seeing the community come together for this year's The MS Gong Ride truly makes it the **Ride to Fight MS**.



what's on

Exploring the latest programs and updates from client engagement and wellbeing



December 2024

Newly Diagnosed? Book an Allied Health Advisor appointment

Just like your MS medication, we want to help you prevent worsening symptoms. Our 30-minute Allied Health Advisor telehealth appointments (Exercise, Diet or Continence) provide you with advice and preventative strategies to keep you living well.

We recognise that after an MS diagnosis you might still feel well and be physically active, with relatively mild symptoms. However, we also know that MS can change anytime and being prepared with good lifestyle practices is key to staying well.

Allied health appointments are available to people newly diagnosed (within the first two years)

Cost: \$80 for a 30min telehealth appointment with an exercise physiologist, dietitian or continence nurse.

To book: Chat with one of our MS Nurses to learn whether an Allied Health appointment is right for you.

connect@msplus.org.au 1800 042 138

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 Feb 2025 12.00 - 1.30

Learn more: msplus.org.au/FACETS

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

Cost: \$150

Peer Support

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

Venue: Glenorchy or Moonah



LAUNCESTON

Meets: First Friday of the month at 11am

Venue: Various café's in Launceston

ULVERSTONE

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

Venue: Ulverstone Life Saving Club

In Memory of Amanda: Peter's Legacy of Love and Hope



Amanda, Peter's first wife, was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) in 1990. However, she refused to let the illness define or limit her. Known for her resilience and tenacity, Amanda approached life with a fierce determination. She wanted to remain active and positive, regardless of the challenges MS presented. *"She fought the illness and was determined not to let it define her or limit her life,"* Peter remembers.

Yet, there were days when the obstacles of MS weighed heavily on her, and Peter saw firsthand the toll it could take. "Sometimes, it did limit her, which caused immense frustration," he reflects. Peter noted how deeply it impacted him to see her struggle. **For Peter, MS wasn't just an illness—it was an unfair battle that he and Amanda faced together.**

Tragically, Amanda's life was cut short over a decade ago in a car accident. The loss was unexpected. Peter's admiration for her strength and determination stayed with him. Knowing how unpredictable life can be, he was inspired to honour her memory by supporting others with MS.

Through a gift in his Will to MS Plus, Peter has found a meaningful way to keep Amanda's legacy alive. *"I see it as a dedication to Amanda,"* he says. *"There are so many worthwhile causes, but I chose MS because it chose Amanda."*



Peter's journey began in Nhill, Victoria. Here he spent his early years on a farm before moving to Frankston with his family. Growing up in a hard-working family, he later pursued a career in finance, dedicating 40 years to the industry. Now retired, Peter volunteers at a regional hospital. He also enjoys life on a farm with his wife, Margaret. Here they are surrounded by animals, including a beloved horse named Astro—a cherished connection to Amanda, as Astro was once her own.

Peter's decision to leave a gift in his Will to MS Plus brings him peace. He knows that Amanda's memory will continue to inspire others. "My wife Margaret is most understanding of this wish," he says. He is grateful to have her support in honouring Amanda in a way that will make a difference for those living with MS.

Could you be like Peter and want to protect future generations from MS? And pay a special tribute to a person in your life? You can do all this through a gift in your Will. This gift could help fund research, better treatments, or more services.

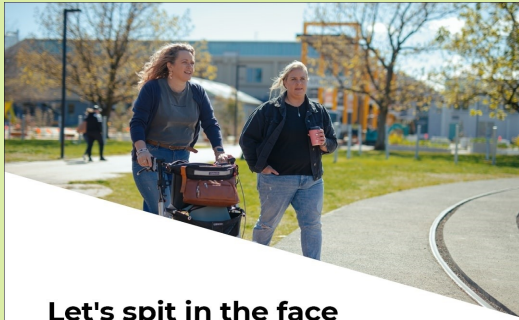
Become a member of the MS Callistemon League. To learn more, contact Laura at the MS Plus Future Planning Team. Call 1800 443 867, email futureplanning@msplus.org.au or visit www.mymslegacy.org.au

MS Plus Bonbonnieres

Choose from
different
designs and
occasions

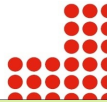


Make your next special occasion a Moment for MS and help provide vital support to people living with multiple sclerosis



Let's spit in the face of multiple sclerosis

CALL FOR MS RESEARCH STUDY PARTICIPANTS



Are you aged 18 to 60? Researchers at the Menzies Institute for Medical Research need your help to advance our understanding of multiple sclerosis (MS) in an Australia-wide study [MS Genetics (GEMS) study].

We urgently need:

- **People diagnosed with MS** (Off your DMT meds? We need YOU now!)
- **People without MS** (YOU can still contribute!)

Why participate?

We're investigating the connection between the Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) and MS, and your contribution could lead to Improved diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of MS.

Participation is easy!

- Complete a brief questionnaire
- Provide three saliva samples (postal submissions are welcome!)
- Optionally, give a blood sample

Ready to make a difference?

To find out if you're eligible scan the QR code or contact:

Chhavi Asthana, Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Menzies Institute for Medical Research
17 Liverpool Street, Hobart, TAS, 7000
t: (03) 6226 4226 e: Chhavi.Asthana@utas.edu.au



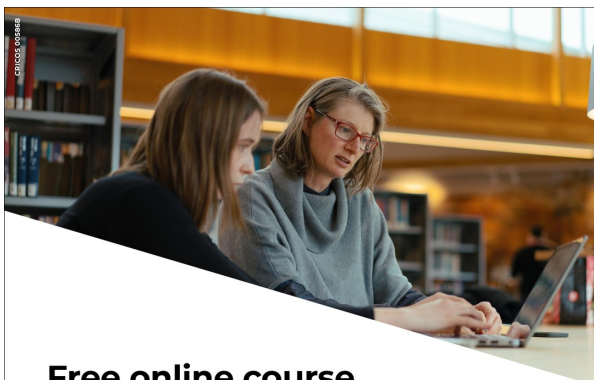
Help us pave the way for better MS care. Your participation matters!

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UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA



Institute for Medical Research



Free online course enrol now

UNDERSTANDING MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS



Free online course: Understanding Multiple Sclerosis

Understanding Multiple Sclerosis is a free online course open to anyone with an interest in MS, including friends, family, colleagues and carers of people living with MS. You can participate at your own pace, including logging in at any time of the day (or night) that suits you.

Enrolments are now open for March 2025 here: ms.mooc.utas.edu.au/i/mstas