



Office Closure in response to COVID-19

You will be aware that State and Federal governments are implementing additional restrictions to minimise risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) spread in Australia. This includes the closure of schools and non-essential services in some states.

Accordingly based on this advice, Multiple Sclerosis Limited (MSL) has decided to close its offices and suspend all face-to-face appointments until further notice.

While a difficult decision to make, this is an important step towards minimising risk and protecting the health of clients, staff, supporters and the broader MS community.

Please be assured that MSL will, to the best of our ability, do our best to keep providing services.

Services available as per usual

Current services are being provided online, by phone or Telehealth to ensure the safety of our staff, clients and participants. This includes MS Connect, webinars, employment support, allied health support, and NDIS support coordinator.

If you require support or would like more information about services available, contact us on 1800 042 138 or msconnect@ms.org.au

We will keep you updated

Our team knows how important it is to get timely and trusted information to help you manage your health in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19).

MSL is following advice from state and federal Government health professionals and working closely with MS organisations to ensure you have up-to-date information that is relevant to you.

There is a dedicated page on our website, which is monitored daily, to share the latest COVID-19 advise and information with you: www.ms.org.au/coronavirus

A message from our CEO



This is a message from our CEO, John Blewonski to all our clients and members of the MS community.

To watch the video, please [click here](#).

MS Connect - Business As Usual

MS Connect Monday to Friday (8.00 am to 6.00 pm)
1800 0420138 (free call) or msconnect@ms.org.au



In these unusual times, MS Connect continues to provide support to our clients, carers, family and health professionals. Our team is working from the safety of their homes and they are only a phone call away.

If you are feeling uncertain about the barrage of COVID-19 information we are hearing in the media, or you have questions about the multiple sclerosis symptoms you are experiencing or you want to find out more about the services we can still connect you with, or even just feeling isolated, a great place to start is by calling MS Connect.

We are available Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm and if you call outside those hours, we will get back to you as soon as possible.

You are not alone, we are all in this together.



**MS
GO FOR
GOLD**

Applications open June 10, 2020

MS Community Visitors Scheme



MS Community Visitors Scheme (CVS) was developed to meet the needs of Aged Care recipients who, for a variety of reasons, are isolated and whose quality of life may be improved by regular visiting. At this time, we also seek to coordinate virtual matches whereby visitors and recipients can connect via internet, phone or letter.

If you know of a family member or friend living in an Aged Care Home who might benefit from this service please contact us on 1800 042 138 or email CVSAdmin@ms.org.au

For more information and online referrals please visit our website www.ms.org.au and search CVS.



People with MS & Taking Control Support Group Meetings

Virtual 'Zoom' meetings during self-isolation for PwMS and their families
Every second Friday at 12.30: 1 May; 15 May; 29 May; 12 June ...

While the MS ACT office is closed we've moved to virtual peer support meetings. We've decided for the duration to combine the PwMS Group and the Taking Control Group, and are holding them every fortnight. If you're on the mailing list for either group, we'll be sending out reminders before each meeting which will include the Zoom link that you click on at the appointed time to join the meeting. If you're not on either list, send Mary an email (denmar@netspeed.com.au) or text/call 0412 190 123 and we can add you.

Also feel free to get in touch with Mary or Vanessa (vanessa.fanning@gmail.com or 0414 363 4650) to learn more about Zoom meetings, if you're not sure how they work. Vanessa is our current Zoom Master. We are using a Zoom Pro Account, not the free one, and this provides a significant degree of added security.

Hope to see you at one soon!

Mary Webb and Vanessa Fanning

Pharmacy support for the ACT MS Community

The Pharmacy Network, a group of three Canberra pharmacies, has kindly offered to help members of the MS community if you're having trouble **sourcing** items such as **hand sanitiser, masks and gloves**.

They are The Pharmacy on Petrie (Canberra Centre), open every day 8am to 8pm, ph. 6249 8074; The Pharmacy on Northbourne (Canberra City), open every day 8am to 11pm, ph. 6162 1133; and The Pharmacy on Franklin (Manuka), open every day 8am to 8pm, ph. 6162 0007.

They have introduced a new **concierge service** to reduce the amount of physical contact required to shop with them. You can phone and speak to a friendly team member who will assist you with your shopping and then you can drive up to the front of the store and collect your order. To find out more about the concierge service click, go to: thepharmacynetwork.com.au/services/concierge-pick-up-service

Purchases can be picked up in store or using the concierge service. They have also recently established a partnership with Canberra Milk, so you can pick up essentials like milk, eggs, juice, yoghurt and bacon as well, that might save you an extra trip out of the house.

They also have flu vaccines available with a booking system for appointments: thepharmacynetwork.com.au/flu

Let me know if you're still having trouble getting anything you need, as one of the back-office staff has offered to try and source hard-to-find items for us, and I'm the MS contact person.

Cheers, Mary (0412 190 123 / denmar@netspeed.com.au)





MS Webinar Library

Below is a list of recordings of previous webinars. To view, click on the topic and it will take you to the page with the associated handouts and further reading.



- [Eat Well, Live Well](#)
- [Get active - Preventing falls](#)
- [Get active - Benefits of exercise](#)
- [Get active - Focus on balance](#)
- [Live well with multiple sclerosis](#)
- [Live well with multiple sclerosis - Take charge and become the CEO of your life](#)
- [Mindfulness, Meditation and Relaxation](#)
- [Sleep well with multiple sclerosis](#)
- [A Conversation about COVID-19 with Neurologist, Associate Professor Anneke van der Walt](#)

Meditation Group

As we are all living in stressful times some of us are stepping up our meditation practice.

The Meditation Group is meeting weekly on Fridays at 3.30 pm by Zoom for about an hour to chat and then to do a guided meditation.

The time of the meeting may vary depending on peoples' availability.

If you're not receiving alerts and an invitation for the on line Meditation Group meetings at the moment and would like to be advised when sessions are being scheduled, please contact vanessa.fanning@gmail.com or Richard Wilmott (lisrich@gmail.com)



Yoga at Home

Eliane (Eli) Haski who runs our Be Better Balanced and Wheels In Motion classes at Gloria McKerrow House has designed some yoga classes for Arthritis ACT and has invited Multiple Sclerosis members to join in. Following are the links and instructions for you to access the classes from your own home.

Monday Mat class: 9:40am - 10:40am - Webinar ID: 464-178-956 Password: ARACTMY
https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_KfmdaxDMTHKYoS2HtXDTZg

Monday Chair class: 11:00am - 12:00pm - Webinar ID: 537-913-339 Password: ARACTCY
https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_CIKMSx0pTJOJo_2Q6-HceA

Thursday Chair class: Time To Be Advised - Webinar ID: 631-072-764 Password: ARACTCYT
https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_mz-8MT99QMWxIOAgw83fAg

Members need to click the link, They will be prompted to set up a free account with Zoom. Once that is set up they will be able to put in the password and Webinar link, then away we go. They will be able to see and hear me, but I will not be able to see them. They can type to me and others in the chat.

For further information please contact Eli via email: eli@livingsantosha.com.au

MS GIFT PLANNING

“I have lived through it.. MS is a cause close to my heart.”

‘John, my first husband was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in the 1960’s. I did not receive any financial help or other assistance, though I wish I had. That was government policy at the time.’ Those were very, very tough times for John and Marjorie.

‘In the 60’s the role of the then Multiple Sclerosis Society of NSW was not so well known, and we had little contact. However, family and friends were of tremendous help.’

Living through that difficult time gave Marjorie a first-hand understanding of the challenges people living with multiple sclerosis face. ‘I learnt how informed, caring and expert support can make a huge difference to the whole family.’



Marjorie has seen the impact that multiple sclerosis has on everyone. As a social worker, she also saw it with her clients. This personal experience aided her decision to support Multiple Sclerosis Limited (MS). She decided to help now and for well into the future.

She has joined the ‘**MS Callistemon League**’. She is leaving a legacy of her love via a gift in her Will to **Multiple Sclerosis Limited**.

Marjorie’s decision to leave a legacy gift is a very strong statement of her values. She doesn’t want anyone to face MS alone.

Marjorie’s legacy will serve as an example for her stepchildren and step-grandchildren. Encouraging them to also live by these caring and supportive values. She tells us: ‘I have lived through it... so MS is a cause close to my heart’.

Marjorie encourages others to join her in her quest to ensure ‘no one needs to face MS alone.’



Any gift, large or small can make a difference.

For more information please contact Laura Henschke or Michael Knox on 1800 443 867 or www.mymslegacy.org.au

MS Podcasts

More than a decade ago when podcasts were still very new, technology limitations meant that only a very few listened to Podcast. Fast forward 10 years and that has changed considerably; Podcasts have become a popular medium to share information.



PODCASTS

We are very excited to offer our clients the MS Podcast series! With new episodes each month you can listen to strategies on how to live well with multiple sclerosis. Our first podcasts include Mental Resilience during Covid-19, Sleep, Eat Well and Live Well with Multiple Sclerosis, Sexuality, Bladder issues and Exercise.

You can find the MS Podcasts on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts and very soon on Spotify. Of course, you can also access them from our website ms.org.au

We hope you enjoy them, and we’d love to hear your suggestions for new episodes. Please send your ideas for future MS Podcasts to education@ms.org.au



We are still here!

Living with multiple sclerosis or caring for someone with the condition can be challenging – especially people newly diagnosed, who can feel particularly vulnerable. Presently during COVID 19 isolation, more than ever, connecting with others is important for mental and emotional wellbeing.

Face to Face Peer Support now Phone Groups!

We may have postponed all our Face to Face Peer Support Groups but we are still here and continue to deliver our Peer Support Program! Many of our Face to Face groups have converted to phone group meetings and will continue to catch up as usual but from the comfort and safety of their home. The service continues to be free and all you need is a phone.

1:1 Peer Phone Support

Phone MS Peer Support is a great way to have a one-on-one conversation with somebody who understands, no matter where you live. The service is available for People living with multiple sclerosis, carers and family members.

Telelinks

Telelinks are phone based, 6 week peer support programs facilitated by one of our dedicated Peer Support Coordinators with weekly guest speakers on topics agreed by the members. Our next Telelink commences on Tuesday 5th May at 10:30am and is aimed at People over 65 living with multiple sclerosis.

Telegroups

Our MS Peer Support Telegroups enable people with similar interests or experience to connect by telephone as an alternative to face to face groups. Some groups have a particular focus, such as young carers or parents, while others are a mixed bunch of ages and roles.

Current Telegroups

- ◆ **Under 30s Telegroup:** First Friday of every month - 12.30pm - 1.30pm
- ◆ **Women's support group:** Fourth Monday of the month – 12.30pm - 1.30pm
- ◆ **Women in 40 to 64 group:** Third Tuesday of the month – 10.00am - 11.00am
- ◆ **Over 65's group:** First Tuesday of the month – 10.30am - 11.30am
- ◆ **After hours group for working people:** Second Wednesday night of the month – 7.00pm - 8.00pm
- ◆ **Family and friends telegroup:** First Tuesday of the month – 7.30pm - 8.30pm
- ◆ **Mums with MS support group:** Second Tuesday of the month – 1.00pm - 2.00pm
- ◆ **General support groups:** First Monday of the month – 11.00am - 12.00pm
Second Monday of the month – 7.00pm - 8pm
Second Tuesday of the month – 7.00pm - 8.00pm
- ◆ **Men's support group:** First Thursday of the month – 1.30pm - 2.30pm
Last Tuesday of the month – 12 noon - 1pm

If you are interested in accessing these supports, please contact MS Connect on 1800 042 138 between 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday or email msconnect@ms.org.au