



MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS ADVISORY COUNCIL CHARTER

(updated December 2017)

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS LIMITED

ABN 66 004 942 287

A Company Limited by Guarantee Incorporated under the
Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)

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MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS ADVISORY COUNCIL (MSAC) CHARTER

1 PURPOSE OF THE CHARTER

The Board of Multiple Sclerosis Limited (MSL) seeks to be well informed about issues affecting people with multiple sclerosis, and the MSAC shall be the primary source of consumer advice to MSL regarding the collective needs and concerns of people affected by multiple sclerosis (*people diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, their families and carers and others in the community who support or are supported by people diagnosed with multiple sclerosis*).

MSAC is the consumer representative bodies to MSL for people affected by multiple sclerosis in NSW, Tasmania and Victoria and it serves as a direct voice on their behalf. In ACT and Southern NSW, the ACT/Southern NSW Advisory Board operates to a separate Charter.

The MSAC Charter sets out the authority, membership, operations and responsibilities of the MSAC of the Company.

2 AUTHORITY

MSAC is an advisory Council to the MSL Board. The MSL Board remains the governing body of the organisation.

2.1 The Council is appointed and authorised by the Board of Directors of the company to assist the Board in fulfilling its statutory and fiduciary responsibilities. The Council exercises the authority and power delegated to it. The authority of the Council is sourced from:

- the MSAC Charter; and
- separate Board resolutions and approvals granted to it from time to time.

2.2 The Board of MSL will nominate one of its local members as the Board's Sponsor of MSAC who will:

- a) Maintain awareness of MSAC activities and projects, and advise the Board as required, and
- b) Provide a contact point for enquiries from the Chair of MSAC regarding the Board's position on issues of interest to MSAC and proposed MSAC projects;

3 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Because of its composition MSAC is in a unique position to provide consumer advice to MSL Board in relation to strategic issues, the needs and abilities of people with multiple sclerosis and the complex issues arising from the impact of multiple sclerosis on life activities including work, family, education, recreation, and community involvement.

- 3.2 The role of MSAC is to consult with, and provide strategic advice to, the MSL Board on strategic issues and is a primary avenue for consulting with people affected by multiple sclerosis about multiple sclerosis related issues; with a view to MSAC providing informed advice to the Board. This consultation is focused on ensuring that MSL is effective and efficient in supporting and promoting the wellbeing of people affected by multiple sclerosis in relation to all of the above matters.
- 3.3 MSAC will:
- 3.3.1 **Identify** the needs, views and issues of people affected by multiple sclerosis through consultation with a wide range and cross section of the multiple sclerosis community, including MSL clients;
 - 3.3.2 **Advise** MSL Board on strategic issues from a local, state, and national perspective; and
 - 3.3.3 **Provide** the MSL Board with the direct perspective of people affected by multiple sclerosis
 - 3.3.4 **Contribute to** priority setting for MSL Board.
- 3.4 MSAC, its chair and members are expected to be in touch with people affected by multiple sclerosis through a variety of means and on a regular basis. This work is vital as these people are the constituency which MSAC represents. It is expected that each MSAC member will maintain such means of staying in touch with people affected by multiple sclerosis as is appropriate in their circumstances.
- 3.5 The Council may undertake such research as it considers appropriate designed to gather information on the views and needs of people affected by multiple sclerosis (which may include research proposed by MSL) and utilize, as necessary, other available data and research.
- 3.6 The Council may undertake such projects as it considers appropriate. These projects should be identified, prioritized and developed by MSAC with the MSL Board Sponsor and each project shall have a project brief and plan.

4 COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL

Membership

- 4.1 MSAC will comprise at least four people affected by multiple sclerosis and not more than 20 overall.
- 4.2 MSAC shall comprise a group of people with multiple sclerosis, carers and others representing a broad range of the needs and views of people affected by multiple sclerosis. MSAC reports to the MSL Board.
- 4.3 Members will be selected from a broad cross-section of the multiple sclerosis community to reflect the diverse circumstances of people

affected by multiple sclerosis (rural/metro, young/old, female/male, carer/client, etc).

- 4.4 Position Descriptions for MSAC Members is separately defined but to be read in conjunction with this Charter. The Position Description include provisions covering – role, confidentiality, time commitment, term of appointment and resignation and removal of members.

Appointment

- 4.5 MSAC members will be appointed by the MSAC Chair and approved by the MSL Board in its absolute discretion resulting from a selection process which includes wide advertisement for expressions of interest, including advice to members of existing Branches, Auxiliaries, People with multiple sclerosis (PwMS) groups, and other groups of people affected by multiple sclerosis.
- 4.6 Appointments will be based on criteria which will include:
- 4.6.1 ensuring that MSAC is representative of the broader population of people affected by multiple sclerosis in that state/territory in relation to age, gender, culture, ethnicity, rural or urban location and differing levels of disability. This should be gauged by an annual membership audit; and
 - 4.6.2 candidate competencies as specified in the relevant Position Descriptions.
- 4.7 Employees of or contractors to MSL are not eligible for membership.

Chair

- 4.8 The Chair of the Council will be selected by MSAC and endorsed by the MSL Board.
- 4.9 Should the Chair be absent from a meeting and no acting Chair has been appointed, the members of the Council present at the meeting have authority to choose one of their number to be Chair for that particular meeting.

Secretary

- 4.10 The Council may appoint, remove or replace a Secretary from the members of the Council.
- 4.11 The Secretary has the powers and duties specified in this Charter or determined by the Council and must exercise his or her powers in accordance with any directions of the Council.

Term

- 4.12 MSAC members will be appointed for a 2-year term. Retiring members may stand for re-election.
- 4.13 The MSAC Chair and Deputy Chair will be appointed for terms of up to 2-years and will not be reappointed for a further consecutive term. In an effort to ensure a degree of continuity the terms of appointment of the Chair and Deputy Chair will normally be staggered.

5 COUNCIL MEETINGS AND PROCESS

Meetings Other than in Person

- 5.1 The Council may conduct meetings without all Council members being involved in the meeting in the physical presence of one another provided that all Council members involved in the meeting are able to participate in the discussion.

Frequency of Meetings and Convening of Meetings

- 5.2 The MSAC will meet monthly or such other period as is required to effectively discharge its responsibilities. The members of MSAC will also convene ad hoc meetings as required.
- 5.3 In addition, the Chairman will call a meeting of the Council if so requested by the Chairman of the Board.

Quorum

- 5.4 A quorum is present at a Council meeting if at least 51% members entitled to vote on any resolution that may be moved at the meeting, are present.

Agenda

- 5.5 The Council shall develop and agree an annual program to fulfil its responsibilities. The Chairman will develop the agenda for each meeting on the basis of the annual program and any other matters deemed to be relevant to the particular meeting.

Minutes

- 5.6 The Secretary shall provide minutes of all Council meetings to MSL Company Secretary.

Attendance at Meetings

- 5.7 The MSAC Chair will invite and encourage MSL Board members, the CEO and MSL General Managers to attend MSAC meetings as observers to support the effective conduct of the Council.
- 5.8 Any Director of MSL Board will be on invitation from MSAC and such invitations are encouraged.

Reporting and Assessment

MSAC will:

- 5.9 Report regularly on MSAC activities and the progress of projects to the MSL Board (Chair/Sponsor) and MSL Management.
- 5.10 The operations of MSAC and this Charter will be reviewed every five years (or as considered desirable by MSAC or the MSL Board).
- 5.11 A review shall be undertaken when the membership of MSAC is expanded to include members from additional States or Territories

6 AMENDMENTS TO THE CHARTER

- 6.1 This Charter may be amended by the MSL Board of Directors.

This Charter is dated December 2017.

Multiple Sclerosis Advisory Council (MSAC)

Further Guidelines

1 Support

MSL will provide:

- 1.1 Training, ongoing support and other practical and administrative assistance as agreed.
- 1.2 Access to broad level financial and operational details such as those contained in the MSL Annual Report will be provided to MSAC and its members to give context to their plans and projects.
- 1.3 Regular updates on MSL's strategy and activities so that MSAC can effectively communicate with the wider networks of people affected by multiple sclerosis.

2 Budget

- 2.1 MSAC members who incur travel, accommodation and reasonable out of pocket expenses associated with being a MSAC Member will be provided to reimbursement by MSL as agreed.
- 2.2 MSL will provide light refreshments for MSAC face to face meetings upon request to MSL. In addition, MSL will contribute to an annual MSAC dinner in recognition of the voluntary contribution of MSAC members.

3 Communication

MSAC will use a range of means to communicate with and make its presence known to the multiple sclerosis community including:

- 3.1 A regular column in each edition of 'In Touch' outlining the work plans and actions undertaken by MSAC and seeking input from people affected by multiple sclerosis as well as local newsletters and other communication opportunities;
- 3.2 A Web site (www.msac.org.au) and email address (Advisory.Council@ms.org.au) that people affected by multiple sclerosis can access to submit issues, questions, concerns and the like. MSAC information will also be available so that those without web access will not be disadvantaged.
- 3.3 A link on the MSL Website to the MSAC webpage where consumers can get more information eg. results of research.