



MOVING FORWARD

Welcome to a combined March / April newsletter with Easter being early this year we decided to combine the two newsletters. I hope you were able to have a break. We have quite a bit happening at the moment, staff changes with recruitment for roles in the North, the selling of our Kings Meadows office, the Symposium 30 May in Hobart, the successful tender for specialist MS employment services which will extend to Tasmania for the first time, and ongoing rollout of the NDIS.

We have been successful in selling the Launceston office in Kings Meadows as part of our ongoing MS property strategy, and possession of the building will be 9 June 2018. We will take the opportunity to relocate with Epilepsy Tasmania into their office at 30 Brisbane Street Launceston. This follows the pattern of working more collaboratively with other neurological services as we have established in the Hobart office.

The rollout of the NDIS continues and from the 1 July people in the 35-49 year age group will be eligible to apply for the NDIS. You can commence the application process up to 6 months prior to July and we will have our NDIS Engagement team contacting everyone in the age group to help them consider whether to access the NDIS. We have a well tried pre planning tool to help prepare for the conversation with the NDIS which really helps you clarify your needs. The outcomes we are seeing from using the tool is that using the tool is giving people a 30% better plan than not using the tool, being well prepared is the key. If you would like to discuss entry into the NDIS as well as us contacting you, please don't hesitate to ring MS Connect and ask them to arrange for one of the Engagement team to ring you.

With the commencement of the MS Employment Support Service we are recruiting for an experienced allied health practitioner based in Hobart who will work throughout Tasmania, it is a great service which has been operating in Victoria for nearly 10 years and we are excited to be able to offer it to you.

With the Symposium at the end of May just a reminder to book for it and for people who are travelling we do have a petrol voucher scheme available or if you have any other special needs, you can access support through MS Connect.

Regards, Sandra

The i-FIMS study Hobart Region

The i-FIMS research study (Interactive Step Training to Reduce Falls In People With **MS**) is about to start in April in the Hobart region. Previous research, including ours, has shown that step training can improve mobility, balance and coordination in people with MS. Our ongoing i-FIMS study is investigating whether using a step-training program can reduce the risk of falling and improve balance and cognitive abilities.



The i-FIMS study is a six month program based in your home. It involves interactive stepping exercises using a mat attached to a television or computer screen. The study has been running in Sydney for 18 months and Canberra for 6 months.

If you would like more information about this study or to volunteer, please contact the research assistant, Jessica Turner, at ifims.hobart@neura.edu.au or on 0447 397 071.

MS EDUCATION

UPCOMING WEBINARS



Webinar - Sexuality and Intimacy in Multiple Sclerosis Thursday 12 April 2018 10.00am – 11.00am

Webinar - Talking to your Kids about Multiple Sclerosis Thursday 3 May 2018 11.00am – 12.00pm

Webinar - Learn about Multiple Sclerosis Tuesday 8 May 2018 7.30pm – 8.30pm

Webinar - Improve your Memory: Thinking and Memory in Multiple Sclerosis Monday 21 May 2018 11-12

Tasmanian Symposium Wednesday 30 May 9.00am – 3.00pm

For more information please email education@ms.org.au or call [MS Connect™](tel:1800042138) (Freecall 1800 042 138) or check our Website.

Tassie Telelinks

The Tasmanian Community Fund has approved funding for MS to establish Telegroups for everyone living with multiple sclerosis in Tasmania.

Angela Land, as MS Peer Support Coordinator, is heading up this project and will be sending out invitations very soon with further information. We plan to commence our Telegroups by firstly inviting you to join a 6 week Telelink, by telephone with guest speakers involved in a conversation with the Telelink participants. They are limited to 10 participants so that everyone gets a say and are facilitated by a staff member.

An example of the guest speakers includes MS Nurse Advisors, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Psychologists, Nutritionists and others we hope you'll find relevant and helpful. It's all about giving you the knowledge to live well with your multiple sclerosis, so the groups are guided by the members.

Some Telelink participants enjoy the experience so much they decide to continue meeting up by phone as an ongoing Telegroup – more on that in our next newsletter.

Watch out for an invitation to join a telelink and take the opportunity to get some expert advice from professionals and your peers who are also living with multiple sclerosis, after all who knows better than someone living with the condition?



MS 1:1 Peer Support via phone

Did you know about our Phone MS Peer Support program? It is a great way to have a one-on-one conversation with somebody who understands, no matter where you live. A recent participant said; "My peer has been a great support, very knowledgeable and just easy to talk to. She has helped me to understand things when I'm unsure."

We can connect you with one of our trained MS Peer Support volunteers over the phone. We can match you demographically with someone of similar age, same gender, experiencing similar symptoms or on the same medication as you! You let us know what you require and we will find a 'match' for you. According to another participant, their peer was "So helpful and friendly with every question, Such a lovely lady, really was nice to speak to someone who really understands - Put your hesitation aside and give it a go!

You will be offered a set number of phone calls, usually about six to eight calls over a few months. Peer support is scientifically proven to be of benefit and many people have said it's a great way to build a relationship and give and receive advice. Peer Support is available to people living with multiple sclerosis and to carers or family members. For more information contact [MS Connect™](tel:1800042138) on Freecall **1800 042 138** or email msconnect@ms.org.

STAFF UPDATE IN TASMANIA:

From Jen Lowe, Practice Leader

As you know, Kim McCarthy resigned from her position and left us in January. This has enabled us to recruit an OT, Olivia Verschuur, part time to the Launceston office. Olivia will be commencing with us on Monday 9th April for induction – and hopefully to meet some of you that week. If you live in the north of the state and would like an appointment with Olivia these can be made through MS Connect.

Sarah is returning to Advocacy Tasmania. And her last day was 29th March and with the rollout of the NDIS continuing we felt that this would be an opportunity to support people in learning more about the NDIS and also assisting them to make informed decisions regarding access into the scheme. We have advertised a role for a NDIS Engagement Officer/Coordinator of Support, with a view to state-wide coverage.

We have had interest in the MS Consultant (RN) role and have interviewed for the position as a part time role of 4 days per week and we will be doing second interviews, and will let you know more as we go.

Michael Mortensen, is moving into a dual role 2 days as an MS Consultant (RN), and 2 days per week with MS Connect as a Nurse Advisor, to utilise his specialist clinical skills. The Advisor role will of course cover all 4 states and give him an opportunity to broaden his knowledge. Michael is excited about this.

For our over 65s, you will be pleased to know that Anthea Stutter, our MS Consultant (social worker), has been working hard behind the scenes with some other staff specialists on developing a pre-planning tool for My Aged Care. Whilst this is being finalised, please feel free to watch the Aged Care Webinar - <https://www.ms.org.au/national-disability-insurance-scheme-ndis/our-services-ndis-and-my-aged-care.aspx> or contact MS Connect 1800 042 138 for further assistance.

We have received some great applications for the p/t Business Support Position in Hobart and have commenced interviewing for the role.

OUTREACH UPDATE

Given our staffing changes of late, we are currently in the process of refining our Outreach Calendar. If you would like to book an appointment with one of our MS Consultants, please call MS Connect on 1800 042 138 or email msconnect@ms.org.au and let them know – we will then be in touch to make an appointment with you.



MS Employment Support Service (ESS)

MS has been successful in being awarded a new Federal Disability Employment service contract, which will allow us to extend the service to Tasmania commencing July this year.

Our service is specifically for people with MS who are working or those with MS who are not working but want to get back into the work force, the staff will work with both the person and the employer. Staff working in the service are allied health trained and we will be recruiting for the role which will be based in Hobart but will be able to respond across the state.

There will be information sent out to you regarding the specific details of the program and how to register for the program leading up to the commencement of the program and also there will be an information table at the Symposium in Hobart on 30 May.

Free programs offered in Burnie and Devonport for chronic pain sufferers

<http://www.theadvocate.com.au/story/5244953/free-programs-for-chronic-pain-sufferers-in-burnie-and-devonport/>

Tasmanian Community Fundraising Update



World MS Day 2018

With the year speeding away now is a great time to encourage connections to start registering and planning their World MS Day fundraising activities including schools and workplaces to Wear Red for MS! We ask all our fundraisers to register their activity with the MS Community Fundraising Team so please feel free to pass my details onto any potential fundraisers whether they be individuals or groups looking for support to co-ordinate their own activities or organisations looking to host MS Donation Tins:

Erin Wicking - Fundraising Support Coordinator, Direct line: 03 9845-2825 communityfundraising@ms.org.au

World MS Day is on Wednesday 30 May this year and we love having a great variety of events through-out May to raise funds and awareness for MS, but you can Do It For MS all year round! Check out our website www.doitforms.org.au for more information or to register your plans.

Run For MS in 2018

We've launched an exciting new program to help encourage fundraisers to pound the pavement for MS – Run For MS! Through this program and some fantastic new incentives we're promoting popular run/walk events and asking people to Do It For MS. Recently we reached out to over 500 Tasmanians who have run/walked at past events to support MS and asked them to consider joining the Run For MS program in 2018 through two key events:



Tasmanian Running Festival

City Park, Launceston
3 June 2018

10km, 5km and 2km events

<http://www.tasmanianrunningfestival.com.au/>

Point to Pinnacle

Mount Wellington
18 November 2018

21.4km half marathon

<http://www.pointtopinnacle.com.au/>

Check out the Run For MS program via <https://www.doitforms.org.au/run-for-ms>

Save the date - MS 24 Hour Mega Swims 2018

It is time to get your swimmers out of the cupboard because the Launceston and Hobart MS 24 Hour Mega Swims are back in 2018!

Launceston MS 24 Hour Mega Swim

Saturday 4 – Sunday 5 August 2018
Launceston Aquatic Centre

Hobart MS 24 Hour Mega Swim

Saturday 13 – Sunday 14 October 2018
Hobart Aquatic Centre

Visit www.msmegaswim.org.au to register and for more information.

Free entry is available to people living with multiple sclerosis by contacting 1300 733 690 or megaswim@ms.org.au





Compliments, complaints & feedback

We are committed to providing high quality services to you and value your feedback. On our website we have a link which we encourage you to use to tell us how things are going and how we can improve services for you. All feedback is reviewed through the Quality committee and changes made. Here is a recent compliment example of one of our Tasmania team members

A compliment we received about for one of our MS Consultants

"Thanks so much for your support, you have no idea how much I appreciate all your assistance & guidance through everything. I am just so very grateful of all your support & couldn't have done it without you. You were so patient and gentle, and encouraged me to try things for myself."

Go for Gold 2018

Applications are now open for the 2018 MS Go for Gold Scholarships, so it's time to start thinking about what dream you want to follow!

MS Go for Gold scholarships up to \$3000 each are funded by the MS 24 Hour Mega Swim, and are available to anyone living with multiple sclerosis who has been registered with MS for at least 12 months.

Don't miss your opportunity to kick start whatever dream it is you'd like to achieve, under categories including education, travel, the arts, music, sport, lifestyle and employment.

You have until Monday 25 June to submit your application. For an application form, plus more information on the program and previous recipients' stories, visit our [online Go for Gold hub](#) or contact MS Connect on 1800 042 138.

PEER SUPPORT MEETING TIMES -

CIRCULAR HEAD

Meets: *Please note change this month due to Easter Monday, time 7:30pm to 9pm
Venue: Circular Head Rural Health Service, Smithton
Next Meeting: Mon 16th April
Guest Speaker: Alison Hall from Community Transport

EASTERN SHORE

Meets: Second Friday of the month, please note time and venue change for this meeting
Venue: Mornington Inn, Mornington
Next Meeting: Fri 13th April, 12pm to 2pm
Social outing at Mornington Inn, lunch is at own expense

GLENORCHY

Meets: Last Monday of the month, 6-8pm
Venue: Glenorchy RSL
Next Meeting: Mon 30th April
Guest Speaker: Viv Jones from MSAC and Menzies Research

KINGSTON

Meets: Second Tuesday of the month, 12 midday to 2pm
Venue: The Salty Dog Hotel, Kingston
Next Meeting: Tues 10th April
Social gathering

NORTHERN (Launceston)

Meets: Second Thursday of the month, 11am to 1pm
Venue: The Community Branch Centre, Kings Meadows
Next Meeting: Thurs 12th April
Social gathering

ULVERSTONE

Meets: Fourth Wednesday of the month, 11am to 1pm
Venue: Ulverstone Surf Life Saving Club, Ulverstone
Next Meeting: Wed 25th April
Guest Speaker: Leanne Wease, NDIS Community Engagement Officer

MS Nurse Advisor Service goes from Strength to Strength



Nurse Advisor, Michael Mortensen

For those of you that haven't used it yet, the MS Nurse Advisor Service is a phone based program where specialist MS Nurses are able to provide information about Multiple Sclerosis and diagnosis, disease modifying therapies (DMTs), medication management and multiple sclerosis symptoms, plus management advice for issues such as fatigue and continence, and information about other MS supports and services.

The service has increased in demand and as such we have been able to expand our Nurse Advisor Team. Michael Mortensen, MS Nurse based in Hobart will be joining the existing Nurse Advisor Team consisting of Jane Bridgman and Lorraine Chuma from Tuesday 3rd April. Michael's experience and knowledge will be a great asset for people living with MS in our VIC, NSW, ACT and TAS regions.

The fantastic reputation of our MS Nurse Advisor service meant that we were recently contacted by a young Australian aid worker, who is currently working and living in the jungles of Myanmar (Burma) assisting with the Rohingya people who are in crisis. This young person experienced unusual symptoms and the aid organisation she works with flew her to Singapore where a diagnosis of MS was made. She chose to return to the jungle to continue her important work and in researching came across the contact details for the MS Connect Nurse Advisor Service.

She linked in with the MS Nurse Advisor via Facetime and the Nurse could assist in answering her questions and providing education about her medication and linking her with supports in Australia. The video call through Facetime meant that this newly diagnosed person with MS felt connected and comforted by being able to visually see the nurse as they spoke. She reported that this made her feel far less isolated.

The MS Nurse Advisor program is a valuable service for people living in remote and rural areas who do not have an MS Nurse or Neurologist nearby.

MS Nurse Advisors can be contacted through **MS Connect on 1800 042 138** or through email at msconnect@ms.org.au.

If you are used to using Facetime and/or Skype and you would like a video call with the Nurse Advisor please let the MS Connect staff know when you contact them.

FOR THOSE WANTING TO PURCHASE RAFFLE TICKETS:

If you would like to support MS by purchasing raffle tickets in our Art Union raffle you can do either of the following:

To purchase tickets: www.msraffles.org.au or call: 1300 287 367

To pay for tickets already ordered: call 1300 287 367 or email mslraffles@ms.org.au or mail your payment to MS Art Union, Locked Bag 6506, Marrickville NSW 2204

If you would like to support MS by purchasing an Entertainment Book please go to our website: www.entertainmentbook.com.au/orderbooks/240045n Or email angela.land@ms.org.au or call Angela 03 6220 1111

***Please note that as we are recruiting in Launceston, we do not have the capacity to take money for raffle tickets at the moment, so we would appreciate you using the website or calling the 1300 number. Thank you**