



Inaugural MS Gong Ride Virtual raises over \$720,000 to Fight MS!



Congratulations to all the Tasmanian riders who completed the 2020 MS Gong Ride Virtual.

Throughout October, 1,712 people rode 387,644km to fight multiple sclerosis. That's the equivalent of riding around the world more than 9 times!

Riders were involved from every state in Australia, and 19 international riders took part, from Chile, New Zealand, Singapore, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.



This year has been the first year the MS Gong Ride has taken place virtually. Participants took part in a variety of ways, from the comfort of their home, at their gym or outside on their favourite bike paths.

Thank you to all riders and supporters. The event raised more than \$720,000 – funds that will deliver vital services and support to people living with multiple sclerosis, ensuring no one has to face MS alone.



A big shout out to the top fundraiser in Tasmania, their outstanding fundraising efforts deserve a round of applause. Thank you to Ross MacKenzie for raising a tremendous \$1,127 and riding 240km to fight MS!

The MS Gong Ride is a strong community with a 39-year long legacy of participants, supporters, donors, and volunteers who every year come together to raise much needed funds to help over 25,600 Australians living with multiple sclerosis.

Join us for the 40th MS Gong Ride in 2021

Join the iconic ride from Sydney to Wollongong in 2021 as we celebrate 40 years. It will sell out fast! **Register your interest** and you will be the first to know about the milestone event: msgongride.org.au/event/classic

The MS Gong Ride Virtual will return for 2021, so you can ride virtually to the Gong at home in Tasmania your way, on local outdoor routes or a stationary bike. Whatever your cycling experience may be, and wherever you live, you can take part. No additional equipment is needed, just you and your bike.

Will you go the distance in the **Ride to Fight MS?**



Our Christmas Appeal this year featured Virginia Holmes who lives in rural Tasmania. Virginia shared her personal story about her journey with multiple sclerosis and how with the help of MS services she was given renewed hope and optimism at a time when she was at her lowest ebb.

Diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2012, Virginia attributes her wellbeing during this difficult year entirely to MS Connect, and to Michael - the MS Advisor she was connected with when she called the service after quite literally finding herself in the gutter:



"After one particularly difficult morning at school, it hit me like a brick that I wouldn't be able to continue teaching. I went for a wander in my break and found myself literally sitting in the gutter between two parked cars so that I wouldn't be seen or heard. I was at rock bottom, and knew that I needed help."

It was at this low point that we are glad to say Virginia made the decision to break the habit of a lifetime. Instead of trying to face multiple sclerosis alone, she took out her phone and she called MS Connect.

"It's just incredible to think about where I was before I picked up the phone and called MS Connect. I was at rock bottom; I was on the edge of a complete breakdown. Now, I'm in a totally different place. With Michael's help, I have found positive solutions and practical ways to move forward. I am now able to enjoy the simple things every day, such as the beauty of the nature around me. I now know that, whatever multiple sclerosis has in store for me, I won't have to face it on my own. And for that, I could never thank the team at MS Connect enough. I am so grateful it made all the difference in my life, and I wish the same for others, too."

MS Connect helps bring thousands of people like Virginia and Michael together every year. It has made life better for so many people, not least during this difficult year. **MS Connect 1800 042 138**

MS Connect: the gateway to living well with multiple sclerosis

MS Connect will be operating on the following days during the Christmas period.

- **Thursday 24 December - Working with limited staff**
- **Tuesday 29 December - Working with limited staff**
- **Wednesday 30 December - Working with limited staff**
- **Thursday 31 December - Working with limited staff**
- **Public holidays are: 25 –28 December and 1 January 2021**
- **Monday 4 January - return to normal working hours.**

We're here for you at every step of your multiple sclerosis journey. Our MS Connect service provides information and advice, and links you in to supports and services. Our team of MS Specialists are available 8:00 am - 6:00 pm Monday to Friday. Freecall: [1800 042 138](tel:1800042138) or Email: msconnect@ms.org.au

For NDIS related enquiries during this closure please phone the NDIS contact centre 1800 800 110.

Please note MS Connect will be operating with reduced staff over this period to enable everyone to spend time with their families. Some calls and emails may need to be returned the next working day, rest assured that we shall contact you back.



Multiple Sclerosis Engagement Council – Tasmania (MSCEC-TAS) are recruiting!

The MS Community Engagement Council of Tasmania's charter is to represent the needs and views of the MS community in Tasmania to the Board of MS Limited (MSL) to help them provide the most relevant and effective services and programs possible.

The Council is completely independent from the MSL organisation. The Council members are made up of people living with MS, their carers, members of their support network such as friends, families and health professionals. (Their MS Community)

MSCEC-Tas seeks to be a representative volunteer committee which broadly reflects the MS demographic across Tasmania. As such we are keen to recruit people from the MS Community in Tasmania who meet the following criteria:-

1. Are a person living with MS, a carer of a person living with MS, family or friend or someone living with MS, or health professional in the MS space.
2. Can commit to meetings on-line or F2F 5 times per year of approx. 1.5 hours each meeting.
3. Are willing to reach out to as many people in the MS community through their own personal networks and bring that collective intelligence to the committee and
4. Are willing to work alongside other members of MSCEC-Tas in a respectful, cooperative manner on projects and topics of importance and relevance to the MS Community to better inform services and programs delivered by MS in Tasmania.

We are keen to hear from anybody interested in becoming part of this committee which is focused on being the local voice of the collective needs of people in Tasmania living with MS and bring those views to the attention of the MSL Board. We would really like to hear from people from the **North/North West of the state** but are keen to hear from anybody interested.

If this is of interest to you or someone you know or you would just like more information please contact Viv Jones, Chair MSCEC-TAS on 0407 486 425 Email: jonesbnv@bigpond.com or Jayne England, Deputy Chair on 0439 873 073 Email: jayne.mscec.tas@gmail.com



MS GIFT PLANNING



A DECISION THAT MADE ME VERY HAPPY

Kentucky south is a very small country town in NSW. Located 21 km from the larger Uralla. In the 1950's it only had a post office, a railroad shed and a bus shelter. This is where Lindsay was born.

As the third youngest from a family of ten children, Lindsay grew up within a close-knit family group. He especially recalls the affection and closeness with his aunt and uncle. It was not long before Lindsay had to go further away, to the town of Barraba, to find work. He found employment in the mines. Here he drove 80 tonne dump trucks. Now retired Lindsay feels a strong connection with people living with multiple sclerosis. Even though he has never met someone with this condition. Through his contact with Multiple Sclerosis Limited (MSL), he has learned much about the work MSL does. He now wanted to leave behind a testament of his values and continued support. Thus, he has decided to leave a gift in his Will to Multiple Sclerosis Limited. The organisation that looks after the wellbeing of people living with multiple sclerosis. Through MSL communications he finds out about the work that MSL does.

Lindsay knows that he is supporting a charity that he trusts. It is the one that is ensuring people with multiple sclerosis do not have to face it alone, now or in the future. Lindsay was very excited when he called us to let us know that he has included MSL in his Will. This decision made him feel very happy. Want to feel very happy? Leave a message of your values? Whatever the amount, we are grateful. Any gift big or small will make a difference. You will provide future vital support so people living with multiple sclerosis.

Contact Michael Knox or Laura Henschke on 1800 443 867 (1800GIFTMS) for more information. Check our website: www.mymslegacy.org.au or write to futureplanning@ms.org.au

We are here so no one needs to face MS alone

EDUCATION



Working with Multiple Sclerosis

Thursday 3 December, 7.00pm - 8.00pm AEDT

Are you aware of your rights and responsibilities and your employer's obligations in your workplace? Led by MS Employment Support Consultants, Maria Nguyen and Jacqueline Efthimiou, this program will include: • Strategies for symptom management in the workplace • Discussion about disclosure of multiple sclerosis at work • Superannuation and insurance considerations • Who to contact regarding work issues

Coping with the Heat

Friday 4 December, 10.00am - 11.00pm AEDT

With an increase in temperature during the summer months, many people living with multiple sclerosis experience discomfort and pain. Join MS Occupational Therapist, Annabelle Brodsky as she explores practical strategies to manage heat intolerance and tips and tricks to enjoy this season a little more.

Bladder and Bowel Changes in MS - a recorded conversation with our MS Continence Nurse

Wednesday 9 December, 7.00pm - 8.00pm AEDT

Many people living with multiple sclerosis experience changes to their bowel and bladder function as a result of their multiple sclerosis and other symptoms. In September, MS Continence Nurse Advisor, Fiona Easton gave a presentation on the issues relating to continence. Listen in on this recording and hear Fiona's tips and strategies that will help you manage your symptoms. This program is recorded with the opportunity for you to ask questions or make comments which will be followed up within a week of the program.

Managing Finances - When you're receiving the part pension

Thursday 10 December, 11.00am - 12.00pm AEDT

Presented by Nicola Beswick, a Certified Financial Planner®

Are you receiving the part pension? Do you want to know more about the options available for you? Nicola will discuss some of the options a financial planner could implement and explore the strategies available for a person receiving the part pension.

Laughter Workshop

Friday 11 December, 12.00pm - 12.40pm AEDT

Did you know that laughter decreases stress and boosts the immune system? Laughter can also improve sleep and fight depression. Some believe that laughter can make you look younger and re-energise body and mind. So, when was the last time you had a good belly laugh? Join us for this Laughter Workshop presented by Cris Popp. Cris trained with the founder of the world laughter yoga movement and has adapted his laughter workshops to suit anyone and everyone!

Eat Well, Live Well

Wednesday 16 December, 10.00am - 11.00am AEDT

Nutritionist, Nicola Graham, developed the Eat Well, Live Well section of the MS website. Nicola talks about great foods to eat, superfoods, supplements, MS specific diets and food that can help with fatigue, constipation and mood. To register or for more information, please click on the links to the webinars of interest or visit www.ms.org.au/support-services/education/ms-education-programs.aspx

Past webinars can be accessed at www.ms.org.au/support-services/education/webinar-library.aspx

For information on these programs, please email education@ms.org.au

EDUCATION - cont'd



Brain Health - a recorded conversation with MS Executive and Nurse, Jodi Haartsen

Monday 14 December, 7.00pm - 8.00pm AEDT

Jodi has a background of MS nursing and has been involved with the MS Brain Health Initiative as a member of the global steering committee for 3 years. Jodi is passionate about the brain health initiative and what it means for the care of people living with multiple sclerosis.

Jodi provides a background on how the MS Brain Health Initiative began, the aims of the project and what it means for people with MS now and in the future. Jodi will also chat about some strategies to improve brain health for those living with multiple sclerosis. Join us for this valuable recording!

To register please click on the links to the webinars of interest or visit www.ms.org.au/support-services/education/ms-education-programs.aspx or for more information on these programs please email education@ms.org.au

2021 Programs

We have many exciting programs coming up in the new year!

- Our programs for January and February include topics such as:
- Sexuality, Intimacy and Relationships
 - Live Well with Multiple Sclerosis
 - Driving and Multiple Sclerosis
 - Pilates by Webinar
 - FACETS – A Fatigue Management Program

PEER SUPPORT MEETING TIMES

All groups are having a break for the month of January, meetings will resume in February 2021!

ULVERSTONE PEER SUPPORT GROUP

Christmas lunch

Wednesday 2 December 11:30am
Venue: Windows on Westella, Ulverstone
*Meals & drinks own cost

Meets: Fourth Wednesday of the month
11:00am-1:00pm
Venue: Ulverstone
Next Meeting: February 2021



**All southern groups are having a combined Christmas lunch.*

Christmas lunch

2 Course \$40pp | 3 Course \$50pp

Saturday 5 December 12 noon
Venue: The Black Buffalo
14 Federal Street, North Hobart



RSVP Friday 27 November 2020

Chris Gumley – cegm58@icloud.com or
Angela Land – 62201121

CIRCULAR HEAD

First Monday of the month, 7:00-8:30pm
Venue: Circular Head Rural Health Centre,
Smithton
Next Meeting: Monday 7 December

WYNYARD PEER SUPPORT GROUP

Third Wednesday of the month, 1:00pm onwards
Venue: Bruce's Café, Wynyard
Next Meeting: Wednesday 16 December
Coffee catch up

EASTERN SHORE

Second Friday of the month, 10:30am-12noon
Venue: Bellerive
Next Meeting: Friday 11 December,
morning tea 9:30am onwards

GLENORCHY

No meeting in December

KINGSTON

Third Thursday of the month, 12 noon onwards
Venue: Brookfield Shed, Margate
Next Meeting: Thursday 17 December
Guest speaker: Christmas lunch

NEW NORFOLK

First Wednesday of the month, 10:30am-12noon
Venue: New Norfolk
Next Meeting: To be confirmed

The following groups are On Hold:

- **NORTHERN (Launceston) – Social Group**
- **LAUNCESTON UNDER 50'S GROUP**
- **DEVONPORT**

RSVP for groups to msconnect@ms.org.au