Rising to the challenge

MS Annual Report 2016

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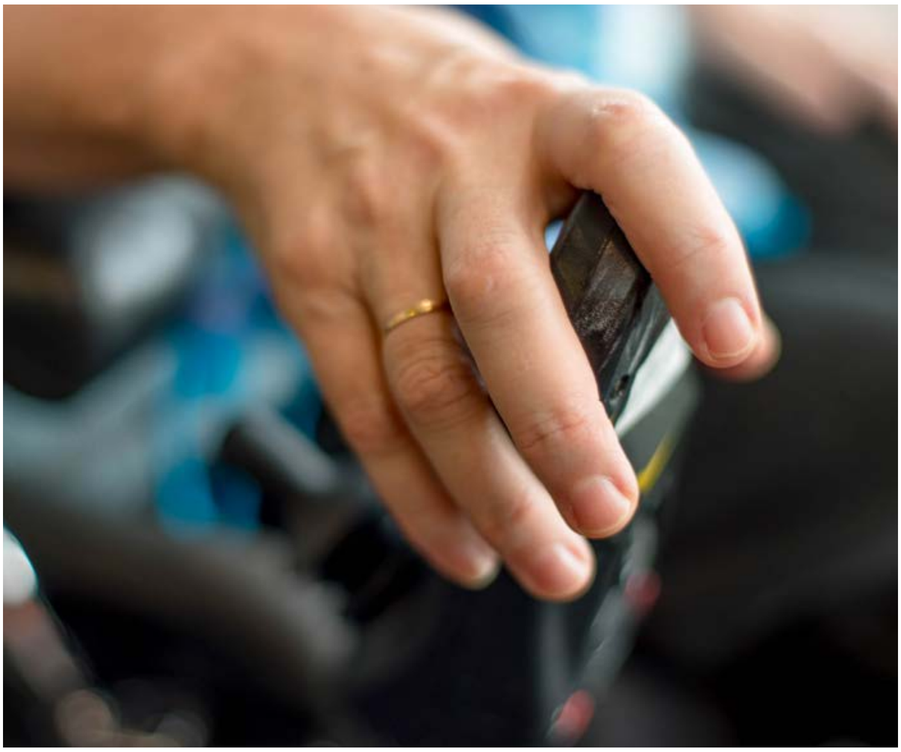
Our Corporate Governance Statement:

- sets out the principles, policies and procedures that the Board adopts to ensure that our long-term health and prosperity are maintained for the benefit of Australians affected by multiple sclerosis
- provides an overall governance framework for MS
- identifies the roles and responsibilities of the Board and Executive in setting our strategy and direction, and in managing and controlling the organisation.

Our full Corporate Governance Statement can be viewed at www.ms.org.au



The Board of Directors

W. Peter Day,
Chair

Garry R. Whatley,
Deputy Chair

Christina Gillies

Denise Cosgrove

Don Ferguson

Ian Pennell, AM

Karen Hayes, AM

Major General Ian Gordon, AO,
retired

Robert McEniry

Scott McCorkell

Sophie Langshaw

Chair's report

“Our strategy is to preserve and to strengthen the mission services and to build the capacity to provide core services into the future.”

MS has always strived to achieve the best possible outcomes with the resources we have available, always maintaining the core vision and mission at our heart.

In reality, today, two very different major sources of our traditional funding are severely threatened. The first is State Government block grants, which have been stable for more than a decade and have accounted for about half of our income. Within this funding, the MS team were well experienced in providing care “free” to our clients at the point of delivery. These grants will, however, cease as the National Disability Insurance Scheme comes into being.

The other half of our income has come from fundraising, which also helped pay for our experienced salaried employees. Fundraising in the future will prove even tougher given competition for donor dollars and the effect of the NDIS.

Our financial controls remain sound. This year we have reported a modest operating deficit, which in part reflects the cost of key investments in new services, plus year one of a new fundraising strategy and necessary improvements to our ICT systems and infrastructure renewal.

Our financial projections for the next three-plus years nevertheless concluded that, with the advent of the NDIS, the current way of operating is likely to be unsustainable and effectively creates a need for transformation in light of the imminent funding changes and the introduction of the NDIS.

Our focus is not on what funding dollars we are losing, but on how we can use the dollars we will have for our services to improve now and in the future. Our strategy is to preserve and to strengthen the mission services and to build the capacity to provide core services into the future.

We are reconfiguring our service delivery to provide and facilitate better health and life outcomes for people affected by multiple sclerosis, with more professionals to be there at every stage of the journey, more family supports, and a community that cares and connects.

The Board has been very involved in monitoring NDIS readiness and has at the same time been engaged with MS Tasmania on a collaboration and merger process. We have continued to maintain adherence to sound governance and effective financial oversight of the activities of MS and our changing business model under the NDIS.

Board membership has remained stable throughout the year (while preparing to endorse two new directors from MS Tasmania for 2016-2017) and it has continued engagement with the MS community through the MS Advisory Councils and community engagement forums.

W. Peter Day
Chair

CEO’s Report

“We have made considerable strides over the past year towards fully engaging our people, knowledge, resources, assets and partnerships to provide more services to more people living with multiple sclerosis.”

THE National Disability Insurance Scheme is rapidly changing Australia’s disability sector, and the MS organisation is transforming along with it.

We have made considerable strides over the past year towards fully engaging our people, knowledge, resources, assets and partnerships to provide more services to more people living with multiple sclerosis.

We have tripled the capacity of MS Connect and introduced MS Advisor, which provides specialist allied health support over the phone or using technology such as Skype and FaceTime. We are engaging and preparing people for the NDIS, and by implementing NDIS Support Coordination to people living with neurological conditions we are bringing our integrated commercial strategy to life. It is real and it works.

We have reinvigorated the MS brand with the award-winning Seeing MS Campaign, which has fostered an improved understanding of the invisible symptoms of multiple sclerosis, the chain of impairments and how they impact a person’s everyday life.

We have implemented Fundraising 2020 to increase the focus on more predictable income through our donor program and regular giving, and to identify ways to improve returns from existing events fundraising.

Our steadfast focus on culture and engagement, embedding core values, behaviours and change capability day-to-day has achieved improved confidence, belief and trust.

We have invested in a new ICT system and a technology refresh that enables and enhances the delivery of fundraising and events. We have also launched a new website: www.ms.org.au

In the countdown to the NDIS rollout we have engaged with our clients in partnership, taking direction and working together on pre-planning how to navigate and optimise engagement with the National Disability Insurance Agency.

Three years into our five-year Strategic Plan, we remain confident that our commitment to organisational transformation is creating a sustainable model for supporting people affected by multiple sclerosis long into the future.

Robyn Hunter
Chief Executive Officer

Executive Team

Robyn Hunter
Chief Executive Officer

Catherine Saint
General Manager
Human Resources

Sandra Walker
General Manager
Service Innovation

Jack Hanson
General Manager
Commercial Development/
Company Secretary

Dyranda Hortle
General Manager
Strategic Marketing
and Sales

Special thanks

In particular, we would like to acknowledge:

The Australian Government:

- National Disability Insurance Agency
- Department of Social Services
- Department of Health and Ageing

The Australian Capital Territory Government:

- Disability ACT
- ACT Health

The New South Wales Government:

- Department of Family and Community Services – Ageing, Disability and Home Care
- NSW Health

The Victorian Government:

- Department of Health and Human Services

Our Patrons:

Tim Ferguson
Sarah Ryan OAM

Our supporters:

KPMG
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DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club
Transurban

Our media partners/supporters:

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Network Ten
SBS
SKY
MCN Multi Channel Network
Café Media
APN News and Media
ATM Australian Traffic Network
ABC News 24
Free PR
i98 Radio

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Subaru
Destination Wollongong
Phill Bates
Cycling NSW
New South Wales Institute of Sport – Cycling Program
Specialized
Brooks
RACV (Corporate Property Services)
Monjon Security
Mitchelton Wines
Bunnings Warehouse
Weblease
City of Sydney
City of Melbourne
Flemington Race Course
VicRoads
Legends & Heroes Memorabilia
Rotary
Lend Lease
OSCARS Hotel Group
Great Australian Poker Run

Our donors

We thank all of our donors and supporters who contributed towards our services this year. A special thank you goes to our major donors whose generosity we would like to acknowledge:

Mr Robert Allen
Mr Joseph and Mrs Veronika Butta
Mrs Grimsdale
William Hayward
Mr R Kaiser
Mr Rod Miller
Greg and Renee Pynt
Mr Barry K Timbrell
Mrs Robin Yabsley

Trusts and Foundations

We also acknowledge and thank the following major grant funders for their valuable contributions:

Bell Charitable Fund
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Elsie Louise Thomas Trust
Eventide
Gandel Philanthropy
Harper Bernays Charitable Trust administers the:
  MacDougall Family Endowment
  John James Foundation
Muffin Foundation
Perpetual Foundation administers the:
  J and G Bedwell Endowment
  J B Bedwell Endowment
  Denise and Phil McAleer Endowment
Profield Foundation
Skipper Jacobs Charitable Trust
Smithfield RSL

Our Service Promise

These four guiding principles define our attitudes, behaviours and ultimately our reputation:

First Contact
Being there from the beginning

Think Yes
Work out how things can be done

Act Now
Problems are addressed and solutions found

Push Ahead
Find new ways to minimise the impact of multiple sclerosis and search for a cure

Bringing Tasmania aboard

“We are delighted to welcome Tasmania into the MS family, and look forward to continuing to support people affected by multiple sclerosis together.”

Associate Professor Des Graham and MS Chair Peter Day (right) sign merger documents.

IN December 2015, MS Tasmania approached Multiple Sclerosis Limited about a potential merger of the two organisations. So began the six-month-long process of integrating Tasmania into the MS family.

The move was designed to proactively respond to the challenges facing MS Tasmania in a NDIS environment, give Tasmanians access to the suite of MS services offered to their counterparts in NSW, ACT and Victoria, and also to create the strongest possible voice for Australians living with multiple sclerosis on the south-eastern seaboard.

Work on the project began in January 2016, with Stage 1 producing a Case for Amalgamation, which was established with the cooperation of a Joint Project Steering Committee (MSL and MS Tasmania Board representatives) and a Joint Project Working Group (MSL and MS Tasmania Executive staff). The case for Amalgamation was endorsed on 19 February 2016.

Stage 2 involved the development of an MSL and MS Tasmania Integration Plan, which, along with a proposed Merger Deed and Deed of Gift, was endorsed at an MSL/MS Tasmania Board Planning Day in Hobart on 24 March. Alongside this process we consulted extensively MS Tasmania clients and members, of whom 98 per cent voted in favour of the merger at a special meeting on 23 March.

Stage 3, Implementation of the Integration Plan, was split into two phases. The first was conducting the Critical Path Activities required to enable the merger by the close of the 2015/16 financial year, and for operational control of MS Tasmania to be passed to MSL on 1 July 2016. This was achieved though strong collaboration between the two Boards and two Executive teams.

Phase 2, Ongoing Transition Activities, will see the wind-up of MS Tasmania as an entity and the establishment of the Transition Project Steering Committee, as a sub-committee of the MS Board, to oversee the final transition activities until January 2019.

In the meantime, Tasmanians can look forward to services such as MS Connect, MS Advisor and MS NDIS services being rolled out into their state. A local MS Advisory Council will also be established, to represent the interests of Tasmanians in the same manner as the Victorian and NSW Advisory Councils and the ACT and Southern NSW Advisory Board.

MS Tasmania team members are all being offered opportunities within MSL, and two new MSL Directors (TAS Nominees), Assoc Professor Des Graham and Sharlene Brown, will be formally voted at the 2016 Annual General Meeting, ensuring the strong continuance of Tasmania’s people and culture.

We are delighted to welcome Tasmania into the MS family, and look forward to continuing to support people affected by multiple sclerosis together.

MS Connect

"For the first time since being diagnosed, I was honest about what I was feeling, with someone I could have an intelligent and well-informed conversation with."

What's next?

- MS Connect will be rolled out in Tasmania, becoming the first point of contact for our Tasmanian customers.
- A new 'Live Chat' capability will be trialled at www.ms.org.au, allowing anyone with an interest in multiple sclerosis to chat online in real time with an MS Connect specialist.
- Every caller to MS Connect will be offered the opportunity to provide feedback at the end of their call, which will feed directly back into improving our support and services.

MS Connect continues to be the gateway to living well with multiple sclerosis, and for many people their journey will include participation in the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

To prepare for this, all MS Connect team members spent the past year developing their knowledge of the NDIS. This included understanding how the full rollout would affect people living with multiple sclerosis, and how they would access services in all MS regions.

MS Connect team members attended a "Train the Trainer" forum to embed their knowledge of the NDIS and to keep it accurate and up to date. Throughout the year, the MS Connect team has consistently received positive feedback from clients, carers and other health professionals in regards to their knowledge about the changing landscape in the disability sector.

MS Connect also participated in the "Outbound Calling Project" in order to identify registered clients over the age of 60 who are at risk of receiving inadequate services due to their ineligibility for the NDIS. MS Connect contacted 238 people from our database in this age group. This allowed us to identify that clients were still registered, and also provided data for government reporting in regards to future continuity of care for people over 65 who are living with multiple sclerosis.

MS Connect expanded on the success of the online registration forms available on the website by also developing an online referral form for health professionals, which has quickly become the preferred method of contact for referral into MS services. It is quick to fill out and MS Connect provides an acknowledgement of receipt within one working day.

One call can change it all

Sally recalls sitting in her neurologist's office minutes after she'd been told she had relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis and hearing the words, "You're taking your diagnosis well".

It was a masterful disguise. Virtually blind in one eye from optic neuritis and experiencing pain in the other, she was in fact terrified.

Sally tried shielding her family, friends and colleagues from her uncertainty. But as the weeks wore on and her picture of her future only grew grimmer, she found herself unable to face it.

"I'm the type of person who leads a team and is called upon to manage a crisis," she says. "Here I was having my own, and I honestly couldn't see a way out of it.

"I remembered the nurse told me about MS Connect. In what I would call a last resort, I rang the number. For the first time since being diagnosed, I was honest about what I was feeling, with someone I could have an intelligent and well-informed conversation with."

That plan included MS Education and MS Peer Support, which linked Sally not only with newly diagnosed people who shared her fears, but also people who were able to show her that multiple sclerosis need not be a condition that dictated her life.

Her initial call to MS Connect unlocked a door Sally will always be grateful she walked through.

"I could have gone down a very dark path," she says. "There were a few key experiences I had early in the disease that changed the direction of my thinking, and the programs the MS offered me were part of that.

"I am so incredibly grateful for the help, as I feel I am now mentally robust enough now to deal with whatever this disease throws at me."

- 13,023 contacts for the year
- 1085 contacts per month on average
- 7055 people living with multiple sclerosis supported
- 1293 families, friends and colleagues helped
- 8881 phone calls received
- 2496 emails received

MS Advisor

"Our experience in the NDIS trial sites suggests only 30 per cent of people living with multiple sclerosis will, at any one time, receive an individualised support package. We are looking forward to the positive impact MS Advisor will have on the remaining 70 per cent who will still rely on MS services to maintain their quality of life, employment viability and delay of disease progression."

- 990 people assisted through MS Advisor programs:
- 733 via Nurse Advisor
- 189 via Occupational Therapy Advisor
- 68 via Social Work Advisor

What's next?

- MS Advisor will be fully rolled out in NSW, ACT, Victoria and Tasmania.
- The program will be marketed through key networks as a source of free, fast specialist advice from a team of allied health professionals.
- A new 'Live Chat' capability will be trialled at www.ms.org.au, allowing anyone with multiple sclerosis-related concerns to connect via type with an MS Advisor.
- Every caller to MS Advisor will be offered the opportunity to provide feedback at the end of their case, which will feed directly back into improving our support and services.

IN light of reforms under the National Disability Insurance Scheme, we began the pilot of our MS Advisor service in 2015 – an innovative way to extend our reach to all people affected by multiple sclerosis, whether or not they would be covered by the NDIS.

The idea was that anyone living with multiple sclerosis would be able to access allied health professional advice for free, without having to travel or wait for long periods of time. You would simply contact MS Connect, explain your issue and be referred to the most appropriate MS Advisor for you, who would then respond by phone, Skype or FaceTime.

The pilot team included an MS Nurse Advisor, an MS Occupational Therapy Advisor and an MS Social Work Advisor. The service proved very timely: people received return phone calls within 24 hours, although most of the time the response was immediate.

Feedback from health professionals and customers was extremely positive, particularly for the MS Nurse Advisor and the MS Social Work Advisor. The MS Occupational Therapy Advisor had a lower uptake and will be replaced by an MS Continence Advisor, given the volume of referrals to the MS Nurse Advisor that pertained to bladder and bowel issues.

Most issues referred to the MS Nurse Advisor were requests for information and advice about immunotherapy, symptom management and continence, while the bulk of enquiries for the MS Social Work Advisor coming from carers seeking respite and other in-home assistance. There were also a number of enquiries about public housing, funding for supports and information about sector change such as NDIS and My Aged Care.

Our experience in the NDIS trial sites suggests only 30 per cent of people living with multiple sclerosis will, at any one time, receive an individualised support package. We are looking forward to the positive impact MS Advisor will have on the remaining 70 per cent who will still rely on MS services to maintain their quality of life, employment viability and delay of disease progression.

Help when and where you need it

Anyone who's travelled will know the feeling: only when something goes wrong abroad do you get a true sense of how far you are from home.

Peter, 42, was diagnosed with relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis seven years ago, and has been living overseas for the past nine years. He commenced treatment with Tysabri six months ago in the USA, and timed a recent visit to family in Australia to fit in with his 28-day infusion schedule.

But the sudden illness of a family member in Australia delayed his return to the USA, which left Peter in a stressful position. Worried about how receiving his treatment late might harm its effectiveness, he sought help from a local GP about accessing Tysabri and having it administered.

The GP was unable to help, but suggested contacting MS. Peter called MS Connect and was referred immediately to the MS Nurse Advisor, who was able to facilitate contact within MS networks for treatment to proceed through the public hospital system.

Within four days of Peter contacting us, he had received his infusion, and thanks to MS Advisor was able to proceed with this trip without any added stress.

MS Wellbeing

"The MS Education program is critical to making sure people are making informed choices."

- 2367 people participated in 117 MS Education programs
- 48 webinar recordings on our website, with 5000+ views
- 626 healthcare workers received education about multiple sclerosis
- 350 people referred for Peer Support
- 86 Peer Support groups with approximately 1000 members
- 135 people matched with volunteers for phone Peer Support, resulting in more than 1000 calls and 5000 hours of phone Peer Support.
- 1200 people living with multiple sclerosis as members of the MS Peer Support Facebook pages
- 300 carers/family of Peer Support carers Facebook pages
- 129 MS Social Support Day Program participants in 11 weekly groups

OUR MS Wellbeing services are about helping you make connections, build your knowledge, share strategies to take care of yourself and manage your symptoms, and understand how to access the right support and services at the right time.

Our MS Peer Support program connects people living with multiple sclerosis to share their stories and support each other. Some people prefer not to meet face-to-face for a number of reasons, such as not feeling well enough to get to a group, finding it too confronting after a recent diagnosis or simply living too far away. To address this issue we introduced MS Peer Support telelinks, a new way people can connect without leaving their homes – no matter where they live.

The first telelink involved four newly diagnosed people meeting over the phone over eight weeks. The feedback was extremely positive and we learnt a lot too.

Our MS Education program has gone from strength to strength, and this year the webinars truly took off. A Highly Commended Award at the Victorian Disability Awards recognised the value of embracing technology as a way to extend our reach, while face-to-face programs such as Wellness Lunches and Family Wellness days continue. The inaugural NSW Family Wellness day at Taronga Zoo was a great hit with children and parents alike.

We ramped up our focus on wellbeing by introducing our MS Eat Well Live Well tool, an interactive nutritional tool that takes into consideration a person's age, sex, symptoms, BMI and activity level to provide tailored nutritional advice. It was the most popular page on www.ms.org.au for three months running. We also expanded our MS Exercise programs to trial the Dance for Health program, a new way to keep fit and have fun, and trialled a new yoga class in Marrickville thanks to a generous grant from the Marrickville Council.

We welcomed our new Urologist Dr Tom Jarvis to our Lidcombe Urology Clinic. Along with our MS Continence Nurse, he has helped so many people face their bladder and bowel issues and turn their lives around.

This year we saw many of our MS Social Support Day Program participants transition into the NDIS. We are confident the NDIS will mean more people in more regions can enjoy the benefits of social connection.

Learning for life

Diagnosed with multiple sclerosis 13 years ago, Matt Roger (pictured) wasn't the type to let the condition dictate his life. Armed with information from MS, he and his wife Sherree chose to get on with the life they had planned for themselves.

Now 42, he's the proud father of two children – Mitchell, 12, and Hannah, 10 – and has just celebrated 18 years at a major bank, where he works as an executive manager in internal audit.

While dealing with the symptoms, especially his now limited mobility, hasn't been easy, Matt says the biggest challenge of living with multiple sclerosis has been fatherhood. And Sherree says burden of extra responsibilities for the family has weighed especially heavily on Mitchell.

"As Mitchell's gotten older it's hit him hard, not having a dad who's able-bodied like his mates' dads," Sherree says. "So he can play up a bit – mostly out of anger and frustration. He just doesn't know how to express it."

This situation is very common, and it's precisely why the MS Education Program has been running family days for more than 15 years – including our first in Sydney, at Taronga Zoo, this year, which Matt and his family found hugely beneficial.

"The kids had a great chance to meet and talk to other kids with parents with multiple sclerosis," Matt says. "Days like these allow them to see that they're not the only kids going through this; that they're not alone."

Matt says engaging with the MS education service throughout his journey with multiple sclerosis has made the challenge of living well more achievable.

"The MS Education program is critical to making sure people are making informed choices and have the right tools, information and techniques when they're going to talk about multiple sclerosis with care givers, care providers, employers, friends, family – and, importantly, kids," he says.

MS Wellbeing

“I think the NDIS is a great thing.”

- 158 NDIS plans made active through MS Support Coordination
- 330 urology clinic appoints
- 137 continence assessments
- 164 people attended Lidcombe gym classes
- 391 respite customers used Lidcombe gym

What’s next?

- We will conduct an Aged Care review to determine how best to support people who are over 65 and therefore not eligible for the NDIS.
- MS Care team members will continue to transition into other areas.
- We will explore health grants, as part of the changing health environment.
- We will continue to monitor and consider the kinds of NDIS supports we can provide, developing business cases around allied health supports, exercise physiology and new community participation classes.
- More yoga and exercise classes will be introduced to the Lidcombe gym.

Moving with the times

Throughout the year, our MS Care service continued to provide case management, social work, physiotherapy and occupational therapy for people living with multiple sclerosis, and also helped them transition into the new National Disability Insurance Scheme environment.

This was the last year of full government funding for case management and therapy services across NSW and Victoria. MS will continue to see our government block funding reduce as the NDIS rolls out across these areas. While this presents challenges to us in our ability to provide services, the NDIS – an idea that was first broached at the end of the Second World War – is being hailed as the biggest social reform of our lifetime. We agree, we welcome it fully and we are confident we can continue to help people affected by multiple sclerosis live the way they want to.

MS Care team members have had the option of transitioning into new roles – with MS Connect, MS Advisor and our new MS Support Coordination program. Some team members decided to move on to other ventures and opportunities. The MS Care team members will continue to reduce or transition as new opportunities arise, as our funding moves over to the NDIS.

We understand that changes in rural staffing directly affect clients, and we have introduced MS Advisor to reduce service disruption.

This year we officially launched our MS Support Coordination service, after three years of insights into the workings of the NDIS trials. We’ve helped make 158 plans active, and it’s been inspiring to see so many people achieve goals like staying in their own home, going on a holiday, getting back into work or even getting back to visiting the pub or catching up with mates.

Get supported to embrace change

When Doris first heard about the NDIS through a friend at her MS Social Support Day Program, she felt it might be more trouble than it was worth.

Doris (pictured) loves to get out and about, and the group – which she has been attending weekly for 21 years – means the world to her.

“I totally enjoy it,” Doris says. “We do activities. If you don’t want to do anything, you don’t have to, there’s no pressure. You can just be there, and be who you want to be.”

The person Doris wants to be is the independent and social woman she’s always been, but the symptoms of her multiple sclerosis had begun to make that harder.

The NDIS helped out, funding a scooter so she can shop on her own, and taxis so she can head out to social events without having to rely on her husband, Fred.

But without her MS Support Coordinator to guide her through the process, Doris might have given up.

“Doris felt overwhelmed by the NDIS, so keeping her familiar with who’s who is important,” Senior Manager NDIS Projects, Deborah Farrell says. “Knowing where her services are coming from, knowing that she can give feedback on things she’s not happy about with her plan – that’s what the role of MS Support Coordination is all about.”

With house cleaning also in her plan, Doris has more time and energy to devote to social connection. It’s one of the many ways NDIS supports can improve wellbeing.

“I think the NDIS is a great thing, and if there’s a chance someone can get into it, go for it, don’t be scared,” Doris says.

MS@Home

"My MS Support Coordinator was there right from the beginning, pushing for me to get into a new house. And I can say thanks to the NDIS that I have the ability to stay here in town."

What's next?

- Examining and trialling other NDIS supports, including occupational therapy, urology/continence, physical therapy, community participation and centre-based activities.
- Ongoing support to clients over 65 under the continuity of the support program funded by the Australian government.
- Planned regional visits by the MS team to meet with service recipients and support groups as well as the local community, service providers and health professionals.
- Ongoing support to assist prospective participants prepare for the NDIS.

HOME, it's often said, is where the heart is – and our MS@Home services are designed to keep people living in their own homes for as long as possible. We know this is one of the top goals in people's NDIS plans.

This year our Gift of Time program provided short-term care, domestic assistance, personal care, respite and community access in situations of urgent need. This reduces the pressure on people living with multiple sclerosis and their families, allowing both the person and the carer to have a positive break. The program operates with funding from donations from a range of private donors, trusts and foundations.

Our new MS Support Coordination service also played a huge part in keeping people in their homes by helping set up NDIS plans that include home modifications and services such as cleaning, domestic help and personal care. MS Support Coordination is about making people's NDIS plans active and getting these supports and services happening.

Our MS Financial Assistance program also helped 137 people facing financial hardship access home modifications and air conditioning – crucial supports to enable them to continue living how and where they most want to.

MS Support Coordination hits home run

This time last year, Chris (pictured) was in a house completely incompatible with his needs as a man with living multiple sclerosis. And the state of the home meant modifications were unfeasible.

"It was an old asbestos house built in the 1960s," Chris explains. "Come winter it was freezing. It was only two bedrooms, and there were three steps. Just trying to navigate that was bad enough – as soon as it's an uneven surface, I am crap."

Clearly, it was time to go. But where? Finding something suitable in his hometown had proved financially impossible, and moving away from a lifetime's worth of friendships is a decision no one should be forced to make because of a disability.

Enter the NDIS, and Chris' MS Support Coordinator.

"It was a nine-and-a-half-month journey," Chris says, "but my MS Support Coordinator was there right from the beginning, pushing for me to get into a new house. It's beautiful, it's warm, I've got a bedroom for each of the kids, and I don't have any steps, which is great.

"And I can say thanks to the NDIS that I have the ability to stay here in town. I believe that's the most important thing, because I've been here for so long, I've built so many relationships."

Funding in Chris' NDIS plan covers house cleaning, assisted meal preparation, gardening and yard maintenance, and a new trike so he can cycle with his children.

"I believe the government has done the right thing by people with disabilities, and it's been absolutely fantastic to have my MS Support Coordinator with me through the whole journey," he says.

- 1265 Gift of Time hours
- 137 Financial Assistance requests fully funded
- 158 NDIS plans made active through MS Support Coordination

MS Residential

"Since all the residents here have multiple sclerosis, we can share our experiences together and relate to one another."

- 27 permanent residents
- 149 respite service recipients
- 3 properties: Watsonia, Lidcombe, Williamstown

What's next?

- Lidcombe residents will work with family and community services to design and build a new home in Beverly Hills (Western Sydney) thanks to a grant from the NSW Government.
- New gazebo built and another unit refurbished at Watsonia.
- Kitchen and dining room facilities at Lidcombe to be remodelled, allowing residents to participate in all aspects of their meal creation.
- Sourcing new community partners and working with them to increase residents' connections and participation in the community.

IT HAS been a busy 12 months for our MS Residential service. The biggest challenge of the past year was being ready for the National Disability Insurance Scheme, with our facilities in Watsonia (North East Melbourne) and Lidcombe (Western Sydney) both in the first full NDIS rollout areas.

New staffing models were implemented to deliver services to our residents and MS Respite clients within NDIS funding changes. In the lead-up to full NDIS rollout, we supported residents to prepare for and have their planning meetings to source their individual funding packages.

Thanks to donations from DOOLEYS and the NSW Health Minister Jillian Skinner, Lidcombe has new bathroom facilities for our respite service (pictured left). The superbly designed bathroom has been receiving great feedback from our respite guests.

At Watsonia, residents are enjoying the benefits of solar panels thanks to a generous donation from private donor John Harris.

The upgrading of computers and ICT equipment across our residential sites throughout the year has resulted in increased productivity and connectivity, and has helped ensure better and more efficient service delivery for all.

Putting the heart in home

A lot can change in 15 years, especially when you're living with a condition such as multiple sclerosis. But one thing that has been a constant in resident Christopher Hanson's decade-and-a-half at MS Williamstown is the exceptional care and support he's received no matter what life throws at him.

"Recently I've been having trouble driving my wheelchair, and as a result a lot of new aids have been introduced to help me keep my independence," says Christopher (pictured above).

"I've been trying a new wheelchair and new cushions in my bed. It's support like this that makes MS Williamstown a fantastic place to live."

Of particular value to Christopher is the peer support and friendship he enjoys at MS Williamstown.

"Since all the residents here have multiple sclerosis, we can share our experiences together and relate to one another," he says. "About once a fortnight we all go out to lunch together, which I really enjoy.

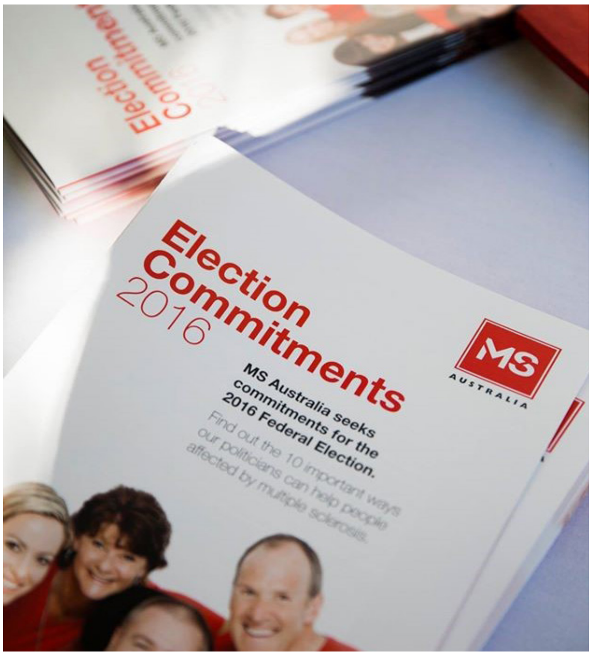
It all combines to make MS Williamstown very much more than just a residential facility to Christopher.

"The carers look after us and are very kind, and often there are activities organised to keep us busy," he says.

"Recently they organised a birthday party for me that all the residents attended – this makes me feel like we're all one big family!"

MS Australia

> **“This document sets out the 10 important ways politicians could help people affected by multiple sclerosis, and it was used to inform sitting members and candidates throughout the 2016 election campaign period.”**



From left: Senator David Bushby, Co-Chair, Parliamentary Friends of MS; Andrew Potter, National Advocacy Co-ordinator, MSA; Deidre Mackechnie, CEO, MSA; Mr Ian Pennell AO, Board President, MSA; Senator Deborah O’Neill, Co-Chair, Parliamentary Friends of MS and Dr Matthew Miles, CEO, MS Research Australia at the MSA Election Submission (top) launch at Parliament House.

MS, along with the other state and territory MS organisations, provides financial support to MS Australia (MSA) as the national peak body for people living with multiple sclerosis.

MSA manages national issues, in particular interacting with Australian Government stakeholders, on behalf of its state- and territory-based member organisations, to advance advocacy and awareness of multiple sclerosis, through a range of activities and communication and information channels.

MSA is an active member of the Multiple Sclerosis International Federation (MSIF) and peak bodies in Australia such as the Consumers Health Forum, the Australian Council of Social Services, National Disability Services and the Neurological Alliance Australia, to advance the interests of people affected by multiple sclerosis.

Advocacy work spans various initiatives including the National Advocacy Program, which includes a network of volunteer National Advocates under the stewardship of the National Advocacy Program Coordinator, Andrew Potter.

The National Advocacy Program was developed to support and build the capacity of people living with multiple sclerosis, and carers, to be effective advocates and contribute to public policy debates. MSA mentors and shares information to assist Advocates participate in many diverse activities. Through this program, MSA makes regular representations to Federal parliamentarians, gains media exposure and makes submissions to Australian Government and other agency inquiries.

At the October 2015 MSA Advocacy Conference in Canberra, the National Advocates learnt how to integrate their work with the service managers and communications managers from the state and territory organisations. The conference was also an opportunity to interact with Federal politicians and their advisors at a Parliamentary Friends of MS event at Parliament House.

At a second Parliamentary Friends of MS event in May 2016, MSA launched its Election Commitments submission. This document sets out the 10 important ways that politicians could help people affected by multiple sclerosis, and it was used to inform sitting members and candidates throughout the 2016 election campaign period.

MSA marked World MS Day on 25 May 2016 with an Employment Summit. Participants included representatives from employer organisations, universities, researchers, other peak bodies, senior public servants and the MS community. The major focus of the summit was to acknowledge and address the stigma associated with multiple sclerosis in the workplace. MSA launched a new Guide for Employees and Guide for Employers. The summit also featured a presentation by Stephen Jolly, Manager of the MS Employment Service.

MSA has continued to work closely with the state and territory organisations to develop both nationally consistent communications about the NDIS, and a range of submissions, mainly in response to Australian Government inquiries.

For more information about MS Australia and its work, visit www.msaustralia.org.au.

Deidre Mackechnie
Chief Executive Officer
MS Australia

MS Research Australia

"MS Research Australia aims to accelerate research advances that will prevent, better treat and ultimately find cures for multiple sclerosis."

From left: Dr Julia Morahan (Deputy Head of Research, MSRA), Dr Alana Shepherd (Research Development Coordinator, MSRA), Prof Helmut Butzkueven (Progress in MS Research Scientific Conference Convenor), Dr Lisa Melton (Head of Research, MSRA) and Samantha Rosenfels (Development and Events Coordinator, MSRA).

DURING the financial year, MS Research Australia provided nearly $4 million in total funding to multiple sclerosis research nationally and globally. Within this funding envelope, MS Research Australia awarded $2.14 million to 23 exciting new investigator-driven research grants and 20 scholarships and fellowships, and more than $1.42 million to our ongoing collaborative multiple sclerosis research platforms and to the International Progressive MS Alliance.

MS works collaboratively with MS Research Australia to provide funding towards our research efforts, and to link clients into research trials. Again in 2015/16, MS contributed $315,000 to MS Research Australia.

MS Research Australia has a scientifically robust and competitive model to fund the best research in Australia. Research is funded within our three main focus areas, including:

- identifying the triggers for multiple sclerosis
- developing better treatments and ways of managing the symptoms
- finding a cure for MS via repair of existing damage or regeneration of cells.

MS Research Australia aims to accelerate research advances that will prevent, better treat and ultimately find cures for multiple sclerosis.

MS Research Australia is also linked to the global agenda of multiple sclerosis research through the International Progressive MS Alliance, as a Managing Member. It is also involved via other initiatives such as Multiple Sclerosis International Federation (MSIF), as well as global and regional multiple sclerosis research networks. These collaborative networks are key to the future of all medical research, including multiple sclerosis.

Recent grant recipients

- Dr Sheila Donnelly at the University of Technology Sydney is investigating whether parasitic worms or the chemicals they release could be used to effectively calm down our immune responses, and prevent diseases such as multiple sclerosis from developing in the first place.
- Dr Cynthia Honan at the University of Tasmania is examining the relationship between cognitive fatigue, everyday functioning and a potential new biomarker for multiple sclerosis.
- Dr Litza Kiropoulos at the University of Melbourne is running a clinical trial into cognitive behavioural therapy for depression in people living with multiple sclerosis.

For more information on MS Research Australia and the multiple sclerosis research projects they are funding, visit www.msra.org.au

Dr Matthew Miles
Chief Executive Officer
MS Research Australia

MS Advisory Councils of NSW and Victoria

> **“The MSACs network widely to gather input and identify areas of concern via direct contact and emails from people throughout the MS community.”**

MS Advisory Council of Victoria Chair Kate Cherry with staunch MS advo-cat Harvey.

MSAC-Vic members Alison Reece and L.E. Ohman (top), and Pat Campbell and Kevin Mitchell (above) meet at The Nerve Centre.

MSAC-NSW Chair Rob de Ridder and team do the Sydney MS 24 Hour Mega Swim.

THE MS Advisory Councils of NSW and Victoria include people living with multiple sclerosis, carers, people in residential care, working and non-working members, people from urban and rural areas, people from culturally diverse backgrounds and people across a range of ages.

In their mission to represent the MS community by providing regular feedback to the MS Board and leadership team, the MSACs network widely to gather input and identify areas of concern via direct contact and emails from people throughout the MS community. They also monitor multiple sclerosis-relevant social media and MSAC’s Facebook page.

Completed and ongoing 2016 projects include:

- In response to MSAC’s “Emergency Preparedness Needs of Those with Multiple Sclerosis” report, MS has added resources to www.ms.org.au, and a webinar on this topic is planned.
- MSAC-Vic worked with MS and MS Australia to prepare a joint submission for the Victorian State Disability Plan.
- The MSACs have an ongoing interest in understanding the impact of the NDIS for people affected by multiple sclerosis, and in particular how those aged over 65 will be supported.
- The MSACs have identified several gaps in existing disability services, where people living with multiple sclerosis may “fall between the cracks”, and alerted MS to the need for particular support at these times. The findings have been passed on to MS Australia, which can advocate for improvements.
- MSAC-NSW and Vic are jointly exploring opportunities to optimise communication between MS and the community on a range of issues.
- The MSACs are looking at resources needed to help people living with multiple sclerosis prepare for, and make the most of, their neurologist appointments.
- The MSACs are researching resources to support employers to hire (and retain) people living with multiple sclerosis.
- To keep the MS community informed about its activities, MSAC-Vic emails the major outcomes of monthly meetings to the Victorian MS Peer Support facilitators and invites feedback. Community input via this mechanism has been much appreciated!

ACT and Southern NSW Advisory Board

THE ACT and Southern NSW Advisory Board continues to represent the interests of people affected by multiple sclerosis in the ACT and Southern NSW.

The Advisory Board meets six times a year to receive reports from the management of MS and the MS support groups that meet in the ACT and southern NSW region.

Members of the Advisory Board come from a variety of backgrounds and include people living with multiple sclerosis, as well as carers of people affected by the disease.

Two members of the Advisory Board are members of the MS Board and represent the views presented to the ACT Advisory Board at the MS Board.

Advisory Board members support MS management at MS fundraising activities in the ACT including the MS 24 Hour Mega Swim, the MS Walk and Fun Run, and the MS Go for Gold presentations.

The Board is closely involved in the studies to make best use of the Gloria McKerrow House site.

The Board also continues to help the MS Executive in its work to improve services to all people in the region affected by multiple sclerosis.

MS team

"Our investment in building a team of inspired and engaged people is an investment in our single most important resource for delivering the best possible services to people affected by multiple sclerosis."

What's next?

- Integrating our performance management approach more closely with the reward and recognition of our people.
- Developing our senior management team's capability in the introduction of a new program called MS LEaD (Leadership, Engagement and Development), the next step in our successful Emerging Leaders Program.

- 308 MS team members
- 19 sites throughout Australia's south-eastern seaboard
- 423,360 hours worked

MS is above all else a service organisation. Our team members and volunteers come to MS for one reason – to provide a service for people affected by multiple sclerosis. The National Disability Insurance Scheme brings great change for people affected by multiple sclerosis. And it brings no less change to organisations such as MS and the team members and volunteers within them.

Our investment in building a team of inspired and engaged people is an investment in our single most important resource for delivering the best possible services to people affected by multiple sclerosis. Our team members and volunteers are our most important resource – without them we can deliver very little. We need to continue to invest in our team members to recruit and retain the best talent, to train them in the latest developments and above all to engage and involve them in the changes taking place in their workplace.

We are proud of the results of our 2015 engagement survey and our Seeing Ourselves, Seeing MS Culture program. Throughout the year we continued to work on building an internal culture and capacity that is capable of matching the external rate of change so that no person will ever face multiple sclerosis alone.

We have focussed on change throughout the year by ensuring the Human Resources team became an important support for our people, ensuring that we are able to match pace with the changes in this rapidly changing environment. Change is uncomfortable for many. Uncertainty is distressing for all – people affected by multiple sclerosis, team members, volunteers, clinical and business partners.

The best response to this is the most open and honest communication we can provide to everyone involved. We recognise the importance of communication and consultation. While we cannot guarantee we will have every answer to every question, we can guarantee we will tell you what we do know when we know it.

No substitute for experience

Claire Whyatt, a registered nurse, had been a highly respected MS Care consultant for five years. With the end to full state disability funding looming, and her region of NSW Central Coast due to be moved into the NDIS on 1 July 2016, we knew her experience would be invaluable to us we navigated the new world of the NDIS.

We developed MS Support Coordination as a way to help people living with multiple sclerosis get the best out of their NDIS plans, and offered all of our MS Care consultants the option of transitioning into new roles as MS Support Coordinators.

Claire (pictured right) is one of many who took the opportunity to adapt her unique knowledge to the ongoing support of the MS community.

"I feel my extensive nursing experience enables me to fully support people affected by multiple sclerosis, as I recognise and understand their individual symptoms and how they impact their lives on a daily basis," she says. "As a Support Coordinator, this allows me to help each person make their NDIS plans work specifically for them."

Our people are the reason our services remain so invaluable to the MS community, and we'll do everything we can to retain them and their irreplaceable insights.

MS volunteers

"Their roles vary enormously, but all of our volunteers share a single goal: to help people living with multiple sclerosis face their challenges and retain their dreams."

OUR volunteers are the heroes of MS – without them, we simply could not deliver the kinds of support and services we do.

Their roles vary enormously, but all of our volunteers share a single goal: to help people living with multiple sclerosis face their challenges and retain their dreams. The enthusiasm with which they approach their work is a constant inspiration to us.

This year, MS celebrated 25 years of being an auspice of the Community Visitors Scheme. Since 1992, our CVS volunteers have been visiting people living in aged care homes, or their own homes receiving a home care package. The positive impact they've made on the lives of socially isolated older people in NSW and Victoria is impossible to measure in dollar terms.

- 1295 volunteers in MS Events
- 126 volunteers in Service Innovation
- 484 CVS volunteers made 13,615 visits to 556 people
- 52 MS Ambassadors
- 351 volunteers in MS Community Shops

Shared knowledge is power

A severe bout of flu in 1999 threw up the first symptoms for Lauren Kish – loss of coordination and balance. A visit to the GP and a rushed appointment to the neurologist resulted in a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis within three days.

It was devastating news, as Lauren was just about to begin her career as a flight attendant.

For many, a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis can be distressing, putting a big question mark over your future, dreams and goals. While Lauren doesn't attempt to sugar-coat the realities of living with the condition, she's keen to share what she's learnt over the years about living well in spite of it.

"Multiple sclerosis is really challenging on all levels. It's a bugger of a thing, but it is what it is and you still have to make life count," she says.

Lauren's role as an MS Ambassador allows her not only to connect with people affected by multiple sclerosis, but also to educate the wider community about the challenges of living with the disease. It's not the way she expected her life to play out, but it's an example of how she has learnt to take control of a negative and turn it into something positive.

"For me, a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis is not a death sentence but a challenge to make you live each day the best that you can," Lauren says.

"If people can gain something for themselves from my experience with multiple sclerosis, even if it's in the smallest sense, then it's all been worth it."

Top Gong for tireless Frank

Events as big as the MS Sydney to the Gong Ride pose huge logistical challenges, and rely heavily on the contributions of hundreds of volunteers to run smoothly each year.

Frank Whittle is just one of them, but his commitment to the event puts him in a league of his own. Frank volunteered at his first MS Gong Ride in 1994, and that was that – he's been back every year since.

From organising the equipment to seeing all the signage arrive for the event, Frank's done it all – but the feeling he gets during each event, knowing he's helping people living with multiple sclerosis, remains as rewarding as the first time he experienced it 22 years ago.

"Being a part of MS makes me feel that I am achieving something and helping the organisation to achieve what they want to as well," Franks says.

"I find volunteering very rewarding. It makes me feel really good when the event runs successfully because I helped it to happen."

Frank's tireless contribution to the MS Gong Ride was officially recognised during the year with the Spirit of the Gong Award for 2015. And as always, he's looking ahead to the next MS Gong Ride, and how he can help make it an even bigger success.

Focus on sustainability

“I have been fortunate with my health, and this is a way for me to do something for those who have been less fortunate.”

What’s next?

- Bequest lead generation campaign to increase number of legacy gifts.
- Redeveloped MS Readathon program within the school curriculum.
- Recruitment campaign to build the emerging regular giving program.
- A second donor acquisition campaign to add to our sizable donor database.
- Launch of a joint venture with GTR Events to increase the profile of and participation in our cycling events.

- $4,642,021 raised from events
- $910,340 from Trusts and Foundations
- $863,001 from art unions and raffles
- $1,336,734 from appeals
- $514,157 from community fundraising
- $245,737 from MS Readathon
- $1,822,859 from MS Community Shops

FUNDRAISING is becoming more and more important to our cause as changes in government funding through the National Disability Insurance Scheme mean MS’ mission services need greater donor support than ever.

We launched our Fundraising 2020 strategy this year with a goal of doubling fundraising income by 2020. The strategy focuses on creating a more balanced, diversified fundraising portfolio with investment in new areas of regular giving, donor acquisition, legacy development and revitalising major events.

Strategic initiatives for the year included:

- A donor acquisition campaign, which successfully recruited more than 2600 new donors.
- The launch of a new online community fundraising portal: #doitforMS.
- Relocation of the Melbourne Cycle to Flemington, introducing a new closed ride circuit for families.
- Development of the MS Gong Ride with the inclusion of a professional race Criterium at Wollongong and a redeveloped festival finish site.
- Two insight activities: the first, a feasibility study into the home lottery market; and the second, a telemarketing trial to explore converting event participants to regular givers.
- Sadly we closed the MS Hub Café at Blackburn at the end of June 2015. While it was dear to its regular patrons, it was making recurring operating losses and we tried lots of different things to make it commercially viable, but unfortunately these didn’t work.

Year two of Fundraising 2020 will see significant investment in the fundraising portfolio, and we look forward to seeing its positive impact as it grows.

Can’t beat that feeling

Two years ago when a mate at a dinner party asked Matthew O’Hare (pictured left) to do the MS Gong Ride, his first thought was the daunting distance and climbs from Sydney to Wollongong.

His second was the people he knew who were living with multiple sclerosis – a sister-in-law, a neighbour, another friend – and the difficulties they faced every day. Suddenly it didn’t seem so intimidating.

Matthew, then 48, went on his first training ride the next weekend, and he hasn’t looked back.

“My involvement in the MS Gong Ride is a way for me to do something for the community,” Matthew says. “I have been fortunate with my health, and this is a way for me to do something for those who have been less fortunate.”

While riding through Royal National Park, up to Stanwell Tops, down to the Sea Cliff Bridge and along the Wollongong beaches are Matthew’s favourite parts of the MS Gong Ride itself, each donation he’s able to obtain for doing it provides a lasting highlight.

“I find the fundraising incredibly rewarding and so put a lot of time and effort into looking for sponsors,” he says.

The year in fundraising

- Our MS Community Shops' income performed well, with increases in donations and sales. This was achieved with a close eye on operating costs and the introduction of timely and well executed sales promotions.
- In Trust and Foundations, the team brought in close to $1 million in funds to support a range of capital equipment, education tools and services. The Spring, Christmas, Mother's Day and Tax appeals were revamped to include video vignettes bringing to life the stories of people living with MS. We also received some very generous donations including funding for the gardens and facilities at the Watsonia residential service.
- While the MS Readathon continued to face competition from schools' own fundraising and increased demands on teachers, loyal schools continued their commitment – Sydney Grammar School being one such school. They are now close to raising a total of $500,000 since they started their involvement in 1980.
- The MS 24 Hour Mega Swim is in its 17th year and has raised more than $8 million since its inception. The result meant we could award 55 MS Go for Gold Scholarships to people living in NSW, Victoria and the ACT.
- The MS Sydney to Gong celebrated its 34th year with the inclusion of a pro-race, Criterium at the new look finish site. More than 7000 riders join in with many thousands more as sponsors.
- The MS Melbourne Cycle was moved to Flemington and introduced an inaugural children's ride on a close course. People also got a glimpse into what it's like to live with multiple sclerosis by taking the 'bike with MS' for a ride!
- With heavy rain and winds, the annual MS Walk and Fun Run was cancelled in Canberra and Sydney, however Melbourne was a sea of red with almost 5000 people turning up to support people living with multiple sclerosis.

2810 MS Melbourne Cycle participants raised $381,379

7225 MS Sydney to the Gong Ride participants raised $2,326,890

7461 MS Walk & Fun Run participants raised $1,043,291

2336 MS 24 Hour Mega Swim participants raised $890,461

This bike has MS

WE SMASHED ITS TEETH TO MAKE YOU UNDERSTAND

To teach you a lesson in multiple sclerosis, teeth were removed from the cogset of a bike, causing its gears to slip in a violent, unpredictable motion. Those who ride this bike have the ability to disembark. Not so, a person with MS.

FATIGUE LULLS YOU INTO DEPRESSION

It's not sleepiness, or laziness, or anything you can just "snap out of". Fatigue is an ever-threatening reality of life for people living with multiple sclerosis. To help you understand, only the heaviest of parts were used to build the bike with MS. The result is a ride so bleak and burdensome it will keep you awake at night.

THESE BARS HOLD A PAINFUL SECRET

To share in this you'll need to ride the bike with MS. Embedded with a scatterings of ball-bearings, they'll cause you discomfort, then pain, and before too long you'll lose all feeling. When you've had enough, you can simply let go. Lucky you.

"This bike has MS attracted worldwide attention with close to 150,000 views on YouTube and gained more than $800,000 of donated media coverage."

THIS bike has MS was developed by our pro-bono agency Grey Australia as a unique way to shed light on the invisible symptoms of multiple sclerosis for the 10th annual MS Melbourne Cycle fundraising event.

In order to build a bike that would be a true representation of the condition, a team including Paralympic gold medallist Carol Cooke AM, who was diagnosed in 1998, neurologists, a physiotherapist, a sport scientist, bike mechanics and several other people living with multiple sclerosis held a workshop on how best to build the symptoms into a bike.

Teeth were removed from its gears to mimic spasticity. The grind of the cassette served to create a whirring sound. Ball bearings were tucked inside the handlebars to create pins and needles. The frame was made heavy and the wheels buckled, which would cause fatigue and offset balance, forcing the rider to fight constantly against it just to keep it straight. The seat was without any padding, which would simulate numbness and pain.

An online film, *This bike has MS*, was created that introduced our experts and the bike to audiences, walking them through the symptoms and design. Accompanying the film was a website that allowed audience members to further delve into the human and mechanical stories behind the campaign.

But in order to truly demonstrate the impact of living with multiple sclerosis in a way that words could never do, we would need a cyclist to take on the challenge. This challenge was met at the MS Melbourne Cycle by cycling champions Shane Kelly, Alex Morgan and Nick Owen.

Broadcast to a live audience, all witnessed Shane struggle to finish the 30km ride. During the ride, Shane commentated via live feeds on the massive toll the bike was taking on his body, shedding light on the symptoms of multiple sclerosis in an entirely new way.

The bike also serves as a compelling education tool, with 74-page manual created including a detailed breakdown of its design through the lens of patient notes, medical professionals and the bike mechanics. These tools were used in conferences, online and educational seminars to aid in the discussions about multiple sclerosis.

This bike has MS attracted worldwide attention with close to 150,000 views on YouTube and gained more than $800,000 of donated media coverage, including five- to seven-minute segments on SBS World News, the ABC breakfast show, Fox News and the Huffington Post.

The campaign also received three prestigious Lion awards at the Cannes Advertising Festival, and an Effie award. Replica bikes have been created around the world, including countries such as Mexico, Hungary, Turkey, Germany and the USA.

Visit www.thisbikehasms.com to find out more.

Building a future-proof organisation

> **“We are learning techniques to reduce our costs through business process reengineering and effective change management.”**

- 236,011 contacts in Salesforce (48 per cent growth)
- 8 core ICT systems in use at MS (down from 20 over the past two years)
- 8400 minutes freed up by changing our mail-sorting system
- 50 x 240-litre bins and 1 x 4-tonne truck filled in office declutter
- 19,260 minutes saved in processing corporate card transactions, reducing average wait time by five to seven working days

What’s next?

- MS Connect will be rolled out into Tasmania, becoming the first point of contact for our Tasmanian customers.
- A new ‘Live Chat’ capability will be trialled at www.ms.org.au, allowing anyone with an interest in multiple sclerosis to chat online in real time with an MS Connect specialist.
- We will develop a new online training environment for volunteers and MS team members.

OUR commitment to implementing system changes to ensure long-term organisational sustainability continued in earnest over the past year, and focused on three main areas.

Systems

During 2015/16 we’ve continued to progress development of our systems to support the team and completed the second year of our three-year systems strategy. This year we’ve consolidated all our event websites and their management systems into one application which is integrated into Salesforce, our new central customer relationship management system (CRM). Additionally, we have commenced a major project to implement a replacement for our legacy client management system to a modern system that is based on Salesforce. We are now well down the path to have all our external contacts managed in one system and create a holistic view of a person’s activity. With one database we will be able to improve our targeted marketing, customer communication and improve privacy compliance.

LEAN

This year we have introduced LEAN thinking to MS. Initially developed for manufacturing, we are learning techniques to reduce our costs through business process reengineering and effective change management. This initial training has led to a number of LEAN projects that spanned across the organisation with cross functional teams working together. We are now expanding this program to instil this approach into how we continually improve our business.

Property

Over the year we commenced a systematic review of our major sites. These reviews have included community consultations, online surveys, key stakeholder interviews and staff discussions to obtain a clear view of the purpose and function of each of these sites. From these functional reviews we have progressed with the sale of our Footscray site, the costing of design options and assessment of how this potential investment contributes to our service delivery strategy.

Jack Hanson
General Manager Commercial Development

Learning to be LEAN

In March 2016, MS commenced a rolling training program tailored to suit the needs of all MS business areas to embed the principles of LEAN across the organisation. The training was designed using components of the traditional LEAN, Six Sigma and Leadership philosophies to produce a simple and practical framework for MS teams to use to improve outcomes for both internal and external customers.

During the first round of LEAN training with 14 MS team members, five key opportunities for improvement and organisation-wide savings were identified by using the MS LEAN Toolkit. Since this time multiple large and small LEAN projects have been completed, with new projects commencing frequently in all business areas.

Some of the achievements to date include:

- A new intranet calendar enabling visibility of MS Peer Support groups across all states. The MS Connect team can now easily and rapidly link customers to their local group.
- A structured and ongoing “clear out” of organisational clutter resulting in clearer workspaces, improved filing systems and reduction in money spent on archiving.
- Comprehensive mapping and review of the MS onboarding and induction processes with development of a dramatically improved system that reduces double-handling and missed information.

Focussed on future success

"The focus in the coming year is ensuring we remain on a sustainable footing to provide for the ongoing demand for MS services, and to promote innovation and service availability."

Fundraising financial information is provided in accordance with any legislative requirements of both state and federal agencies.

Fundraising revenues are derived from diverse sources and activities; the portfolio of initiatives reflects the entity's assessment of those programs likely to be most relevant and effective within its operating environment.

The programs are also influenced by the entity's traditions, history, and its constituency – but not least by the competitive marketplace. The costs of fundraising include both direct and indirect costs. Different forms of fundraising require different levels of support, investment and cost.

Furthermore, in any one year the costs of a particular type of fundraising may have been influenced by the need for greater short-term investment (for example, growing a direct mail-out database to generate future prospective income) or by the low or high cost ratio inherent (some activities require greater investment and thus generate lower margin than others). Some general costs may be included that can also reflect the advocacy, marketing and awareness-raising inherent in some forms of fundraising.

In all cases, fundraising costs are managed as carefully and judiciously as possible to achieve the maximum possible net outcome for the benefit of recipients.

WE have had another solid financial year, reporting a surplus of $6.3 million including greater-than-budget bequest income and the sale of our Footscray site, which contributed more than $3 million to our positive result.

The underlying modest operating deficit (excluding bequest income) resulted from increased competition in key fundraising events coupled with a one-off impact due to adverse weather conditions.

We have spent $21.8 million on services, up from $21.6 million, and we have achieved operational expenditure savings by managing costs as carefully as possible.

We have a planned approach focussing available funding on direct client work to ensure more dollars are spent on people affected by multiple sclerosis. We continue to make targeted investments for future success, continued investment in ICT systems and infrastructure, and implemented year one of Fundraising 2020. We must continue the transformation to ensure our sustainability.

We believe the steadfast focus on effectiveness and efficiency is critical for sustainability of service provision under the full rollout of the NDIS.

We are recruiting into new roles with new capability to deliver expert services in a better way. Our first NDIS service, MS Support Coordination, leverages our 60 years of insights and understanding of how progressive neurological symptoms can impact everyday life and goals. We are building capability to serve the holistic health needs, traversing health and disability – unmet by mainstream organisations.

We are facing steep competition for philanthropy, fundraising and donor support, and we are intentionally investing in improving our fundraising return on investment, as it is key to supporting service delivery and research.

The focus in the coming year is ensuring we remain on a sustainable footing to provide for the ongoing demand for MS services, and to promote innovation and service availability.

Our financial performance summary

	Budget 2015–2016 ($'000)	Actual 2015–2016 ($'000)	Actual 2014–2015 ($'000)	Actual 2013–2014 ($'000)
Income				
Government Funding	18,835	18,165	17,756	16,421
Fundraising and Events *(including Bequest Income)*	14,325	15,282	15,760	16,642
Rendering of Services	600	1,051	624	730
Corporate Services *(Management Fees, Rental Income)*	130	263	260	349
Investment income	324	3,614	2,280	486
Total Income	**34,214**	**38,375**	**36,680**	**34,628**
Expenditure				
Fundraising and Events	9,994	8,990	9,081	9,330
Services	23,270	21,834	21,601	22,179
Corporate	226	346	463	801
Research and Advocacy	878	862	1,100	830
Total Expenditure	**34,370**	**32,032**	**32,245**	**33,140**
Surplus/(Deficit)	**-154**	**6,343**	**4,435**	**1,488**

Financial highlights

Please note these figures are based on the Multiple Sclerosis Limited standalone results (i.e. they exclude Australian Home Care):

Total revenue for the financial year was: $38,374,659.

Total expenditure for the year was $32,031,921.

MS recorded a surplus for the current financial year of $6,342,738.

This is an increase of $1,907,428.

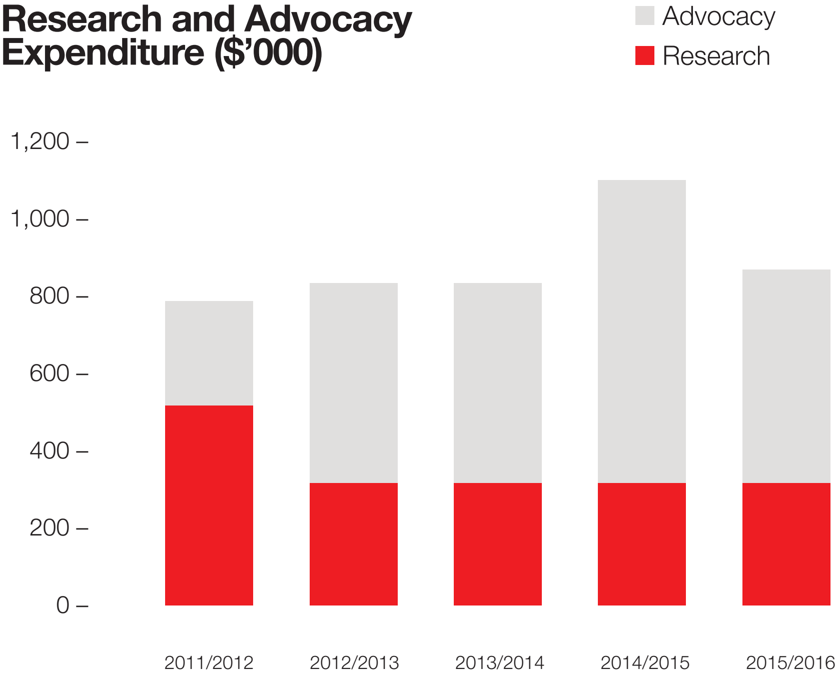
Total revenue in 2015/2016 increased by 4.6% on the back of increased bequests and the sale of a property.

MS received government income of $18,165,422 and spent $21,833,823 on MS services.

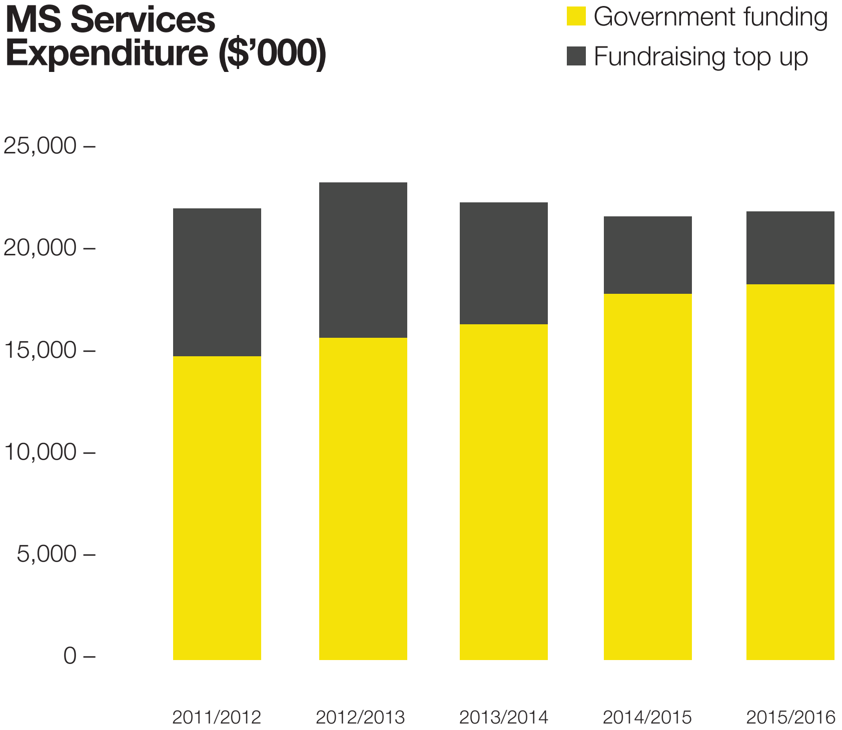
Expenditure on MS research and advocacy funding totalled $861,724.

Financial highlights

Research and Advocacy Expenditure ($'000)



MS Services Expenditure ($'000)



Multiple Sclerosis Limited and its controlled entities
Consolidated statement of comprehensive income

These statements include the income of Australian Home Care Services, an operating subsidiary of Multiple Sclerosis Limited.

For year ended 30 June 2016

In AUD	Consolidated **2016**	 **2015**
REVENUE		
Fundraising		
Donation campaigns	2,950,183	2,385,735
Bequests	2,828,405	2,203,570
Art Union	863,001	847,166
Events	6,048,867	7,731,538
Community fundraising	514,157	408,825
Readathon	245,737	297,930
Retail – sale of goods	1,822,860	1,851,849
Other fundraising income	8,746	33,004
Rendering of services – Multiple Sclerosis Limited		
Residential and respite care		
Government funding	7,286,578	7,209,596
Fees from residents	285,356	204,359
Other income	361,906	88,258
Community teams		
Government funding	5,171,937	4,915,583
Other income	76,868	220,236
Disability day programs	850,866	698,025
Employment services	3,547,234	3,510,351
Other client services income	1,628,036	1,458,002
Corporate services		
Management fees	20,256	70,116
Rental income	130,149	65,907
Other corporate services income	34,920	19,194
MSL revenue subtotal	*34,676,061*	*34,219,244*
Rendering of services – AHCS		
Homecare and acute nursing income	46,606,487	47,490,099
Cleaning and laundry income	41,398,897	44,091,024
AHCS revenue subtotal	*88,005,384*	*91,581,123*
Other income	229,984	272,892
Total group revenue and other income from operating activities	**122,911,430**	**126,073,259**

Multiple Sclerosis Limited and its controlled entities

Consolidated statement of surplus or deficit and other comprehensive income

For year ended 30 June 2016

	Consolidated	
In AUD	**2016**	**2015**
EXPENDITURE		
(a) Expenditure incurred by Multiple Sclerosis Limited		
Fundraising expenses	7,270,872	7,168,051
Residential care expenses	8,681,249	7,920,196
Community care expenses	4,911,728	4,951,969
Disability Day programs expenses	858,248	948,792
Employment services expenses	3,585,318	3,458,439
Other client services expenses	3,521,023	3,553,034
Retail expenses	1,719,430	1,912,464
Corporate expenses	196,488	347,103
Other expenses	1,011,309	1,216,634
MSL expenditure subtotal	*31,755,666*	*31,476,682*
(b) Expenditure incurred by AHCS		
Homecare and acute nursing direct expenses	32,329,218	32,212,945
Cleaning and laundry direct expenses	36,842,364	35,068,085
Corporate and regional overhead expenses	21,576,783	23,252,951
AHCS expenditure subtotal	*90,748,365*	*90,533,981*
Total expenditure	**122,504,031**	**122,010,663**
Surplus from operations	**407,399**	**4,062,596**
Profit on sale of property, plant and equipment	3,099,078	9,308
Finance income	574,708	412,004
Finance expenses	31,335	48,597
Net finance income	543,373	363,407
Tax expense	-	-
Total surplus/(deficit) for the year	**4,049,850**	**4,435,311**
Other comprehensive income		
Items that may be reclassified subsequently to surplus or deficit:		
Available-for-sale financial assets – net change in fair value	(242,061)	149,686
Available-for-sale financial assets – reclassified to surplus or deficit		(1,608)
	(242,061)	148,078
Total comprehensive income for the year	**3,807,789**	**4,583,389**

Multiple Sclerosis Limited and its controlled entities

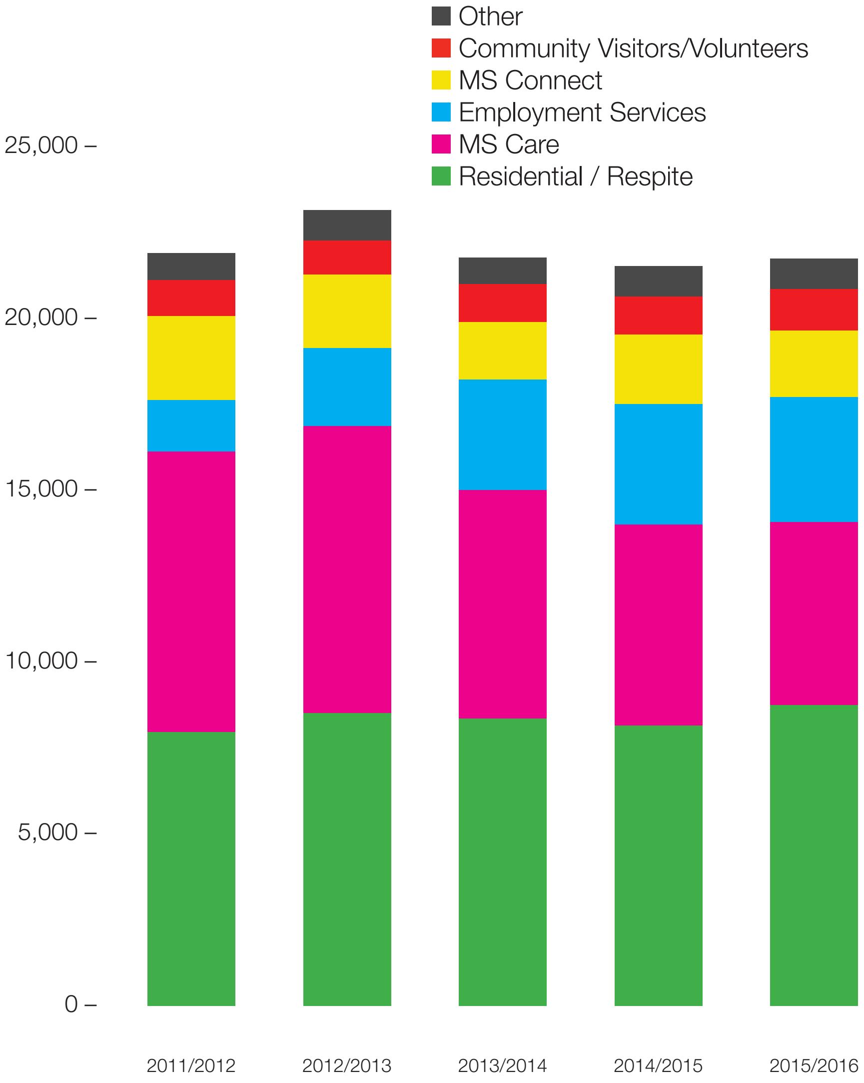
Consolidated statement of financial position

As at 30 June 2016

	Consolidated	
In AUD	**2016**	**2015**
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	14,192,270	7,891,794
Other financial assets	2,629,132	4,673,850
Trade and other receivables	8,288,729	7,082,232
Non-current assets held for sale	-	1,102,988
Total current assets	**25,110,131**	**20,750,864**
Property, plant and equipment	17,276,287	15,582,591
Intangible assets	13,400,710	13,845,908
Available-for-sale financial assets	4,224,117	4,223,249
Other receivables	1,166,445	1,053,520
Total non-current assets	**36,067,559**	**34,705,268**
Total assets	**61,177,690**	**55,456,132**
LIABILITIES		
Bank overdraft	51,097	-
Trade and other payables	5,100,546	5,003,854
Employee benefits	13,424,823	13,583,549
Deferred income and funds in advance	10,696,850	8,142,079
Hire purchase liabilities	110,668	56,480
Provisions	129,400	255,357
Total current liabilities	**29,513,384**	**27,041,319**
Employee benefits	974,974	1,459,741
Hire purchase liabilities	-	126,091
Provisions	266,874	214,312
Total non-current liabilities	**1,241,848**	**1,800,144**
Total liabilities	**30,755,232**	**28,841,463**
Net assets	**30,422,458**	**26,614,669**
Members' funds		
Accumulated surplus	29,641,633	25,591,783
Fair value reserve	709,047	951,108
Bequest reserve	71,778	71,778
Total members' funds	**30,422,458**	**26,614,669**

Financial highlights

MS services expenditure by category



Where the money came from

Please note these figures are based on the Multiple Sclerosis Limited standalone results. They exclude Australian Home care.

Fundraising and Events:
$15,281,956

Government Funding:
$18,165,422

MS Services:
$1,050,856

Corporate Services
$262,492

Investment income
$3,613,933

Total Income
$38,374,659

Where our money was spent

MS Services:
$21,833,823

Fundraising & Events:
$8,990,302

Research and Advocacy:
$861,724

Corporate Services:
$346,072

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