



RESEARCH
ADVOCACY
CURE

AUSTRALIA

MS Australia seeks commitments for the 2022 Federal Election

Find out how our politicians
can help people living with MS,
their carers, families and friends.



We seek commitments from our politicians to:



INCREASE FUNDING FOR MS RESEARCH

1. Supercharge the MS research agenda

Significant progress has been made by Australian scientists in the field of MS. We need to continue to grow this investment as real opportunities are within our reach to improve the lives of Australians living with MS and find the cure.

INCREASE ACCESS TO SERVICES AND SUPPORT

2. Fully fund and improve the NDIS

MS Australia is asking all political leaders to ensure and commit to provide full and ongoing funding of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and to provide any necessary legislation to formalise this undertaking.

3. Meet the needs of people with disability not eligible for the NDIS through improved access to assistive technology

Australians living with disability should have equal access to the life-changing assistive technology they need, regardless of their age, location or gender. MS Australia is calling for bipartisan, whole of government commitment to establish a national assistive technology program to meet the needs of people with disability who are excluded from the NDIS.

4. Improved access to the Disability Support Pension (DSP)

The DSP is a crucial mechanism to protect the right to an adequate standard of living, social protection and social participation of people with disability, including those living with a chronic health condition such as MS.

We call for urgent reform of the current DSP's eligibility, impairment tables and Program of Support, in accordance with the blueprint provided by the Community Affairs References Committee's enquiry Report on the Purpose, Intent, and Adequacy of the Disability Support Pension.

5. Better access to MS Nurses

MS specialist nurses are an integral part of the multidisciplinary team of specialist healthcare professionals for people with MS, not dissimilar to specialist nurses in other fields. Research has shown increased access to specialist nursing leads to improved outcomes whilst cost benefit analysis has demonstrated real cost savings and economic benefits. We are seeking a bipartisan commitment to expand the MS Nurse workforce through targeted funding of MS Nurse-led clinics, expanded telehealth arrangements, mentorship and preceptorship programs and MS Nurse specific training in university courses.

6. Stopping young people with MS entering nursing homes

We seek a commitment to support improved specialist housing options for people under 65 years living with complex disability and health support needs, in accordance with the Younger People in Residential Aged Care Strategy. MS Australia is calling on improved linkage, collaboration and true partnering with those young people affected, their families and loved ones, but also those working within Aged Care and the NDIS.

7. An increase in the number of and improved access to Home Care Packages

Older Australians should be supported to live in their own homes and communities for as long as they can. They should have genuine choice and flexibility about how their aged care needs are to be met. Equitable access to Home Care Packages remains problematic and complex and delays often result in preventable deterioration and reduced independence. MS Australia calls for the adoption of the recommendation of the Aged Care Royal Commission and for the number of, and improved access to, Home Care packages to be addressed.

OUR VISION:

A world without MS

There is no known cause or single cure for MS, but a cure could well be within reach.

In the next term of government, there is an opportunity for our political leaders and decision-makers to make an impact on improving the lives of people with MS, their carers, families and friends.

We are seeking election commitments from all sides of politics to supercharge the MS research agenda through a continuing investment for better treatments, prevention and ultimately a cure for MS, as well as systemic improvements to health care, disability care and aged care.

About MS Australia

MS Australia is the national peak body for people affected by MS. We work with the MS community to fund and coordinate MS research, advocate on behalf of people living with MS and drive awareness and education as part of the worldwide effort to solve MS. We work closely with our four state and territory MS Member Organisations that provide services, programs, and support to the MS community nationwide.



A U S T R A L I A

MS Australia
ABN 51 008 515 508

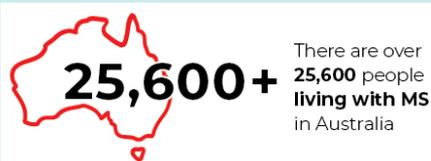
Head Office: Level 19,
Northpoint, 100 Miller Street,
North Sydney NSW 2060

Postal: PO Box 625,
North Sydney NSW 2059

www.msaustralia.org.au



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On average, in 2017, the **quality of life** of people with MS in Australia is **31% less** than that of the overall Australian population.



Quality of life for people with MS who are living with **severe disability is 41% lower** compared to people with MS with no disability.



Every 5 minutes, someone, somewhere in the world is diagnosed with MS.



Diagnosis of MS is mostly between the ages of **20 and 40 years**.

This substantially reduced quality of life is primarily driven by the impact of MS on **pain, independent living, mental health and relationships**.

In young adults MS is the **most common acquired disease** of the central nervous system.



Global experts believe that addressing the impact of **smoking, Vitamin D deficiency, obesity and glandular fever** could **prevent 60%** of MS cases.



MS is estimated to have cost the Australian community **\$1.75 billion** in 2017.



If there was a vaccine against the Epstein Barr Virus* **90% of MS cases might be prevented**.



* the virus that causes glandular fever.

