

## INFORMATION SERVICE

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The National Information Service provides a range of resources about MS, including:

**MS Voice:** Our quarterly publication informing stakeholders of current MS issues in New Zealand, and world-wide.

**MSNZ Information Series:** Specialised resources related to the specific symptoms and effects of MS.

**Knowledge is Power:** A modular series for people who have just been diagnosed with MS.

**MSSNZ Library:** A variety of resources about MS and related topics, available for loan.

**MSSNZ Website** [www.msnz.org.nz](http://www.msnz.org.nz) is a source of up-to-date online information about MS and related topics, including news and events, latest research developments and access to all MSSNZ published information resources.

**Research Roundup:** A weekly electronic newsletter collating the latest research and news relating to MS from around the world. To receive this service email [info@msnz.org.nz](mailto:info@msnz.org.nz).

## RESEARCH PROGRAMME

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Our Research Fund partners with leading scientists and researchers to support crucial research into understanding MS.

A key recent project is the National MS Prevalence Study, which provides the first accurate picture of MS incidence in New Zealand in over twenty years.

## MSNZ AWARDS

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MSSNZ administers two awards. The Dorothy Newman Scholarship funds tertiary study of up to \$7,500 for two people with MS each year. The Scholarship recognises the challenge of an MS diagnosis and supports retraining in employment that may be necessary for those with the condition.

The Esme Tombleson Award honours the contributions members make to their wider community. Awards for 'Person with MS of the Year' and 'Carer of the Year' are presented annually.

## ADVOCACY

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MSSNZ liaises with allied organisations and government bodies to ensure policies concerning people with MS receive considered input from those who will be affected.

## CONTACT DETAILS

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# ms.

THE  
MULTIPLE  
SCLEROSIS  
SOCIETY  
OF NZ

ms.

Multiple Sclerosis Society of New Zealand

## WHAT IS MS?

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Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is one of the most common diseases of the central nervous system.

A fatty substance called the myelin sheath covers the fibres of the nervous system. The myelin protects the nerves and helps messages move between the brain and the rest of the body.

In MS, the myelin sheath covering the nerves in the brain and spinal cord becomes scarred in scattered patches. This is multiple scarring, or sclerosis. Essentially, this distorts or prevents the flow of messages from the brain and spinal cord to other parts of the body.

The distortions to the messages travelling through the nervous system causes a range of problems for people with MS, some of the symptoms may include:

- loss of balance or co-ordination;
- tremor and weakness;
- blurred or double vision;
- eye pain (usually only affecting one eye);
- difficulty with legs, arms and hand movements;
- bladder or bowel problems;
- numbness and pain;
- problems with thinking and remembering;
- sexual problems; and/or
- fatigue.

The cause of MS is unknown, but research suggests it is a combination of genetic and environmental factors.

There is no cure for MS yet, but the condition can be managed through a combination of medication, physiotherapy, good nutrition, rest and moderate exercise.

## THE MS SOCIETY

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The Multiple Sclerosis Society of New Zealand (MSSNZ) is a non-profit organisation formed to provide on-going support, education and advocacy for people with MS and their support networks. It also aims to educate the general public, employers and health professionals about MS and actively funds key research into the condition.

The Society was established in 1967 and today there are 18 regional Societies from Northland to Southland. Each regional Society is autonomous, and appoints one office holder to represent them on the National Council.

The MSSNZ Board (including the President) is elected from the National Council, and is responsible for developing and monitoring MSSNZ policies.

## NATIONAL OFFICE

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The Board is supported by the MSSNZ National Office, based in Wellington. The Office is managed by the National Director, and employs a Finance & Administration Officer, a National Information & fundraising Coordinator and a Fundraising Assistant.

## MSNZ SERVICES

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MSSNZ offers a wide variety of services, some of which are described in this leaflet. This assistance is available to people with MS, family members and their carers. Information on any of our activities is available from National Office.

## FIELD WORKERS

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The Field Worker Service has been operating for more than twenty years. It has developed into a vital and high profile service, available to all members at no charge.

Field Workers are trained to give advice on a wide range of matters concerning MS as well as arranging social groups, exercise classes, support meetings and service referrals.

All regional societies have skilled and experienced professionals providing one-on-one support and information.

## REGIONAL SOCIETIES

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There are 19 offices nationwide, enabling you to access professional and specialised services in your own community.

The regional offices can put you in touch with a local Field Worker, who can provide one-on-one support and information to you and your family.

Northland	09 438 3945	Manawatu	06 357 3188
Auckland &		Wellington	04 388 8127
North Shore	09 845 5921	Marlborough	03 578 4058
Waikato	07 834 4740	Nelson	03 544 6386
Bay of Plenty	07 571 5030	West Coast	03 768 7007
Rotorua	07 346 1830	Canterbury	03 366 2857
Gisborne	06 868 8842	Sth Canterbury	06 684 7834
Hawkes Bay	06 843 5002	Otago	03 455 5894
Taranaki	06 751 2330	Southland	03 218 3975
Wanganui	06 345 2336		