



Conquering Round the Bays 2020!

inside



An ocean of
hopefulness

From MS
diagnosis to
half marathon

Peer
Connection

New Saturday
morning
hydro class

and much more...

FULLY FUNDED

from 1 December 2019 for people with RMS who meet pre-defined criteria



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OCREVUS only needs to be given every six months after the first dose.¹ If you're one of the 4000 New Zealanders affected by MS, ask your doctor if OCREVUS is right for you.

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1. Ocrevus (ocrelizumab) Consumer Medicine Information February 2018 <http://medsafe.govt.nz/consumers/educational-material.asp>

Ocrevus is a PHARMAC funded medicine from 1st December 2019 for patients with relapsing multiple sclerosis (RMS) who meet pre-defined criteria. Patients outside these criteria and with primary progressive multiple sclerosis (PPMS) will need to pay the full cost of this medicine. A prescription charge and normal doctor's fees may apply.

Ocrevus[®] (ocrelizumab), 300mg vial, is a **Prescription Medicine** used to treat relapsing forms of multiple sclerosis (RMS) and primary progressive multiple sclerosis (PPMS). **Do not use Ocrevus if:** you have had an allergic reaction to Ocrevus or any of the ingredients. **Tell your doctor if:** you have an infection, or a history of a recurring or long-term infection such as hepatitis B; you are taking or have previously taken medicines which may affect your immune system, such as other medicines for MS; you intend to have or have had immunisation with any vaccine; you are allergic to any other medicines or any other substances such as foods, preservatives or dyes; you are pregnant or intend to become pregnant; you are breast feeding or plan to breast feed. **Tell your doctor immediately or go to your nearest Accident and Emergency Centre if you notice any of the following:** swelling of your face, lips, tongue or throat with difficulty breathing; swelling of other parts of your body; shortness of breath, wheezing or trouble breathing; skin problems including rash, itchiness or hives; fever, flushing or chills; cough, throat irritation or pain; feeling tired; headache; dizziness or light headedness; feeling sick (nausea); fast heartbeat. **Tell your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you notice any of the following common side effects:** signs of an infection such as fever or chills, cold sore, shingles or genital sores; stuffy nose or chest; thick mucus in the nose, throat or chest; persistent cough; difficulty sleeping (insomnia); diarrhoea, vomiting and/or stomach cramps (gastroenteritis). **Ocrevus** has risks and benefits. Ask your doctor if Ocrevus is right for you. Use strictly as directed. If symptoms continue or you have side effects, see your healthcare professional. For further information on Ocrevus, please talk to your health professional or visit www.medsafe.govt.nz for Ocrevus Consumer Medicine Information.

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Round the Bays!



Support Groups



our people.

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a few words from Ingrid.

Our General Manager

It is a challenging time we are in with the Coronavirus, now known as Covid -19, and all that means to people who are immune compromised or have underlying health conditions. The general advice is not to panic but to be prepared. This will mean ensuring that you have supplies and a support systems in place should a wide-spread outbreak occur in your area. At the time of writing we have had one confirmed case of Covid-19, however with winter just around the corner, it is likely that we will be seeing more. Keep in touch with the latest updates and the guidelines to keep well and prevent others from getting sick. This can be done on the Ministry of Health website health.govt.nz. See the MS Nurses article on page 10 for more information.

We've has some challenges with keeping on top of demand this year. Priyanka left us at the end of January to pursue her PhD studies. We are now advertising for a

new role of Services Manager to lead the client services of MS Auckland. If you are interested please check out the advertisement on Seek or contact Angeline Long at HR executive on angeline@hrexec.co.nz.

Stories of people living with MS are throughout this issue, starting with our cover story of our Round the Bays team. This is our first time being a part of this iconic annual event, and definitely something we will look at doing again.

Anne, Peter, Rochelle and Amanda also share their personal MS stories. They are heartwarming and inspiring and show how truly amazing people with MS are.

Green MP Golriz Ghahraman came out publicly with her MS after being diagnosed 18 months ago. Read her story below.

Green MP, Golriz Ghahraman shares her MS diagnosis with New Zealand.

Golriz Ghahraman, MP was diagnosed with MS 18 months ago. She publicly shared her MS diagnosis for the first time on TV 3's The Project on the 26th of February.

Golriz opened up about her diagnosis because she feels a responsibility to start an honest conversation about MS. She feels her MS has enriched her ability to connect with all communities. She has already done so much in raising awareness of MS by going public and has also said she is willing to help out further where she is able during our Awareness Week and other events.

I was delighted to be in the studio when Kanoa from The Project interviewed Golriz. Golriz spoke so beautifully and honestly. She has a very interesting background, having grown up in Iran, and then fleeing to New Zealand with her family as a 9 year old seeking political asylum. She earned a Master's degree at Oxford University in International Human Rights Law, and was

a human rights and constitutional lawyer for 12 years, having worked in Africa, The Hague and Cambodia. In 2017 she became a Green Party MP and was the first former refugee to be elected to New Zealand's Parliament.



events for your calendar.

Upcoming events

Brain Day - Saturday 4th April

Date: Saturday 4th April
Time: 10am to 4pm
Venue: University of Auckland
Grafton Campus
85 Park Road, Grafton



This event is hosted by the Neurological Foundation and the Centre for Brain Research, bringing together members of the public who are interested in or have a neurological condition.

MS Auckland always has a display stand and people on hand to answer questions people might have on MS. It's a fun event with many displays and also free lectures on special topics.

More information is available on their facebook page:
[www.facebook.com/
events/2404471436532442](http://www.facebook.com/events/2404471436532442)

If you visit Brain Day please come over to our stand and say hello!

Annual General Meeting - Tuesday 23rd April

You are cordially invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of MS Auckland.

Date: Thursday 23 April
Time: 7pm
Venue: ILS (Independent Living Service),
14 Erson Avenue, Royal Oak

At the time of writing we were still confirming our Special Guest Speaker for this event. For more information please contact the office at info@msakl.org.nz or on 09 845 5921

Currently Board positions are for a one year term.

If you are interested in being nominated or nominating someone for the Board please e-mail Ingrid on Ingrid@msakl.org.nz

Life Buoy - Sunday 7th June

Date: Sunday 7th June
Time: 11:30am to 4pm
Venue: Royal NZ Yacht Squadron

Special Guest Speaker: Mike King
MC – To be announced
Ticket price \$110/person or \$1100/table of 10
Early Bird table price of \$1000/table of 10 if bought by the 7th of May.

This popular annual lunch and auction event is our biggest fundraising event of the year with the funds used to maintain our services throughout the year. Our partners, Harcourts Cooper & Co, have been behind us sponsoring this event and providing the auctioneer for the past few years. We rely so much on our sponsors and on all the lovely people who donate their time for the event, offer us auction items, and attend the event.

More information will be coming out soon. In the meantime, if you are interested in sponsoring the event or donating for the auction please get in touch with Ingrid or Liz at 09 845 5921 or Ingrid@msakl.org.nz or liz@msakl.org.nz

New Hydrotherapy Class



We've teamed up with Connect Neuro Physiotherapy to provide you with MS hydrotherapy class, 8am Saturday at AUT Millennium. This group will be unique in Auckland as the class will be based on the principles taught and utilized in the innovative and life changing program MS Get a Head Start.

For more information see page 16.

New Support Group for Parents & Children

We have a brand new child friendly group aimed at Parents with MS meeting on the second Monday of each month at Huckleberry cafe on Portage Road New Lynn from 9.30am to 11am.

If you are a parent or caregiver of children and want a coffee group where you can bring the children along this group is for you. We have an awesome volunteer member who will support the group so that you can relax, have a coffee, chat and make new connections. For more information please contact Lucy on 021 959 189 or by e-mail – lucy@msakl.org.nz.

For more information on MS support groups see page 7.



MS Auckland office is located at
5 The Strand, Takapuna

Office Hours
Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm

Phone number: 09 845 5921

e-mail addresses:
Ingrid@msakl.org.nz
Mark@msakl.org.nz

info@msakl.org.nz

Liz@msakl.org.nz
Becky@msakl.org.nz

MS Auckland's new membership structure.

Join Us

In December a special meeting was held to update the MS Auckland constitution. One of the key updates was on membership.

Our goal for 2020 is to have everyone living with MS in Auckland be a member of the society. That's a big goal! We have just under 800 people to date, but feel that there may be many more people in Auckland living with MS. The changes to the membership structure we hope will make it simple, easy and appealing for everyone to join.

Why should I join MS Auckland?

The first question people may ask is why join? If you are feeling well and getting on with life with MS you probably feel no need for the services of the MS society. However you never know what might come up in the future. By joining you have the security of knowing that you can always call and talk to someone who knows and understands MS. You can also keep informed of speakers, events, programmes, news and other activities that may be of interest to you. By joining the society, you also support the wider MS Community by enabling us to understand the numbers of people in the region that are affected by MS and collectively advocate to the 'MS voice'.

Ways to join

- 1. Just Register!** Once you are registered with us you are considered a 'General Member'. This entitles you to a visit and talks with an MS Community Advisor. You will also receive a book, if you wish, by George Jelinek on 'Overcoming Multiple Sclerosis'. You will receive information and news and will have the option to 'opt out' at any time.
- 2. Pay a 'membership fee' and become a voting 'Contributing member'.** You may be interested in getting more involved in the work of the society. By paying the membership fee, you will have the right to vote and will be invited to events at subsidised prices. Membership fee this year has been set by the Board at just \$20/person.

Ways to Support MS

MS Auckland is a registered charity and relies on the kindness and generosity of supporters and donors to do our work. Whether you are a 'General Member' or a Voting 'Contributing Member', you may also want to consider regular donations. Regular donations of any amount automatically paid from your bank account or credit card (either weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly), help us tremendously in continuing our work. All donations are tax deductible. Significant donations will also allow people to become voting contributing members.

You can also support us by volunteering your time and skills. If you are interested in volunteer opportunities, please contact Becky on Becky@msakl.org.nz.



For more information on joining MS Auckland please call the office on 09 845 5921 or e-mail us at info@msakl.org.nz.

support groups.

MS Support Groups are happening all over Auckland. They are open to anyone with MS, their partner, parent, friend, carer, sibling, or child. There are many benefits to coming along to a support group, some of which include making new friends, meeting others living with MS, feeling less isolated, and getting some tips and ideas from others with similar lived experiences with MS.



Saturday morning support group.

We are very pleased to have a brand new child friendly group aimed at Parents with MS meeting on the second Monday of each month at Huckleberry cafe on Portage Road New Lynn at 9:30am. If you are a parent or caregiver of children and want a coffee group where you can bring them along this group is for you. We have an awesome volunteer member who will support the group so that you can relax, have a coffee chat and make new connections.



West Auckland Christmas Party.

The Men's group in Botany Town Centre also continues to meet on the last Saturday of each month.

If you are looking at joining a group for the first time, please contact your Community Advisor or the office to let them know, so we can make sure to look out for you and make you welcome. For a full list of all the groups please see the list below.

Location	Date/ Time
South / East Auckland	
Pukekohe Café Group - Different Venues	First Thursday / Month - 11.30am
Botany Café Group - Robert Harris Café (Botany Town Centre)	Third Thursday / Month - 11.30am
Manukau Café Group - Friendship House (Manukau)	Last Tuesday / Month - 10.30am
Men's Group - Robert Harris Café (Botany Town Centre)	Last Saturday of each Month - 10.30am
Central	
Mt Wellington Café Group - Coffee Club on Lunn Avenue	Second Saturday / Month - 11.00am
Stonefields Café Group - Stonebake Café (Lunn Avenue, Mt Wellington)	Third Wednesday / Month - 10.30am
Onehunga Group - Urban Verge Cafe (653 Manukau Rd, Royal Oak)	Third Tuesday / Month - 10.30am
West Auckland & Rodney	
Child Friendly Group, Huckleberry Café, Portage Road, New Lynn	Second Monday / Month - 9.30am
Kumeu Café Group - Different Venues	First Tuesday / Month - 10.30am
Henderson Garden Café Group - Columbus Coffee Café (inside Mitre 10 Mega, 186 Lincoln Rd)	First Thursday / Month - 11.00am
New Lynn Café Group - Columbus Coffee Café (inside Mitre 10 Mega, New Lynn)	Second Tuesday / Month - 10.30am
North Café Groupies - Kings Plant Barn (Silverdale)	Third Wednesday / Month - 10.30am
North Auckland	
Mayfield Coffee Morning - Kings Plant Barn (Porana Road, Wairau)	First Thursday / Month - 10.30am
Shore Lunch Group - Palmers Planet Café (cnr Hugh Green Drive/Greville Rd, Albany)	Last Wednesday / Bimonthly - 12.00 noon
North Shore Café Group - Columbus Café Smales Farm (74 Taharoto Rd, Takapuna)	First Saturday / Month - 12.30pm

from the MS Community Advisors.

Your Beautiful Smile

Written by Catherine Glover, MS Community Advisor

Yes, this is a conversation about your teeth and mouth and it applies to all, whether you have multiple sclerosis (MS) or not; however, some of us may have additional issues maintaining our healthy smile because of the challenges that MS throws up.

Tips on brushing your teeth

- Brush your teeth after breakfast and after your evening meal
- Brush your teeth and gum line for two minutes with a fluoride toothpaste. If you're unsure how to do it correctly, ask your dentist.
- Use a regular toothbrush. An electric or sonic toothbrush may be preferable, especially if you experience weakness in your arms.
- If you find it difficult to hold the toothbrush, wrap a flannel around the handle for better grip.
- If you experience fatigue standing at the basin, pull up a chair and take a seat.
- If you experience other conditions associated with MS, such as trigeminal neuralgia or temporomandibular disorder (TMD), talk to your dentist.



General Oral Health

Brush your teeth twice daily, floss before brushing. Avoid snacking between meals to avoid plaque-forming food detritus buildup.

Some of the medications that people with MS take have the side effect of causing a dry mouth. Saliva is the body's defence against bacterial buildup and chewing sugar-free gum can stimulate saliva production.



We all know dentistry is expensive; however, children from birth to their 18th birthday have a limited service free. For adults, visiting your dentist should be made a priority and budgeted for. If you are on a low income with a disability, WINZ may be able to help with payment or you may be referred by your GP to a hospital for dental treatment.

Free dental care applies to holders of a Community Services card. Those with a dental problem can apply for these here:

<https://www.nzda.org.nz/public/our-initiatives/free-dental-days> or

Don't forget to floss!

- Flossing helps prevent gum disease by removing food, plaque and bacteria that can cause gum disease, which may be associated with inflammation and cardiovascular disease.
- Floss before you brush. If you find it difficult to floss there are interdental brushes and floss holders, so talk to your dentist about these. If you can't floss because of muscle weakness or tremor, ask your partner or carer to do it for you.

You can also apply at the dental charity, Revive A Smile: <https://www.nzdentalcharity.org/>

Your Community Advisors



Lucy
Contact 021 959 189



Luminita
Contact 021 959 187



Catherine
Contact 09 845 5921

Your Community Advisors

It's been a busy time for our Community Advisors. In January, Priyanka, who was contracted to us to cover the South and East side of Auckland, left. She applied to get into a PhD programme at the University of Auckland and was accepted. Her departure has left a gap in the South and Luminita and Lucy are doing the best they can to ensure those that need to be seen are looked after.

If you live in South or East Auckland and would like to talk to a Community Advisor please phone the office on 09 845 5921. We will put you through to an available Community Advisor.

We appreciate your understanding during this time. Please rest assured that we are working hard to fill the role and also further develop our Community outreach in line with your recent survey feedback.

profile on volunteers - Rose & Grant.

Written by Becky Tucker



MS Auckland struck gold in 2019 when Rose and Grant Furley joined our volunteering team. Rose and Grant lead busy lives but have always wanted to give back to society and last year became the perfect opportunity for them. Grant had taken a few months off work whilst in between contracts and Rose had finished work as a GP Practice manager, both gaining 'free time' that they wanted to put to good use.

We were first introduced to Rose through our Lloyd Elsmore Hydro group, coming from a 'desk role' Rose was keen to help in a more active way. Bingo! Hydrotherapy was a perfect fit. Rose enjoys the involvement of the group, meeting new people and the exercise and admits that it is mutually beneficial as she gets so much from volunteering too, whilst giving back. We are fortunate to have Rose back again this year to help at Lloyd Elsmore, the stability of our long-term volunteers is incredibly advantageous, the connections that are made and time saved is invaluable.

Good fortune came into play once again, within a friendly conversation between our Board member, Donald Bowie, and Grant Furley, who have been friends and work colleagues for many years. Donald was chatting about MS Auckland and upcoming IT system changes, which led Grant to offer his expertise in the database selection processes. Now, this shouldn't be taken flippantly, as Grant took MS Auckland under his wing and became a main lead in the project. His experience, knowledge and enthusiasm was priceless, without Grant's help, we would have been feeling in the dark for a long time! Grant's technical guidance will help the society evolve in 2020.

Both Grant and Rose are modest people, I would like to share their reasons they volunteer as they are great analogies! Grant likens volunteering to "playing golf with a purpose" and both Rose and Grant explain that volunteering is "like belonging to a club with the benefit of helping others". Grant and Rose's industrious attitudes to life is admirable and undoubtedly, purposefully charitable, which MS Auckland have been so very fortunate to benefit from.

As with all our volunteers, the time you give is precious, thank you.

from the MS nurses.

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

– 13 February 2020

In January 2020, Chinese authorities confirmed a new type of coronavirus, named by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as COVID-19. As of 14th of February 2020 there were no confirmed cases in New Zealand but there is a risk of COVID-19 being imported and measures are being taken to minimise the risks including screening at airports.

The Ministry of Health (MoH) have advised the risk of an ongoing outbreak in NZ remains low and is continuing to monitor the situation. MoH is the primary point of authority and reference for information. We recommend staying up to date with the information on their website: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>



What are Coronaviruses?

Coronaviruses are a large and diverse family of viruses which includes the common cold, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). While investigations continue into the origin of the virus, there is evidence that 2019-nCoV can spread from person to person in the community and in health care settings.

What does COVID-19 mean for people with MS?

The Multiple Sclerosis International Federation has advised that as this strain of the coronavirus is new, we still need to learn more about how it may affect people with MS. Many disease modifying therapies (DMTs) for MS work by suppressing or modifying the immune system. We know that people with MS who are receiving these therapies can face an increased risk of complications related to viral infections.

If you are taking a DMT and are either exposed to COVID-19 or are confirmed to have the COVID-19 infection, please contact your neurologist or other medical professional.

What are the symptoms of Coronavirus?

The symptoms are similar to many other illnesses such



Fiona d'Young and Nazila Samadi

as influenza. As such having the following symptoms is not automatically an indicator of 2019-nCoV. Symptoms include:

- Fever (high temperature)
- Cough
- Difficulty Breathing*

Difficulty breathing is a sign of possible pneumonia and requires immediate medical attention. WHO suggests there is an incubation period of 2-10 days for symptoms to appear.

What should you do if you are feeling unwell?

If you have a fever, cough or difficulty breathing you can contact the Healthline on their freephone 0800 611 116, or, contact your GP or practice Nurse. Testing is now available in NZ.

You can find out the answers to some commonly asked questions about COVID-19 on the World Health Organization's website.

Find out more about COVID-19 in the short informational video, from the World Health Organization: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOV1aBVYKGA&feature=emb_logo

Update: The Ministry of Health has regular updates on their website, [health.govt.nz](https://www.health.govt.nz). MS Auckland will send through to all members information that we receive from the hospital team regarding COVID-19 that pertain to people with MS. Please make sure to update us with your contact details if necessary.

Fiona d'Young and Nazila Samadi
Multiple Sclerosis Nurse Specialists
Auckland City Hospital

Email – msnurse@adhb.govt.nz
Phone – 09307 4949 ext. 25885#

congratulations to Sarah Gilchrist.

– *Dorothy Newman Scholarship Recipient*



On the 27th of July 2014, Sarah was diagnosed with MS. It's a day that she will never forget. She was just 23 years of age at the time and a student in Dunedin majoring in History. The last five and a half years have seen challenging years for Sarah. The first drug treatment she was put on didn't seem to have much effect and the second she had a bad reaction to and wasn't allowed to continue. Fortunately however, with her Australian citizenship she was able to go onto a line of treatment not funded in New Zealand – Mavenclad (Cladribine) – a more effective therapy for her very active relapsing remitting MS.

In April last year, under orders from her doctor, Sarah had to leave her job as an Area Manager in the retail industry. At the time she was having optic neurosis, and together with the driving, fluorescent lighting, and stairs, it was all wreaking havoc on her MS.

Sarah took some much needed time off, visiting her brother in London and family members in Melbourne. She knew however that she needed a 'Plan B' for her career.

While studying in Dunedin she took some social work papers which really interested her, and saw pursuing Social Work as a good option for her and something she could still do if her mobility becomes more limited. "I like helping people" says Sarah, "and through this course of study I can also help myself".

Sarah found out about the Dorothy Newman scholarship and decided to give it a go. She was over the moon to find out that her application was successful. It will be a huge help to her this year as she starts a new four year course of study at Massey University for her Bachelor of Social Work.

We are so thrilled for Sarah, who is so very deserving of this wonderful support and will be following her journey with much interest.

About the Dorothy L. Newman Scholarship

This scholarship assists people who have been diagnosed as having MS and as a result are unable to continue in their present employment, who need to change their employment and undergo a course of retraining in order to do so. There are two funding rounds open each year with the next round opening on the 1st of April and closing on the 30th of June. The scholarship is managed by MS NZ. For more information talk to one of our Community Advisors, or visit the MS NZ website - <https://www.msnz.org.nz/scholarships-and-grants/>

a personal experience.

– Anne Besley writes about HSCT in India late last year



My name is Anne Besley. I am 50 years-old and a nurse and I was diagnosed with relapsing remitting MS (RRMS) in 2006. Tysabri was the 4th Disease Modifying Drug (DMD) I had been on. After two years of being on Tysabri, I tested positive for the John Cunningham Virus (JCV) and was told I had a 1:333 chance of developing the almost always fatal brain infection Progressive Multifocal Leukoencephalopathy (PML), and this risk would climb with each infusion of Tysabri I had. I was unbelievably frightened. My risk before becoming positive for JCV was 1:10,000

The analogy my husband came up with to explain the risk to our friends was apt. If you swim in the ocean, you know that there are sharks out there. You know your risk is minuscule, maybe a 1:10,000 chance that a shark will attack you (actually, the risk for a shark attack is much, much higher). Suddenly you see some fins and you know the risk is very real. You've seen the fins, so will a shark bite you? If it does, will that bite prove fatal or will you be lucky enough to survive it? And how disabled would you be after the bite (PML can cause quite profound disability)? This is what it was like for me when I was told I had suddenly seroconverted to JCV positive. Sometimes being a nurse is a good thing, but sometimes I truly think the saying 'ignorance is bliss' has a place! Even though I was reassured by my neurologist that they would keep a close eye on me, I still could not reconcile with the fact that if I contracted PML, and even if it was caught very early, and in the best-case scenario, I didn't end up too badly brain-damaged or disabled that I could no longer receive any of the other Disease Modifying Drugs to prevent the MS progressing except Copaxone. Copaxone was the second DMD I went on and proved to be the least effective, I relapsed frequently on it. PML was a risk I was simply not willing to take, no matter how closely I was monitored.

I had a frank conversation with my neurologist about HSCT (Haematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation). As this is not a procedure performed by neurologists, my neurologist could not comment on it in depth and referred me to a haematologist. HSCT is a procedure that has been performed on blood and bone marrow cancers since the 1960s. In the 90s this procedure was tested on mice with simulated MS with encouraging results. Since then, there have been numerous randomised controlled trials to test for the efficacy of HSCT concerning treating MS. After much research, and some lengthy discussions with family, friends and my neurologist, I decided this was the way forward for me. If you are a person looking to have HSCT, I cannot recommend visiting a haematologist highly enough. I recommend a discussion with a haematologist who performs HSCT and Bone Marrow Transplants if



Anne receiving stem cells.



Harsh realities of chemo.



Anne with Bone Marrow Transplant team.

possible. HSCT is in the domain of Haematology, not Neurology. The HSCT protocol for MS and other autoimmune disorders came out of the MIST trial in Chicago, the first international large-scale randomised trial into HSCT in relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis. A breakdown of the MIST trial can be read on the Neurology.org website. Some of the centres do not strictly follow this protocol, so a discussion with a haematologist is vital.

HSCT is NOT a cure, the procedure aims to put MS into remission and to 'reset' the faulty immune system. I chose to go to the Apollo Hospital in New Delhi, India for several reasons. The lead haematologist there, Dr Gaurav Kharya, adheres to the protocol. He has been doing this procedure for several years and I have been able to meet many people who had this treatment under him. Also, India is the most reasonably priced. It costs \$40,000 NZD to give a cancer patient here HSCT treatment. India charged me \$42,000 and this included the exchange rate, airport transfers, and all food for my support person. Your support person stays with you, so there is no cost for accommodation.

It is expected you will be there a month. The first two weeks is where everything happens (pre-tests, stem cell liberation, stem cell harvest, chemo, and stem cell re-infusion) the last two weeks are for observation, and to correct any issues arising from your bone marrow being ablated. It was a tough procedure, but I got through it OK. I had a couple of complications post-chemo, but Dr Kharya (known as Dr G but his patients) easily dealt with them.

Has it worked? It's too early to say. I only received my stem cells back on the 30th October, so feel commenting right now would be premature.

I have been confined to my house for 3 months, pending blood test results, and then I will be given a revaccination schedule. I can't touch my cats (this counts for all animals) for 6 months following the procedure. I was sent home with a schedule and have to see my neurologist at 1, 3, 6, 9 and 12 months for an assessment. They have asked for 2 full MRIs (brain and spinal cord) at 6 and 12 months and regular blood tests. They rely on people to get these reports done so they can track your progress. A lot of preparation needs to go into this, and robust research and support is an absolute must.

Since returning home from India, I have been writing a book documenting my MS journey from first symptoms to undergoing HSCT. The care I received in India was excellent. I don't think there was anything I could have thrown at Dr G and his team that they couldn't sort out. As a nurse (and my husband is an anaesthetic technician) I was so happy with the level of care I received. This has been an experience I will never forget, and I am glad I did it.

If you want to chat about India or my experiences, please send me an email – devsmum04@gmail.com

we're off to a flying start...

Written by
Liz Callinan

It's the start of a new decade, a new year, so here at MS Auckland headquarters, we thought, why not have a go at a new event?

But while the Ports of Auckland Round the Bays fun run is certainly not new to Auckland's event calendar (it's in its 48th year), this year will be the first time a MS Auckland team will be lining up at the start line.

Our team of 36 is made up of staff, clients, family, and friends and we are now just a few days out from the event. We have all registered for different reasons. Some of us are supporting our friends or family, others are getting out there to raise MS awareness, some of us couldn't go past the beer and BBQ at the finish line, while some of us just love a challenge and competition runs in our blood. We have trained (as best we can in this weather!), we have tested out our shoes for blisters, and we have stretched, and recovered...on repeat. We have 8.4kms ahead of us and we are ready.

on your mark, get set. GO!



Getting ready for the start of the Bays fun run.



Deb and Chris



Maria, Lucy and Deb.



Vision and MS crew.

we did it!

As this magazine goes to print Round the Bays has just wrapped up for another year and we can proudly report that 31 MS Auckland team members crossed the finish line! What an achievement and what an amazing team!

Naturally celebrations ensued and we enjoyed a scrumptious BBQ buffet and a well earned rest at our VIP tent at St Heliers Bay. After all this was a FUN run!

Special mention and gratitude goes to Vision Personal Training, our partner for this event. Their trainers did such a wonderful job supporting us (sometimes literally) throughout the race, and Dean and Olivia put on a delicious lunch afterwards at their Hospitality tent at Madills Farm. The day would not have been the success it was without them. Thanks too to our wonderful MS volunteers who helped with the BBQ and made sure we were fed and watered.

But the last word of thanks goes to our team. Because as well as asking them to commit to this physical challenge, we asked them to raise money for MS Auckland too. We set our fundraising target at \$5,000 and to date we are delighted to announce that we have exceeded our goal with our current tally at \$7,210!

It's not too late to show your support and applaud our team by donating through our Givealittle page <https://givealittle.co.nz/donate/org/ms-aucklandregion>. Just remember to add RTB20 as a reference in the message box. We are taking donations until 31 March.



Ash with medal.



Liz and Olivia.



Debbie and family.



Food, glorious food!

Team MS Auckland – what an inspiration, from start to finish.

hydrotherapy.

We are up and running again with Hydrotherapy for 2020. We are pleased to be back at Westwave pool again, although the start has already seen some challenges with the facility! We are working through them and hopefully things will settle down soon.

We are very happy about the new addition to our Hydrotherapy courses starting on Saturday the 2nd of May and running every Saturday from 8am to 9am. For this programme we have teamed up with Connect Neuro Physiotherapy, and the classes will be based on the MS Get a Head Start programme. See the comment in the box below from Gilly Davy, the clinical director and senior neuro physiotherapist at Connect Neuro Physio.



Connect Neuro Physiotherapy are really excited to be providing a Saturday morning MS hydrotherapy at AUT Millennium. This group will be unique in Auckland as the class will be based on the principles taught and utilized in the innovative and life changing program MS Get a Head Start. The therapists providing the sessions will be accredited MS Get a Head Start practitioners. This group will be utilizing the high intensity interval training approach, although this is not the actual 6 week intensive MS Get a Head Start program, as it will not be incorporating the important education and behavioural change components. The trained staff will be skilled to support you to ensure you are able to exercise correctly to make positive impacts on your MS journey.



Cost

\$120 for the year

\$30 per quarter

First two classes are free. Pay either on line or for credit card payments call the office on 09 845 5921. Online payments can be made into our bank account: ASB 12-3047-0088939-00. Be sure to put your name and Hydro as a reference.

Once you have paid, you can attend as many pool classes each week as you like. If you pay for a term and are then unable to attend many classes please call the office to discuss a credit or an extension.

2020 Weekly Sessions

<p>Tuesday</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Lloyd Elsmore Pool Sir Lloyd Drive Pakuranga</p> <p>11:00am - 12:00 noon</p>	<p>Wednesday</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Manurewa Leisure Sykes Road Manurewa</p> <p>11:00am - 12:00 noon</p>	<p>Thursday</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Epsom Girls Silver Road Epsom</p> <p>10:30am - 11:30am</p>	<p>Friday</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Westwave Aquatics 20 Alderman Drive Henderson</p> <p>10:00am - 11:00am</p>
<p>Saturday (from Term 2)</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Millennium Pool 17 Antares Place Rosedale</p> <p>8:00am - 9:00am</p>	<p>Saturday</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Diocesan Girls Clyde Street Epsom</p> <p>10:00am - 11:00am</p>	<p><i>Before attending the class for the first time, or for more information please contact your Community Advisor or Liz at the MS Auckland office on infor@msakl.org.nz or 09 845 5921.</i></p>	

from MS diagnosis to half marathon.

- how MS changed my life for the better

Written by Rochelle Cave

Hi, my name is Rochelle Cave, I'm 44 yrs old, a mum wife, daughter, sister, aunty, great aunty, cousin, friend, colleague and MS Warrior.

14 October 2015 – that was D day, diagnosis day. I went to my neurologist by myself not expecting the life changing news that I received. I had been through so much already with hypothyroidism, olfactory hallucinations, a mis-diagnosis of epilepsy and all the life adjustments that come with that including taking nasty medication. But I was positive it couldn't get any worse – I was wrong. I remember staying really calm until I got in to my car at which point I screamed (out loud I think) and started crying uncontrollably. Everything hit all at once – the fear, the grief, the anger, the shock, the disbelief, the why me?

4 years, minus 30kilos and 1 half marathon later I am relapse free, unmedicated and in the best physical condition that I have been in since before I had children over 15 years ago. My diagnosis has taken me on one of the bumpiest, but yet most rewarding and self-empowering journey's I have ever been on.

Without a doubt, the first year was super hard but I threw myself in to the PREVANZ Vit D Study within 60days of my diagnosis. Participating in the study provided incredible support and a sense of contribution if not to my own wellbeing then to that of others. The regular appointments, testing and scans provided a real sense of safety and assurance that my disease wasn't progressing. Sometimes they were the only things that kept the intense fear of worst-case scenario at bay.

In January 2018 after a 6 month long, half-hearted attempt at getting myself in to better shape I was offered an opportunity by Abby Erceg, New Zealand



Before.



After.

Football Fern, to be a guinea pig for hew new fitness program You 2.0 - A Fitter Existence. Little did I know that this would be one of the crucial turning points in my physical and mental wellbeing as well as in the management of my MS. Abby has been virtually alongside me (she is based in the USA) week by week



The finish line!

adjusting, monitoring and guiding my work-outs as I have grown stronger, fitter and healthier. Supported by a well-balanced diet that is about seasonal, available, affordable, natural healthy choices my "program" is now a way of life that I am 100% certain has kept my MS progression at zero and better prepared my body to handle anything that MS might throw at me in the future.

Any fitness journey benefits from goals that are set along the way so when I flippantly said "I'd love to run a half marathon one day" in the presence of a very supportive and motivating friend she replied "there's no reason why you can't – we'll do it together" my goal was set.

We set our sights on the Gold Coast Half Marathon July 2019. Abby set me a long distance, endurance program that built on my stamina week, by week leading up to the big day. Additional to the program I ran a small 5km fun run in February, then Round the Bays in March (8.4kms) then it was time for the big one in July. Sunday 7th July. There I was at 6am with 35,000 other runners doing something that I never thought I could do even without MS but I did it and I am busy setting my next goal now!

MS sucks – no arguments here - but I am determined to keep fighting, keep setting goals, keep living in a way that feeds my mind, body and soul and hopefully inspires a few others to do the same along the way. I appreciate that everyone's MS journey is different and some much harder than others, but within my diagnosis I have found a determination and strength that sees me building my bravery every day.



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References: 1. Data on file, Biogen. 2. Desai A *et al.* *Eur J Pharm Med Res* 2016; 3(5): 197-205.
3. TECFIDERA (dimethyl fumarate) Data Sheet, 2 May 2017.

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recipe.

The Perfect Guacamole Recipe

I've just returned from 6 weeks in Mexico where I indulged in guacamole almost every day! It has to be one of my favourite dips. While we can still get reasonably priced avocados in New Zealand I thought I would share with you some of the secrets of making a stand out guacamole.



This recipe has half a mango stirred in, for a fun and tropical twist. You can leave this out if you can't get a mango, but I highly recommend trying it if you can. It also has a habanero chile, which may also be hard to come by. You can buy habanero sauce though. It's a very hot sauce so I recommend a very small amount, unless of course you like it hot. The hot sauce really is the secret ingredient, so even if you don't like hot food don't be afraid to add a touch.

Guacamole needs to be chunky but smooth enough to be scooped up with a chip. In this recipe only 1 of the avocados is mashed, and then the two others are diced and folded in. This keeps it all sticking together but nice and chunky.

This recipe will make about 3 cups of Guacamole

Ingredients:

3 ripe avocados, halved, pitted and cut into ½ inch pieces

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

2 Tablespoons lime juice

1 habanero chile, stemmed, seeded and minced, or a splash of habanero sauce or other hot sauce

2 cloves garlic, minced

¾ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon cumin

½ mango, peeled and cut into

¼ inch pieces



Directions:

Using a fork, mash 1 avocado with cilantro, onion, lime juice, hot sauce, garlic, salt and cumin in a bowl until mostly smooth. Fold in mango and remaining 2 avocados. Season with more salt to taste and serve.

Do you have a favourite Jelinek friendly, or plant based recipe you would like to share for the next magazine? Please send it to Ingrid@msakl.org.nz. If you can, please also include why it's your favourite and a photo.

peer connection.

Written by Lucy Reade

Over the past few months I have been coordinating a trial of a new and free service we hope to develop and make available to all of our members in Auckland later this year called Peer Connection.

Peer Connection aims to match people with diagnosed MS, their families and caregivers living in Auckland with other individuals and groups of people living with MS via one on one contact, support groups and private, online forums.

Our Peer Connection volunteers will work with others in the MS community sharing their lived experience of coping with and living well with an MS diagnosis in service of supporting others who are facing similar challenges in their lives. The type of support offered varies depending on the needs of the Peer and the MS experience of the Peer Connector. It can range from (but is not limited to) emotional support, practical assistance, information sharing, organising get togethers and events, advocacy and moderating and participating in online forums.

We are aware that this kind of support, generated by social connections, word of mouth and generosity goes on within our MS community and always has. Many an introduction has been made via our Community Advisors based on common concerns, interests, needs and location and of course numerous connections are made at the various coffee groups, events, classes and workshops that are run regularly by MS Auckland.

What is new is that we are now looking to formalise this service, offer it to all people with MS in the Auckland area and create more equity in availability across the MS community.

We are trialling providing a more deliberate, co-ordinated and funded service provided by trained volunteers who will receive ongoing education, support and supervision.

We want to do this well and to set up a service that feels safe, accessible well coordinated and supportive for all parties. We want our volunteers to be able to access relevant training, learning and development opportunities and to ensure they are not left alone to carry difficulties, challenges and problems that result from the work that they do.

Peer Support is a concept dear to my heart and I am delighted to have this opportunity to introduce it to the MS Community. There have also been a small number of recent research studies all pointing to the value to overall wellbeing of a service like this being available to compliment and augment traditional approaches.

I am so grateful to my first 2 volunteer Peer Connectors for working with me and the people I have linked them with so willingly while we trial this concept, iron out problems and identify what will be needed going forward.

Anu Dravid was our first volunteer Peer Connector. We met in my first few weeks on the job when we shared a shift collecting in West Auckland during last years Street Appeal. Anu was so willing to share her own journey with MS and I learned more from her about what it is really like to live with MS than I had in all my recent reading. Anu was so happy to be out collecting for MS Auckland and shared with me how she hoped to give much more back to the MS community and was choosing her subjects at University with a view to using her degree to help others with MS.

Something Anu said at that time really struck me. She wished she could have talked to someone like herself as she is now when she was first diagnosed at just 18.

We met again a few weeks later at a coffee group and I heard about the lovely connection she had recently made with another member of the group, Debbie. I was so inspired by both their enthusiasm and energy for helping others new to MS that I proposed we work together on a project to offer this opportunity to more MS Auckland members and Peer Connection was born.

I have since matched both Anu and Debbie with a number of people I have met in my Community Advisor role. Mostly they have been newly diagnosed people living in West Auckland but also a few further afield and some who have lived with MS for a while but have needed extra support or advice that I am unable to give. Anu and Debbie, both busy people themselves have patiently and generously worked with me towards putting a workable framework in place and have, through their experience in this role, been informing the training, policies and platforms we will need to have in place going forward.

Here is some feedback from 2 recently diagnosed people who matched with Anu.

"I'm so glad I was introduced to Anu. It was invaluable and tremendously reassuring to meet someone who has MS, and to be able to joke about our wooden-feeling feet and much else. Besides, we seem to just like each other.... Anu has been wonderfully generous in sending suggestions and links on, among other things, possible exercise programmes even a MS-friendly variation on the yoga staple 'Salute to the Sun'. Meeting Anu has been both reassuring and 'normalizing'. I hope we'll be able to support each other, find out things (about our condition, and what we can do about it, how we talk to other people about it) that you can only find out through personal connection, the kind of stuff that would otherwise mean spending a long time down a bunny hole going around in circles." - Margo

"Being diagnosed with MS just recently at age 30 was a terrifying experience for me. I knew nothing about MS and although there were many well meaning people in my life offering advise other people just didn't seem to understand. I felt I was very, very alone and was getting rather low. Lucy connected me with Anu. We met up for a coffee later that week and right from the start I felt comforted and understood. Anu looks great! She is funny, friendly and positive and just the example I needed of someone living well with MS to dispel some of the fears I was dwelling on. I feel now I have a buddy on this journey that I can reach out to. I can ask questions that would feel too little or silly to ask of someone who hasn't walked in these shoes." - Emelie

For more information on being a Volunteer Peer Connector please contact Lucy on 09 845 5921 xtn 221 or 021 959 189 or lucy@msakl.org.nz.



Hi. I am Anu. I am in my early twenties and was diagnosed with MS just before my eighteenth birthday. It was a tough and lonely few years and it took a while to find supports and treatments that helped.

I am now living well with my MS, in full time study at Auckland University and hope one day to use my education to serve others.

I enjoy yoga, reading, watching old movies, drawing and I love animals. I have adopted the OMS (Over-coming MS) diet and really enjoy cooking and creating OMS friendly recipes and sharing food.

A big step for me on this journey has been learning to accept and embrace my MS.

I think if I had been able to meet and connect with someone early on in my journey my perspective could have been very different so I am happy to share my experience and support others on this journey.

'Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around'.

‘an ocean of hopefulness’

– a reflection on the adventures aboard the Oceans of Hope Challenge 2019

Written by Peter Tutty



The amazing crew of Steinlager 2.



Returning to Auckland after a week long adventure.

I started to write about **my** amazing trip on Steinlager 2, sailing around the Hauraki Gulf, but I quickly had to change tack. The Oceans of Hope Challenge 2019 was not about individuals, it was about a group of amazing people living with the challenges of MS and coming together as a team to take on this incredible challenge.

It started on Monday on a typical partly cloudy Auckland day. We sailed out to greying skies and it soon deteriorated as we approached Motatapu Island. We dropped anchor inside Home Bay to ride out the storm, and it was a rough night. Most people didn't get a lot of sleep before rising to blue skies and coffee/tea on Tuesday. Auckland weather can change on a dime and this was the last of the bad weather faced and beaten!

We had breakfast, put up the sails and headed for Waiheke Island. Grinding, tacking, sprinting from side to side, we did it all. MS took a back seat as we tackled the oceans and came out the victor. A group of dolphins joined us in the morning and gave all our phones a good workout as they frolicked with the boat. The sun was shining, the sunscreen was slapped on and the smiles were evident all over the boat. We reached Waiheke and sailed to the bottom end, anchoring in Opopo Bay for the night

After a much more peaceful night we started our main voyage for the week...the long haul to Great Barrier Island! 5 hours of sailing including a little match-racing against our sister boat, Lion New Zealand (LNZ), came to the usual result. The newer, longer, faster Steinlager 2 was built to be better than LNZ and consistently showed that all week. By the end of the trip, we were mostly resting on deck as we sailed through the Manowar Passage and dropped the anchor in Smokehouse Bay.

Parked alongside LNZ, we all took the tenders to go ashore for a combined BBQ. Bonfire, marshmallows, burgers...we had it all...except for the beers! How can a boat called Lion NZ and another called Steinlager possibly be dry?! Even so, a great time was had by all and we finally managed to pull Robert away from the campfire and head back to our boats. It was another relaxing evening in an idyllic piece of New Zealand.

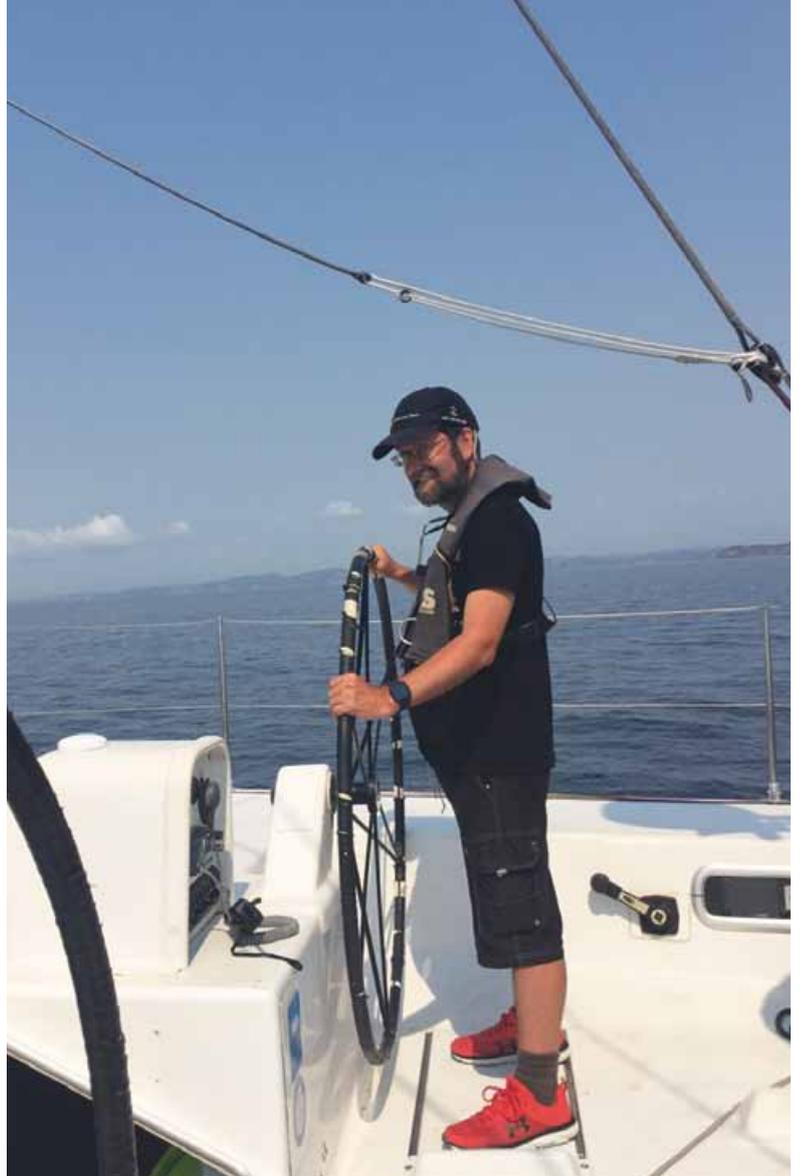
After a quick stop at Fitzroy Harbour for supplies, Thursday morning was the usual business of scrubbing decks, making breakfast, and cleaning below decks. After the work for the day was finished, we set sail for Kawau Island and anchored just offshore from the Mansion House. The tenders were set in the water and some people went ashore to visit the house built by Governor Grey and say hello to his peacocks. We should have bought the croquet set...

As the sun set and we relaxed on board, a projector was set up and we all sat and watched Blakey, the story of Sir Peter Blake and his life, tragically cut short in the Brazilian Rainforest. It was surreal sitting on Steinlager 2, watching a

movie about Steinlager 2, and it was the perfect ending to our penultimate day aboard this amazing vessel. We all tumbled into bed and dreamed the dreams of weary sailors. Auckland awaited us!

The final morning dawned with more beautiful weather. The trip back to Auckland city was exhilarating and satisfying with a tinge of weariness for some as the adrenaline drained from us as we approached the City of Sails, proudly displaying our own colours. Our trip was almost over...but there was just enough time to give LNZ a final defeat as we tacked and gybed under the Auckland Harbour Bridge, entertaining the 49ers racing for their respective countries across the Harbour.

18 people with MS, five crew, and the Auckland islands. I cannot speak for LNZ, which represented another 20ish living with MS, but I imagine their sense of achievement was just as strong as ours. We completed this amazing challenge across the islands around Auckland, with attitude, energy and a demonstration of just how strong and capable people with MS can be. On a personal note, I am honoured to have sailed alongside this group and would drop everything to head back out tomorrow, if offered the chance. Live long fruitful, adventure-filled lives, each and every one of you.



*Peter Tutty - legally blind and at the wheel!
"Boat? What boat? There's a boat in front of us?!"*

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A life changing experience!

Amanda reflects on 9 years since the Christchurch Quake.



February 22nd 2011 is a day Amanda Fuller will never forget. Just four minutes before she was to go for lunch the ground began to shake. It quickly became violent and Amanda who was on the first floor of the Pyne Gould Corporation building crouched behind her desk. The building collapsed and the ceiling fell on Amanda with a concrete block pinning down her right hand.

Hours later Amanda and the three other women around her were rescued. Amanda lost three of her fingers from her right hand. Nine years later her missing fingers are a reminder of the earthquake that changed her life forever.

In December 2014, almost four years after the quake, Amanda, who was now living in Auckland, found out that she had MS. She also found out that she was pregnant. The pregnancy was wonderful news, as her and her partner had been wanting a child. The MS was a real shock. Because of her pregnancy she couldn't take any medication for the MS. She developed other complications which resulted in her son, Ethan being born at 35 weeks. He spent one month in the neo-natal intensive care unit before he was ready to come home. Today Ethan is a healthy 4 and a half year old.

Amanda forgot about her MS and resumed life with her new son as normal. She was feeling good. However, her work with the Medical Protection Society made her realise that she needed to be proactive about her health and get on top of her MS. She followed up with the nurses and quickly afterwards saw a neurologist and was put on MS medication. Unfortunately, she reacted badly to the first drug she was put on.

"You know what feels right and what doesn't."

She was given another drug treatment which she is still on today and which has served her well.

However the earthquake and MS were not the only stresses in Amanda's life.

When Amanda was 12 her sister died. When she was 21 her mother passed away. Both these tragic losses impacted her greatly. Then came the Earthquake, then her MS diagnosis, a difficult pregnancy and then a separation from her partner.

"Stresses can cause illness. I think my MS came from the stresses I've been through. It is not in my family at all".

Amanda is now a single Mum and shares with her ex-partner the care of their son. She talks openly and candidly about her experiences and says, "talking about it has been good therapy". She has just started working full time for AON insurance working with ACC clients with work related injuries. She feels her own life experiences will help her to understand her clients' needs and support her well in her work.

"At the end of the day Ethan is my blessing. He gives me a reason to stay strong. Life is short and I aim to make the most of every day".

acupuncture and MS.

Acupuncture is a complementary therapy sometimes used by people with multiple sclerosis.

Acupuncture is an element of traditional Chinese medicine. This says that health depends on the body's life force or energy flow (qi - pronounced chee). Qi moves in a smooth and balanced way through the body along paths called meridians. If qi becomes unbalanced or blocked, illness may result. Using fine needles at key points on the body, the acupuncturist can trigger the body's own healing response and help restore natural balance.

An American survey of 1,000 people with MS found that about one in five had used acupuncture, mostly for pain or anxiety. About half also said that fatigue, depression, spasticity and sleep problems improved. Despite a large amount of anecdotal support for acupuncture for MS symptoms, there has been limited research into the area. Those studies which have been reported have tended to be small - including single case studies, they often lack controls, the descriptions of the treatment protocols used have been inconsistent and there has been a lack of statistical analysis of the results. The following are the findings of some of the studies which have been carried out.

A review looked at research into acupuncture for a range of conditions other than MS. This found some evidence that it could help with some, but not all, types of pain. A 2014 review of 12 studies in MS concluded that although many of the studies included suggested that acupuncture was successful in improving MS symptoms - including quality of life, fatigue, spasticity and pain, the poor study designs made it difficult to draw any firm conclusions about the true effectiveness of acupuncture.

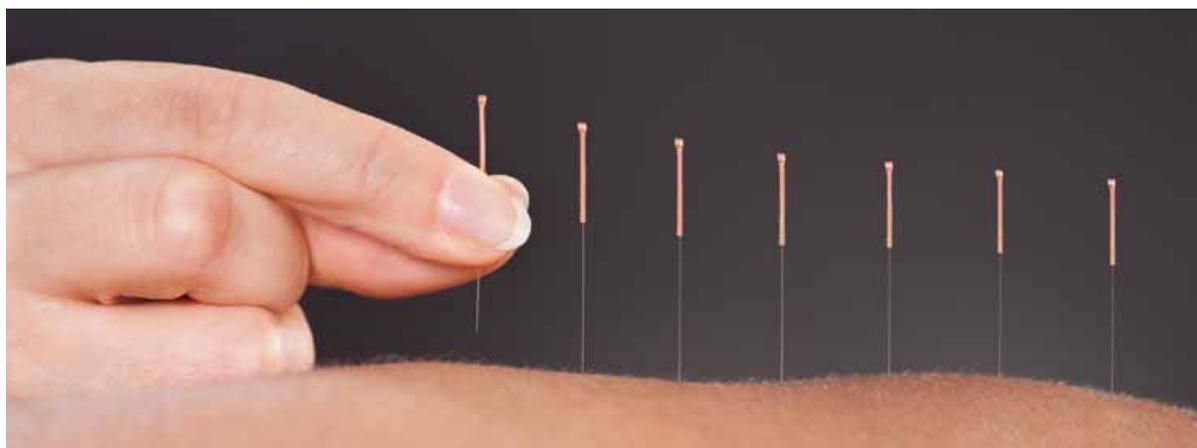
A 2017 study looking at the effects of acupuncture in people with MS with walking difficulties compared true acupuncture with sham acupuncture. Of those who received true acupuncture 95% saw an improvement in walking as measured by the timed 25-foot walk test, compared with 45% in the sham treatment group.

Another 2017 study in China, again comparing true acupuncture to sham acupuncture, showed a positive effect in people with MS who received true acupuncture with reduced EDSS scores seen at 3 and 6-months post-treatment. However, this effect wasn't maintained at 12 or 24 months.

A 2018 review of acupuncture for spasticity in a number of conditions including MS, concluded that there wasn't enough evidence that acupuncture (including electroacupuncture) could reduce spasticity in MS. There is a need for better designed studies with larger numbers of people involved, which include control groups, clearer descriptions of the treatment protocols used and better analysis of the results to get a clearer picture of whether there are benefits to using acupuncture for MS.

Despite there not being enough evidence to make claims for or against the use of acupuncture in MS, it is generally considered safe when provided by an experienced, trained practitioner using sterile single-use needles. (Article taken from <https://www.mstrust.org.uk/a-z/acupuncture>)

Note: to find an accredited acupuncturist nearest to you please go to: <https://nzasa.org/>



some good (bien, bueno, bene) news on learning a second language.

A small, MRI-based study suggests that learning a second language may be an effective way for people with MS to stave off the decline in the brain's grey matter volume (GMV) that is a frequent hallmark of the condition.⁸

Researchers had 11 people with relapsing-remitting MS and 12 healthy adult volunteers take eight weeks of training in a language other than their first language. Members of the two groups were matched by age and sex. When comparing MRIs obtained before the language training began with follow-up MRIs at the end of the program, investigators found significant increases of GMV in specific areas of the brain (the right hippocampus, parahippocampus, and putamen) of the people with MS.



Further, all study participants had significant gains in listening comprehension, speaking fluency, and vocabulary knowledge. The people with MS also reported improved health-related quality of life. Based on these results, it appears there is something to be said (though perhaps not in English) for learning a second language.

(taken from <https://mysaa.org/news/whats-new-in-ms-research-january-2020/>)

Yarra Valley living centre – live well retreat.

The 'Overcoming Multiple Sclerosis' retreat program is a practical and inspirational five-day retreat program, based on Professor Jelinek's scientific research, clinical experience and profound insight, as well as the Yarra Valley Living Centre's 30 years of experience in lifestyle medicine and self-help healing programs.

During this retreat program you will acquire the techniques, lifestyle changes and prescribed medical management practices that, when combined, may stabilise MS and potentially enable recovery.

The expert team of facilitators have overcome their own diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis using these same strategies. Participants will gain invaluable insight and information from these facilitators, and most sessions will involve learning through direct participation and experience. Discussion is encouraged and there is plenty of time for questions and answers.

Participants will also benefit from the supportive and conducive group environment, and can expect to leave feeling inspired, informed and capable of taking more control of their lives.



These retreats are very popular and fill up fast. There will be two 'Overcoming Multiple Sclerosis' retreats held this year. They go for 5 days starting at 11am on a Monday and finishing at 2pm on a Friday. The dates for this year are as follows:

Mon 1 – Fri 5 Jun 2020 and Mon 26 – Fri 30 Oct 2020

For more information please go to gawler.org

our supporters.

MS Auckland is grateful to all organisations, families and individuals who support our work.

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Auckland Council	Lynch & Associates
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Blue Sky Community Trust	Mt Wellington Foundation
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Care on Call	North Shore Presbyterian Hospital Trust
COGS	Novartis Pharmaceuticals
Constellation Communities Trust	Perpetual Guardian
Dragon Community Trust	Pub Charity Limited
Electric Bikes NZ/Smartmotion	Rehabilitation Welfare Trust
Foundation North	Rob Webber & Associates
Four Winds Foundation	Roche
Furley Digital	Rod Milner Motors
Harcourts Cooper & Co	Rotary Club of Newmarket
Hugo Foundation	Sanofi
ILS	Southern Trust
IT Performance	St. John's Rotary Club
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For more information visit www.msakl.org.nz



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Individual treatment response to **TYSABRI** between individual patients may vary. The content of this ad does not constitute medical advice. Prescribers are cautioned to use their own professional judgement and consult any other necessary or appropriate sources prior to making clinical judgements for individual patients. For patients, this ad does not replace advice from healthcare providers. Patients should consult their treating healthcare professional with any questions on the use of **TYSABRI**. Any adverse events or product complaints can be reported directly to Biogen by calling 0800 852 289. Alternatively, you can email Biogen at medinfo-aunz@biogen.com if you have a Medical Enquiry, at TPCAustralia@biogen.com if you have a product complaint, or at PVAsiaPacific@biogen.com if you are reporting an adverse event.

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