FRIENDS,

Welcome to the spring 2019 edition of MS News.

This issue focuses on the theme of resilience. MS Ireland’s mission is “To enable and empower people affected by MS to live the life of their choice to their fullest potential”. We hope that the practical information we have compiled for this issue empowers and enables you to develop, strengthen and maintain resilience.

In addition to providing information and an insight into the activities of MS Ireland page 4, MS News aims to give people living with MS and those supporting them the opportunity to have their voices heard. We have personal stories included in this edition which highlight different lives impacted by MS in different ways. You will find the story of Sam Gaines and Sadhbh O’Neill’s creative approach to building resilience on page 12. Susan Carey talks about the role exercise plays in her management of MS on page 25 and Dr Rebecca Maguire gives us her advice on what helps to enhance psychological wellbeing on page 26.

It is important to know the supports available to you and how to reach out when you need to. Information on some of the supports and services that are available through MS Ireland can be found on page 14.

If you have concerns in relation to MS and Brexit, you will find information which might help on page 9. If you have any further questions on any of the topics or issues raised in MS News, please contact Aoife Kirwan, Information, Advocacy and Research Officer – aoifek@ms-society.ie.

2019 will bring us to the end of our Strategic Plan (2015-2019). A Strategic Planning Team has been established. They have been busy reviewing our current strategic plan and gathering relevant information that will help to inform the development of the next plan and focus our priorities. Information on this and the various ways in which we plan to seek input from our members can be found on page 7.

This issue will highlight the Mid-Western Region in the ‘Regions Showcase’ on page 22. An update on activities from the branches can be found in ‘Community News’ on page 19.

We hope you enjoy this issue of MS News. If you have any feedback on MS News or have suggestions for what you would like to see in future issues, please contact the editor Aoife Kirwan on 01 6781600 or by email to aoifek@ms-society.ie.

Ava Battles
CEO
MS Explored

In November, MS Ireland hosted our first event specifically for young people living with MS, between the ages of 18-35. The event welcomed 68 young people to The Davenport Hotel, to hear three guest speakers discuss; ‘Resilience’, ‘Road-mapping for Success’ and ‘Relationships & Intimacy’. This event, which was sponsored by Novartis was also live-streamed to 1,300 viewers on Facebook and Instagram. Students Unions in third-level universities and colleges across the country organised spaces on campus to host a live stream, allowing young people from all corners of Ireland the chance to come together in remote hubs to view the live stream and engage in discussion.

MS Understood Café Roadshow

Following the success of the pop-up MS Understood Café, in November, we packed it onto a bus which visited various locations in Ireland over a 10 day period. The MS Understood Café Roadshow allowed visitors to gain an insight into some of the unexpected challenges that people affected by MS can face by simulating some of the symptoms they may experience. Uneven floor surfaces, a blurry menu board and awkward seating helped to communicate some of the symptoms associated with MS. Both café’s, sponsored by Roche Products (Ireland) and Fleishman Hillard took home the award for ‘Public Health Initiative of the Year’. On hand to accept the award was Karen Hynes. Karen, who was diagnosed with MS in 1998, was one of the MS community members who provided insights into the experience of people living with MS during the planning and development of this project. The MS Understood Café also received a commendation in the second category ‘Patient Education Project of the Year – Pharmaceutical’. The project also received international praise, receiving a Bronze Cannes Lions Award at the Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity.

Awards

The MS Understood Café was a notable project, picking up multiple awards. It was nominated in two categories of the prestigious Irish Healthcare Awards. MS Ireland, in partnership with Roche Products (Ireland) and Fleishman Hillard took home the award for ‘Public Health Initiative of the Year’. On hand to accept the award was Karen Hynes. Karen, who was diagnosed with MS in 1998, was one of the MS community members who provided insights into the experience of people living with MS during the planning and development of this project. The MS Understood Café also received a commendation in the second category ‘Patient Education Project of the Year – Pharmaceutical’. The project also received international praise, receiving a Bronze Cannes Lions Award at the Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity.

Medical Cards for those in receipt of Disability Allowance

In November, Minister for Health Simon Harris and Minister of State for Disability Issues Finian McGrath announced an over 250% increase in the earnings disregard for those in receipt of Disability Allowance, when applying for a medical card. Referencing the ‘Make Work Pay Report’, Minister Harris announced that the medical card assessment process will now disregard earnings up to €22,204 for those in receipt of Disability Allowance. This move was in line with one of the key recommendations outlined by MS Ireland in a submission during the consultation process of the development of the ‘Make Work Pay Report’.

Budget 2019 Health Measures

An announcement from an Tánaiste Leo Varadkar and Minister for Health Simon Harris revealed that from the beginning of April there would be a number of changes enabling more people to access affordable health care. Measures include:

- €10 reduction in the monthly Drugs Payment Scheme threshold from €134 to €124
- 10% increase across all GP Visit Card weekly income thresholds
- Reduction on prescription charges from €2 to €1.50 for all Medical Card holders over the age of 70.

Charter for Patient Involvement in Medicines Assessment and Reimbursement

MS Ireland we delighted to be a signatory of the new ‘Charter for Patient Involvement in Medicines Assessment and Reimbursement’ which was developed by the Irish Platform for Patient Organisations, Science and Industry (IPPOSI). This charter states that;

- Patients call for a strategic commitment to the advance of patient involvement
- Patients need education, training and support to facilitate their involvement
- Patients demand access to information and regular communication
- Patients ask that patient and clinician evidence and input is systematically considered
- Patients want early and sustained engagement across the process
- Patients request the right to review and appeal

IPPOSI describe this charter as a call to action from patient organisations to the Department of Health, the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the National Centre for Pharmacoeconomics (NCPE) to explore the current patient involvement in the process of assessing and reimbursing new medicines in Ireland, and how this can be improved.
Stockton’s Wing Charity Single

Stockton’s Wing have reunited and released a charity single “We Had It All” in aid of MS Ireland. MS Ireland were thrilled to have been chosen as the beneficiaries of proceeds raised through the sale of the charity single. The band visited the MS Care Centre to launch the single, where the delighted audience were treated to a number of songs. Finbar Furey, friend of Stockton’s Wing also stepped up to show his support. The band have shown huge support to MS Ireland. Our most sincere thanks go to them for helping to raise awareness and vital funds which will go directly towards the provision of services provided by MS Ireland. The single is available to download – https://store.cdbaby.com/cd/stocktongswing

Brain Awareness Week

MS Ireland was proud to take part in Brain Awareness Week which took place March 11th – 17th. Brain Awareness Week, organised by the Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI) saw the launch of the new ‘Love Your Brain’ campaign and website – www.loveyourbrain.ie. This website hosts information on; Understanding Your Brain, Keeping Your Brain Healthy, Living with a Neurological Condition and Promoting Brain Research. Actor, Michael Fassbender showed his support for the campaign in a video that was shown at the launch of the week.

Brain Awareness Week saw partner organisations host events all over the country to help raise awareness and to support the week. MS Ireland held two Twitter question and answer sessions with experts. The first saw MS Researcher, Dr Claire McCoy answer MS research related questions that were generated by our community and sent in via Twitter. The second Twitter questions and answers session invited questions from the community on the topic of brain health. These questions were answered by Dr Sabina Brennan. Numerous other MS Ireland events including information sessions, coffee mornings and yoga took place throughout the country.

MS Ireland Strategic Plan

MS Ireland’s current strategic plan is in place until the end of 2019. A strategic planning team has been established to review MS Ireland’s current Strategic Plan (2015-2019) and to engage in a research gathering exercise to identify new goals and objectives for the period 2020-2024. The team of thirteen consist of MS Ireland Board, branch and staff members. The team are currently reviewing and assessing the extent to which MS Ireland’s Strategic Plan 2015-2019 has been implemented and identifying key areas of success and challenges. Having a strategic plan is important as it underpins the work of MS Ireland on a day-to-day basis to ensure that we are all on track to achieving our objectives as an organisation and working towards a common goal. The creation of a new plan allows us to envision our desired future and set out practical terms to achieve this.

Input from our members will be central to the development of the new strategic plan. We are planning to consult with a range of key stakeholders, including our members. This consultation will help us identify strategic, operational and financial considerations. Input from our members will be sought through surveys, focus groups and conversations between MS Ireland staff and members of MS Ireland. Key findings from this consultation process will assist us in identifying strategic priorities which will help to direct us in developing the next Strategic Plan (2020-2024).

Survey

As part of our consultation process for the redevelopment of our strategic plan, MS Ireland are conducting a survey which we invite anyone affected by MS to complete. This survey aims to capture information which will help us to enhance our understanding of the needs of the MS Community and identify existing gaps in service provision. The results of this survey will provide information that will feed into the development of our new strategic plan.

How to get involved:

Online: This survey will be available online. You will find a link to it on our website – www.ms-society.ie.

Hard Copy: To request a hard copy of this survey please contact MS Ireland National Office - 01 678 1612 and we will post a copy to you.

You can also request a copy from your MS Ireland Regional Office or local branch. If you have any questions please contact Aoife – aoife@ms-society.ie

Care Centre Business Case

On October 3rd, MS Ireland presented the MS Care Centre Business Case to TDs and Senators in Leinster House. The MS Care Centre is a state-of-the-art respite facility. Admitting and welcoming 400 people annually, the Care Centre not only provides people living with MS and their caregivers a break but delivers a range of therapeutic services, neurological assessments and social activities. Due to decreased income, the Care Centre only opens 40 weeks per year. MS Ireland are requesting a further €600,000 in annual investment due to the increased demand on the service. This would see the Care Centre open 350 days per year and provide an extra 1,128 bed-nights annually.

MS Ireland were delighted with the level of support shown by the representatives who attended this briefing. We thank all of the representatives who showed their support. However, the additional funding is yet to be secured. In the last edition of MS News, we invited to write to your local representatives seeking their support on this matter. We would like to thank each of you who took action on this and made this contact. Your involvement and action makes a huge difference and this was shown by the number of representatives who came along to the briefing to hear about the centre. We encourage all of you to continue contacting your local representatives. If you would like a template letter to personalise and send please contact Aoife – aoife@ms-society.ie.

Ocrevus (Ocrelizumab)

In January, 2018 Ocrevus was granted a licence by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) for the treatment of both relapsing remitting MS and primary progressive MS. Negotiations between the HSE and developer of Ocrevus are ongoing. MS Ireland will continue to advocate on this matter until people living with MS who would benefit from receiving this medication can access it.
Local and European Parliament Elections

With Local Authority and European Parliament Elections around the corner, now is the time to raise local issues with candidates seeking your vote. MS Ireland are members of the Disability Federation of Ireland, DFI and the Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI). We are supporting their campaigns to make disability and neurology top priorities for candidates in both the Local Authority and European Parliament Elections. We are asking you to get involved too.

Local Authority Elections

Accessibility: Are there accessibility issues in your area? Are there uneven pathways? Are there pedestrian lights that don’t give you adequate time to cross the road? Think about the accessibility issues you face locally. Ask your local authority candidates to commit to ensuring local public services and buildings are accessible for people who live with a disability.

Participation: Are you aware if people living with disabilities are involved with current decision-making structures locally? Can your local candidate tell you about Public Participation Networks? Ask your candidate to commit to ensure that people living with disabilities are encouraged to take part in local decision making.

Planning: Is your local candidate aware of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD)? Do they know what changes need to be made locally to comply with this convention? Ask your candidate to commit to ensuring that your local authority publishes its implementation plan for the UNCRPD by 2020.

Don’t forget to mention the MS Care Centre Business Case.

In addition to having the power to influence local change, candidates for local authority often have the capacity to raise issues with TD’s and Senators. If a candidate asks for your vote, please make them aware of the MS Ireland Business Case and ask them to raise the issue with Elected Local Representatives. Information on the Business Case can be found on page 7. The Care Centre Business Case can be downloaded from our website – www.ms-society.ie.

European Elections

European Parliament hopefuls are being asked to pledge support in a number of key areas;

Accessibility & Equality: Ask European Parliament candidates to commit to making products, services and infrastructure accessible to people with disabilities and to stop discrimination. Ask European Parliament candidates to commit to working at and EU level to ensure equitable access to treatments, services and supports for people with neurololgical conditions.

Investment: Ask European Parliament candidates to support the investment of European funds in persons with disabilities.

Support: Ask European Parliament candidates to support the aims and objectives of the Members of European Parliament (MEP) interest group on Brain, Mind and Pain. Ask your European Parliament candidate to work at EU level to increase awareness of neurological conditions as a major public health and social care issue.

Ask candidates to commit to their support on Twitter using #DisabilityVotesCount and #LoveYourBrain2019

Further information
www.disability-federation.ie
www.nai.ie

MS and Brexit

The United Kingdom (UK) is due to leave the European Union (EU). This departure referred to as Brexit, will result in some change and possible disruption initially. We have looked at some of the questions you may have in relation to how Brexit may impact your healthcare.

Will a no-deal Brexit affect the supply of medicines?
A number of products come from or travel through the UK. Companies have been reviewing existing arrangements and supply routes and are considering alternative routes if necessary. In the event of a no-deal Brexit, Irish and UK ports may no longer work as efficiently together. It may be more practical and efficient for supplies to come via a different route. As we are unsure of whether or not this is a necessary step, work has been ongoing to ensure that if this is the case, we are prepared. The Health Service Executive (HSE), the Department of Health, the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) and the pharmaceutical industry have been working together to identify, reduce and deal with any potential issues that may arise in relation to the steady flow of medications into Ireland in the event of a no-deal Brexit. To date, no major issues have been identified.

Should I stockpile medications?
No, there is no need to stockpile medication. Extra stocks are built into the supply chain. In fact, changing your regular behaviour in relation to when and how you obtain your medication may in itself cause an otherwise avoidable issue. If you are concerned you could speak to your pharmacist for reassurance.

Will the supply of medical goods be disrupted?
The HSE has said that they are reviewing the supply chain of their suppliers, reducing the risk of disruption and putting alternatives in place where necessary. Suppliers have been asked to provide extra stock on top of a three month supply which is what is normally maintained. This should cover any potential delays in the delivery of stock should the issue arise.

I live in a border area and access UK health services, will my care be affected?
Service level agreements between the Irish and UK Governments exist in order to provide cross-border healthcare. Both governments have committed to continuing the existing agreements.

If I am visiting the UK, can I still access UK healthcare?
Regardless of whether there is a deal or not, Irish and UK citizens who live in, work in or visit the other state will have the right to access healthcare in it.

Will healthcare professional qualifications awarded in the UK be recognised?
The EU Directive on Professional Qualifications governs specific qualifications awarded in the EU. After Brexit, UK qualifications will no longer be recognised under this directive. UK qualifications awarded before Brexit will not be affected. Qualifications seeking recognition in Ireland which are awarded after Brexit will be processed in the same manner as qualifications awarded in current non-EU countries.

Will Brexit impact MS Research?
The EU funds MS research across the continent, including the UK. In the event of a no-deal Brexit, funding for agreed EU research projects will continue until the end of 2020. When the UK becomes a non-EU country, it should still be eligible to participate in EU research programmes.

Further information:
www.hse.ie/brexit/
www.emsp.org/news-messages/brexit-and-ms/
Managing Stress and Building Resilience

Karen Belshaw, Stress Management Ireland.

What is Resilience? Why do some people appear more resilient than others? How can we get it? These are just some of the frequently asked questions about stress and resilience.

Resilience is the ability to adapt in the face of adversity. It is a skill that some have naturally, but everyone can learn.

The first step in becoming more resilient is to know yourself... know your traits and responses, know your mindset and attitude. Before you change anything you need first to be aware of what is happening, recognise the thought process and recognise the behaviour that follows.

Stress can often challenge our health and wellbeing, leading to accidents, anxiety, relationship breakdown, job change, cardiovascular disease, depression, mood swings, crying spells, insomnia, digestive upsets, panic attacks, forgetfulness, negative attitude, feelings of hopelessness and ultimately losing confidence in our ability to cope. When we are able to recognise our stressors and how it manifests in us, or have confidence to seek help or talk to a friend then we are ready to manage stress and build resilience.

Resilience involves giving time and attention to The 5 Zones:
- Work Life Balance
- Sleep
- Diet
- Exercise
- Mental Coping Skills

Mindset: You can re-train your thinking patterns to become more positive. A positive attitude brings energy and excitement to a situation. It has a positive physiological effect, promoting natural chemicals in your body such as serotonin and endorphins. The majority of adults have between 65%-75% negative thoughts in one day. It’s a habit that is difficult to break, but within six weeks you can change your mindset. So how does it work? The Positive Events Diary... sometimes known as a Gratitude Diary, involves a notebook and pen, and each evening for six consecutive weeks you bullet point anything positive that happened to you that day. Some days you may have one bullet point, other days you may have 10! Be honest with yourself and keep to the facts. This exercise takes a mere 60 seconds so you cannot say you don’t have time for it!

Mindful Moments: I love this exercise! You can choose the long version or the short version. The long version: Each day treat yourself to 20 minutes of time out! That’s it! Simply do nothing for 20 minutes. Take the time to think, to breath, to simply sip a cup of tea without pressures and duties. The short version: 3 minutes connecting to your breath. Close your eyes and notice your breathing. Don’t change it or judge it, just notice it. Notice how your body reacts and moves, notice how it is to be still. Keep the focus on the breath.

Exercise: Aim to do 30 minutes of exercise every day. It will help you physically and mentally relax. Absorbing the daylight is important too, so try to have a walk outside in the fresh air.

Diet: Plan your diet and make sure you are following a recommended plan such as the food pyramid, with adequate amounts of vegetables, fruits, proteins, grains, vitamins, minerals, and water. Hydration is essential to a healthy diet and helps flush toxins that can develop in times of stress. Ask for advice on healthy eating if you are uncertain.

SLEEP: It is essential to get enough sleep each night. Your brain and body need time to recharge and repair. Make your bedroom a calm and inviting place to rest. Make sure your bedroom is a cool, dark and quiet place to sleep. Your brain and body need time to recharge and repair. Make your bedroom a calm and inviting place to rest. Make sure your bedroom is a cool, dark and quiet place to sleep.

Sit or lie comfortably in a quiet place.
1. Curl both fists, tightening biceps and forearms, hold for 5 seconds, relax immediately. Repeat.
2. Inhale deep breath through nose, exhale through mouth.
3. Wrinkle up forehead, and all muscles of face, squinting eyes, lips pursed, tongue pressed against roof of mouth, raise shoulders to ears, hold for 5 seconds, relax immediately. Repeat.
4. Inhale deep breath through nose, exhale through mouth.
5. Press your shoulder blades together and tighten your abdominal muscles, hold for 5 seconds, relax immediately. Repeat.
6. Inhale deep breath through your nose and exhale through your mouth.
7. Straighten your legs, flex feet and toes, tighten thigh muscles and buttocks, tighten arm and calf muscles, hold for 5 seconds, relax immediately. Repeat.
8. Inhale deep breath through your nose and exhale through your mouth.
9. Sit still for 1 minute and notice the different sensations occurring in your muscles. Feel calm and relaxed.
10. Repeat exercise if you feel it necessary.

Work Life Balance: Make work part of your life, not all of it! Schedule and manage your time, putting priorities first. If you fill the day with incidentals there is no time left for the important things. Your wellness plan is a daily routine that needs to be scheduled into your Work Life Balance.

To conclude remember these Top Tips:
- Focus on what you can do, not on what you can’t!
- A regular routine sets a mood
- Take 60 seconds to practise your favourite coping skill everyday
- Be Mindful, not Mind Full!

Further information:
www.stress-management-ireland.com
www.ms-society.ie
The past couple of years have been an unknown and sometimes very bleak and frightening new landscape for us. We have had to find our own way through it with very little guidance. We live in a death phobic society and there is no easy way of speaking about what is happening to us, we have not been taught the language of grief or how to let go. For us, resilience is having the courage to show up regardless of what is happening. It’s about being present to what is happening. It’s about being authentic and not sugar coating or being negative.

These days I am Sam’s voice. I am learning to bear witness to Sam’s life. To be the keeper of this time for him, his memory for the times he forgets. I don’t need to do anything, just to be present. This is the ultimate gift we can give each other and the most difficult. Without me, Sam could not be at home, he could not have a voice to speak his truth.

During a particularly difficult time in 2017, as a way of helping Sam, I created a WhatsApp Diary for him. This diary opened a door for him to express himself. It created a bridge between our very different worlds. In the beginning, we had no idea how this diary would unfold but it turned out to be a lifeline for Sam and a deeply touching and inspirational experience for everybody involved.

It was through the diary that Sam started drawing again. Sam had stopped painting in 2015 when he lost the dexterity in his hands. He still had very little energy or use of his hands but over the months, the diary started to be filled with his artwork, which grew in strength and confidence. What I witnessed in Sam’s new artwork totally blew me away. In the beginning, his drawings were like scribbles. His drawings evolved into work that is comparable to his landscape paintings days. His drawings are exquisite. Now I see so clearly how creativity heals, gives meaning and purpose to one’s life. For us, creativity has been our light through these dark times. It has become our language through which we can tell our story because art transcends the mundane and speaks of the human spirit.

In 2018, as a follow-on from the Diary, I created a Patreon website which brought both our artwork together for the first time. The website chronicles our journey through our visual artwork and written essays. For the past two years, Sam has been under the care of Milford Hospice, as part of National Palliative Care Week we were asked to tell our story by creating an exhibition of Sam’s drawings, my sculptures and our written essays. The exhibition is called “There is Only Love” and is touring Ireland.

There is no rhyme or reason to life. All we have control over is our response to the situations that arise. The important thing isn’t about trying to work out why things occur, it’s about discovering who you are in the face of everything that happens to you, the good as well as the bad, the beauty and the terror. Of making meaning instead of trying to find meaning in one’s life.

We have learnt to reach deep within our core for hidden resources and strengths. Illness and death are not failure. It takes courage to stop, to speak from the heart. It is hard to understand that by embracing death we are in fact embracing life. It has been in the darkest of times that the most inspiring ideas have bloomed. When everything that you thought defined you as a person is gone, when everything has been stripped bare, all that is left is love. This is our time of the heart.

For more information on our work:

- www.samuelgaine.com
- www.sadbhoneill.ie
- www.patreon.com/samandsadbh
- www.sadhbhoneill.ie
Nutrition and Resilience

Conor Kerley, PhD, BSc, H. Dip, MINDI

What could food possibly have to do with our mental well-being and resilience? It turns out that it’s probably a lot! The food we eat (or don’t eat) influences just about everything.

One recent study found that consumption of whole grains, vegetables, fruits, legumes was associated with psychological resilience. A separate large study similarly found that a better diet was associated with greater resilience and that even small improvements in diet quality can be associated with better psychological resilience. In other words, a greater ability to cope with stress.

How could diet possibly influence resilience?

You may have heard of the gut microbiome. This refers to the complex, dynamic network of micro-organisms living with the gut. It is now known that this microbiome contributes to brain function! This is called the gut-brain axis. It is well appreciated that diet affects the gut microbiome and we now know that that gut microbiome affects the brain!

This suggests that what we eat can influence our brain, including resilience. In fact, Italian researchers wrote that “high calorie high-animal-fat Western diets change gut microbiota composition towards dysbiosis. Subsequent intestinal inflammation leads to leakage of the gut barrier, disruption of the blood-brain barrier, and neuro-inflammation. Conversely, a vegetarian diet, rich in fibre, is coherent with gut eubiosis and a healthy condition”. What this means is that fatty meats and snacks can change the gut causing inflammation in there as well as inside the brain! On the other hand, a diet rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans can create a healthy gut.

Interest regarding the gut in MS is growing all the time. Interesting an animal study actually showed that dietary fibre could reduce the risk of MS and neurological inflammation. Further, a recent human study even found lower relapse and disability rates in those on a high vegetable and high fibre diet. These results are great because they are consistent with 90 years of research on MS and nutrition!

Two major mechanisms contributing to MS are inflammation and oxidative stress. Oxidative stress is damage caused by particles called free radicals (oxidative stress can be visible such as an apple turning brown or a nail becoming rusty). Many factors can contribute to excess oxidative stress, including stress, pollution, tobacco, poor sleep, unhealthy foods etc. We can combat excess inflammation and oxidative stress by decreasing or avoiding inflammatory foods (e.g. fatty meats) and foods which produce free radicals (e.g. burnt foods) but also by increasing foods which lower inflammation (e.g. berries, green vegetables) and are high in antioxidants (e.g. colourful fruits and vegetables). My research team and I are actively formulating nutrition strategies to help decrease inflammation and oxidative stress, including within the brain…watch this space.

In the meantime, probably best to skip the fatty meats, butter and cheese and load up on healthful fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains.

Get in touch:

facebook.com/conorkerleyhealth
twitter.com/ConorKerley

www.ms-society.ie
20th Annual General Meeting (59th AGM since MS Ireland’s foundation)

Dear Member,

In an effort to reduce costs and with the passing of our Constitution in 2016, we are now able to send AGM notices to you by email. However, we need your consent that you will access the accompanying AGM financial documentation on our website instead of by post. We will be contacting you by email or phone in the coming weeks to seek your agreement on this and to get your email address. Alternatively please complete the attached slip and return to Alice McKeon, MS Ireland, National Office, 80 Northumberland Road, Dublin 4.

We would like to thank those members who have already consented to accessing the AGM financial documentation on our website.

In this issue of MS News, the call for motions and board nominations are advertised below. The AGM legal notice will be sent to each member by email (where we have an email address for you) or by post along with the next issue of MS News.

The Annual General Meeting of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland, at which Board members are elected, normally takes place on the same weekend as the annual conference which this year is scheduled to take place on Saturday, 21st September in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Limerick (time to be confirmed).

The results of the vote for the board vacancies and motions, if any, plus the council’s nomination to the board will be announced at the AGM.

The procedures for motions and board nominations are listed hereunder.

Every registered member is entitled to a vote. For those unable to attend the AGM, proxy papers will be available on our website three weeks prior to the AGM and must be returned to National Office, MS Ireland, 80 Northumberland Road, Dublin 4 before 5.00 p.m. on Thursday, 19th September 2019.

Ava Battles
Company Secretary

Motions
Any member or branch may forward a motion to the Governance Committee who will decide on their acceptability for putting before the AGM. Closing date for receipt of motions is Friday, 16th August 2019.

Call for Board Members
We are currently seeking candidates including candidates with MS research or community development experience to go on to our panel of potential Board members. Members, Branches, Council, the Board and staff may propose candidates. All nominations must be proposed and seconded by Members.

Nominations of retiring Board members seeking re-election must be submitted to the Nominations Committee. Other nominations may be submitted either directly to the Nominations Committee, or alternatively, under the provisions of Article 56 of MS Ireland’s Constitution, nominations may also be submitted directly to the Registered Office (MS Ireland’s National Office, 80 Northumberland Road, Dublin 4) and marked for the attention of the Company Secretary.

The Nominating Committee will review all nominations, except those submitted to the Company Secretary under Article 56, and will recommend to the Board candidates to go forward for election by the Members at the AGM. Any Member nominated via Article 56 will have their candidacy put before the Members at the AGM.

The Nominating Committee will take into account the range of skills necessary for board membership and where possible, the geographical spread, the gender balance, the experience and the qualifications of the candidates.

All candidates must be in compliance with the requirements for Directors as set out in the Companies Act 2014, the Charities Act 2009 and MS Ireland’s Constitution and will be asked to sign a declaration to that effect. The Nominations Committee, on behalf of the Board, needs to be satisfied that no candidate, who legally cannot serve as a Board member, or who has been disqualified or restricted from being a Board member, is put before the Members at the AGM.

Further details and nomination forms are available on the website.

Please return slip to The Membership Officer, MS Ireland, 80 Northumberland Road, Dublin 4.
ANNUAL AWARDS

National Awards

MS Ireland’s Annual National Awards were presented during the ‘Living Well with MS National Conference’ on September 22nd. The awards were presented by Ms. Marcella Flood, Chairperson of the Board of MS Ireland.

Person of the Year Award

Marcella Flood and the McKeon/Treacy Family

Mary McKeon and the McKeon/Treacy Family were the recipients of the ‘Person of the Year’ award. Mary is the Chairperson of the South Dublin Branch. She built up the Branch Committee to become an active and engaged group who foster inclusion and respect for all. It was due to Mary’s encouragement that the Branch to date have donated €20,000 towards research.

Mary and her family have been huge supporters of MS Ireland, taking part in fundraising activities including marathons, the Camino walk and a skydive.

Congratulations to Mary and the McKeon/Treacy Family.

Carer of the Year Award

The ‘Carer of the Year’ award was presented to Carmel and PJ O’Brien. Carmel and PJ care for their niece, Carol, who was diagnosed with MS when she was 17 years old. This very caring duo also take Carol to MS meetings, coffee mornings and fundraising events which she enjoys.

Congratulations to Carol and PJ.

Volunteers of the Year

The ‘Volunteers of the Year’ award was given to Duncan Pratt and Carol Millington Pratt. Over the years, Duncan and Carol who are described as the ‘dynamic duo’ have generously given their time and skills to the South Mayo Branch. Carol, the Assistant Secretary of the branch, is efficient and accurate. She has set a very high standard in the roles she has held on the committee. Duncan is the Chairperson of the branch. He is dedicated and witty. Because of their involvement on the Committee, they make participating at meetings and events fun and rewarding.

Congratulations to Duncan and Carol.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Limerick

Holiday Mobile Home Rental

The Limerick Branch have a mobile home available for rent in Kilkee, Co. Clare. The wheelchair accessible mobile home is fitted with a ramp and includes two large bedrooms and a large bathroom. For information on booking, please contact Aoife - aoifek@ms-society.ie

South Kerry

The South Kerry Branch have moved from Cheshire House, Killarney to Beech Road Carpark, Killarney (previously St. Vincent De Paul Donation Centre). Wednesday Therapies continue from 09.30-12.30. Keep up to date with local news & upcoming events by visiting the MS South Kerry Facebook page!

Listowel

The Listowel Branch held their annual St. Valentine’s Day Coffee Morning. They would like to thank all those who supported it.

MS Ireland’s 2019 Annual National Awards

It is a great honour to be nominated for the national awards so we would encourage Branches, individual members and staff members to nominate members who they feel deserve recognition. The nominations for this year’s Annual Awards are now open. Our Annual Awards are the Society’s way of recognising the contribution many of our members make within their families, local communities and MS Ireland.

There are 3 awards and the categories are:

• MS Person of the Year
• MS Care/Helper of the Year
• MS Volunteer of the Year

Full details and Nomination forms are available on the website or from National Office, tel. 01-6781608. We would recommend you to return your nomination forms to National Office now. The closing date for receipt of nomination forms is Friday, 16th August 2019.

The annual national awards for 2019 will be presented at the National Conference in Limerick on 20th September 2019.

St. Valentine’s Day Coffee Morning Supporters
COMMUNITY NEWS

Cork
The Cork branch sent along some photos from recent branch activities including their Christmas party, fundraising quiz and a fishing competition.

Longford
The Longford branch were beneficiaries of a number of fundraisers over the last few months. The big one being the ‘Christmas Day Run’. This is an annual event between Newtowncashel and Lanesboro in Co Longford. This event is organized by Brigid Mullooly and the Flood family with the help of Peter Hanley Motors. The branch cannot thank these people enough for the huge sums raised over the last quarter of a century. This year alone raised over €6400. Other fundraisers included a Bungee jump by branch member Donal Chapman, a comedy sketch by branch member Stephen Garland, a floral arrangement presentation by Longford Flower Club.

Advocacy in the Digital World
Ciara O’Meara
Take approximately 50 people, all under the age of 35, from across Europe and all living with a neurological condition. Mix them up across 8 tables, in a hotel in the center of Brussels and what do you get? You get 50 strangers, with different stories and different experiences, yet all sharing a common theme: Advocacy.

In November of last year, I was extremely fortunate to be awarded a place on the European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA) workshop on Advocacy in the Digital World in Brussels. The workshop stemmed from EFNA’s survey in 2018 of Young Europeans with Neurological Conditions. The survey identified the three key issues facing 18-35 year olds with neurological conditions in Europe today as:

1. Access to Medication/Treatment
2. Isolation
3. Stigma

Of those who took part in the survey, only 38% were members of patient organizations, 18.58% used digital tools which helped with the management of their neurological condition (reference was made to calendar, Google, Facebook rather than to specific applications) and some of the most important words/phrases to emerge on changes which could improve life included understanding, awareness and support.

The focus of the workshop was to discuss how best to influence change in each of our communities, how to build an online community, contribute to the development of online tools and apps which could improve the management of each neurological condition and how each individual can use the power of their own story telling to raise awareness.

We were very fortunate to meet with a number of experienced online advocates on Day 1 of the workshop. Emma Lawton, who was diagnosed with Parkinson’s Disease at the age of 29, devised the online forum of PD365, where each day of the year she posted a 5 min video, discussing the ups and downs of life with Parkinson’s. George Pepper, founder of Shift.MS, spoke of the importance of an online community, where people can access support and appropriate resources. Louis Gustin, spoke of his campervan journey across Europe- the goal of which was to raise awareness and understanding of stroke and aphasia.

Day 2 of the workshop provided an insight into the make up of the European Union and the decision making process that each policy must go through before it is enacted. We were introduced to both current and developing applications for cognitive disorders and brain disease and to online digital health apps which facilitate the recording of symptoms, relapses and intervention benefits.

This workshop highlighted for me the importance of the digital world in neurological conditions. The best people to advocate for a disease are those living with it on a daily basis. Individuals have a story and it is their own unique story to tell and to share. By sharing our story, we can advocate for others, advocate for better and advocate for awareness and understanding across the wider community. Digital Health is the way forward and, as neurology advocates, we are the vital cog in the development and effective management of the digital wheel.

Further information:
www.efna.net
#brainlifegoals

Ciara O’Meara at the EFNA workshop
In 2019 we introduced 2 new programmes to our portfolio. The ‘Step it Up’ is a physiotherapist-led exercise and education programme that is designed to improve symptoms through knowledge, exercise participation and coaching. It is primarily designed for people who are currently inactive, have minimal walking problems and are relatively recently diagnosed. The ‘Better Balance’ programme is a Physiotherapist-led exercise and education programme that is designed to improve balance and reduce falls. It is suited to people who have recently experienced a fall or who are afraid of falling and who use a stick or sometimes a rollator. Both programmes are underway in Limerick and Clare.

As well as promoting physical activity, we also advocate the restorative practices of chair-based yoga and guided meditation. These community education programmes are supported in part, through funding from the Limerick and Clare Local Education and Training Board.

Providing quality information is a big part of what we offer to the MS Community in the Mid West. We endeavour to work with statutory health service professionals in delivering information so that the MS Community will better appreciate how to access services when needed. In the recent past we have provided information sessions in various venues in across the region on Bladder and Continence and MS and Diet. We also ran a session providing information and guidance to parents with MS in how to communicate with their children in relation to their condition. In 2019 we look forward to hosting more sessions covering topics such as cognition, assistive technologies and providing some group support to those newly diagnosed.

Voluntary Branches

There are four local branches in the Mid West Region. In Limerick, West Limerick, Clare and North Tipperary. These branches provide an important social function to the MS Community in the Mid West and provide vital funds to support the provision of services and programmes. Branches are always on the look out for new volunteers to support both their fundraising and social activities.

Physical Activity Programmes/ Community Education

Providing opportunities to encourage physical activity is big part of the services that we provide in the Mid West. We are all very aware of the positive outcomes arising out of sustained physical activity. Similar to other regions, we provide physiotherapist led exercise programmes in Limerick city, Roscrea, Thurles, Ennis and Kilrush. These sessions run in various locations and timings. We also run pool-based exercise programmes.

In 2019 we introduced 2 new programmes to our portfolio. The ‘Step it Up’ and ‘Better Balance’ programmes.
Resilience for Healthy Physical Activity Habits

Prof. Susan Coote

In this issue of MS News with the theme of resilience I aim to give you some practical steps to increase your resilience to adopt or maintain a healthy exercise habit. I like to think of resilience as the ability to keep going when barriers to achieving your goal get in the way. When your goal is to adopt a healthy exercise or physical activity habit there are many barriers for people with MS. Overcoming these barriers is important and there are some practical things that you can do to increase your resilience so that your exercise routine can survive those inevitable “bad days” or “bad weeks”.

The first step is to understand what the benefits of being active are – extensive research now exists to suggest that improvements in fatigue, mood, walking, balance and strength are possible with exercise. Those who exercise at the MS guideline (two 30 minute walks and two strength training sessions for major muscle groups) can expect to see improvements in all of the symptoms I mention above. Contrastingly, if you are inactive you are at increased risk of secondary complications with circulatory systems, reduced strength and balance, obesity and over-weight, and poor mental health. They say that “sitting is the new smoking” so any movement that you can do is better than sitting still.

The second step is to set goals. A goal is SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed. So this means that “I want to get fitter” is not a goal, but an idea; the goal would be “I want to be fit enough to walk 30 minutes, twice weekly, by the first of June”. The next step is to set a goal for how you are going to achieve that for example, “I will start with a 10 minute walk and gradually increase by 5 minutes per week”. This can also form part of an action plan that you commit to each week.

The third step is to find things that motivate you and give you confidence. The good news is this can be found from many sources – from people with MS in the media or that you know that are seeing the benefits of being active, by seeing improvements in yourself or remembering what it felt like when you were active before, by finding new friends through social opportunities that exercise brings. Find a buddy who will encourage you to keep going, who will bring you the water bottle not a bar of chocolate.

The fourth step is to keep an exercise log – write down what you do and how you feel during and after that exercise. Learn what is too much and what is manageable. Listen to your body, find what is right for you with the symptoms you have now. When starting to exercise or returning to exercise after a long time it is important to start small and gradually increase. Jumping straight back in to a 30 minute run may mean that you feel exhausted, then disappointed that you feel exhausted and annoyed that you can’t do what you wanted. However starting with a 10 minute walk, then increasing by 5 minutes per week to 30 minutes, then adding 30 second jogs interspersed is likely more achievable.

The final step is to acknowledge the barriers that you face, and the things that will make it possible. For the barriers, which are inevitable, the key is to have a plan. So if you have a bad day where fatigue means you are headed to the couch, what are you going to do when that fatigue is improved? If rain on Monday means you don’t want to walk outside, is there something indoors that you can do instead? Face the barriers head on and make a plan to continue.

Most importantly enjoy being active, the sense of achievement that it brings, how it makes you feel, the social connections you make and the health benefits that it will lead to in the long term.

Exercise and MS

Susan Carey

I decided to take a stroll along Kerry’s beautiful Fenit Pier today. I took a moment to appreciate my journey thus far. Looking at the short path on my right, I reminisced on the days I struggled to make my way to the end. I remember using crutches and clenching my fists in frustration because this was so difficult for me. Fast-forward some years and I now walk with ease down the long pier and that difficult short path, as a newly qualified personal trainer.

I am 28 years old and have been living with MS for half of my life. Every person living with MS is different but one thing I believe we all have in common is the ability to drive forward. I have chosen to go down the path of personal training because it is something that also drives me forward. I am passionate about this area and feel that it helps me and those that I work with. MS is not a path I chose for myself, but personal training is. On a daily basis I am asked “How do you keep going?” or I am told that I am over-doing it. I know my body and while I am aware of my limits, I choose to challenge them.

Each day we face different obstacles, tingles, spasms, cognitive issues, balance... the list is endless. If we stopped to dwell, we would never live. When I was diagnosed at 14 years of age I remember my branch physiotherapist discussing the benefits of exercise. At the time I did not pay this much attention. I was an active child but as my condition progressed I was no longer able to take part in team sports. Time went on and a few years later I joined a gym and began resistance training. Initially, I needed assistance to get up the gym stairs and to get on and off various machines. Within a relatively short period of time, I noticed the benefit this training was having on my MS, both physically and mentally. When I relapsed I rebounded faster. Symptoms I had experienced on a daily basis like fatigue began to diminish. Cortisol levels decreased, endorphins were released and I learned how to enjoy my life again.

There is no cure for MS, yet. The knowledge of that can be very disheartening but it has been helpful for me to look at ways I can help to manage it. Using exercise and a positive mindset I feel more in control.

Looking back, I don’t think I expected to be where I am today. I did not think that the girl struggling to navigate the short path to the pier would end up being a personal trainer. I did not let the knowledge that I live with MS stop me, in actual fact the idea of sharing the positive benefits of exercise with other people was motivation for me to head down this career path. I want to help people of all levels of ability to progress and enrich their lives for the better.

Life can be overwhelming at times, especially when MS is part of the mix. I don’t shy away from setting big goals and have found that doing little things each day as part of a daily routine helps me in striving towards the bigger things. For me, I believe that stretching for 5 minutes, writing a diary entry and exercising help me to maintain my mental and physical health, and I never forget to share a smile with the world.

Get In Touch:

Susancarey33
The Importance of Resilience when Living with MS  
Dr Rebecca Maguire

As a lecturer and researcher in psychology, I am interested in understanding the factors that enhance people’s wellbeing in their everyday lives and, in particular, in the lives of those with chronic illness. Over the past few years, for example, I have been engaged in a number of research projects investigating the quality of life of cancer survivors - work which has given me an insight into, and probably a greater appreciation of, the importance of maintaining good psychological wellbeing when coping with illness.

Clearly anyone living with chronic illness, whether it is MS or another condition, wants to be as well as they possibly can – a view also shared by health care professionals. However, being “well” is often taken to refer simply to how physically healthy or able one is. Psychological wellbeing, in contrast, is less likely to be routinely assessed during a clinical examination, despite the fact that it is known to be an essential component of quality of life.

So, what can enhance psychological wellbeing in those of us living with MS? There are a variety of things that can help, including, for example, maintaining good social support networks and access to appropriate health-related information. Another critical factor, however, seems to be a person’s level of resilience.

Some research which I am currently conducting suggests that resilience becomes even more important in people who have limitations imposed by illness. This implies that, the more severely limited one is in their daily life, the more influential resilience is in maintaining good psychological wellbeing - a finding which may have implications for many PwMS.

Recently, I have been reflecting on what has helped me to adapt to MS since I was diagnosed. I feel that developing resilience has been crucial in enabling me to maintain a good sense of wellbeing. My initial diagnosis triggered me to change my lifestyle and learn as much as I could about MS, however, at the same time, I concealed my condition from others, determined to “carry on regardless”. While this was an example of resilient behaviour that worked well for me in the past, I now view resilience as being more open and accepting about my MS.

Resilience, I believe, is more than just surviving. It is about learning and adapting to whatever life throws at you! Resilient behaviour can thus take on many different forms, including asking for help or support when a problem cannot be overcome alone. A final word however is to remember that it is also ok not to feel resilient all the time. We all have days that are tough. How’s Your Mental Fitness?

Eileen Hopkins,  
Pain Management Coach and Registered General Nurse

You do not have to be physically fit to be mentally fit. Many people would say that their mental fitness increased following a serious life crisis, illness or event.

The three main areas of mental fitness are;
- Self-motivation and confidence
- Self-discipline and habits
- Self-resilience

For the purposes of this article I am going to focus on self-resilience.

Resilience is like any other fitness in that you need to practice it regularly so that it is there when you need it.

There are things that we can all look at to help us to get back into the driving seat of our own lives... We all have self-limiting beliefs; these connect us with the world around us.

We get these from several sources such as our parents, role models, education, culture, organisation or group, our experience, our pain memory and our emerging role models, education, culture, organisation or group.

The idea here is to increase your awareness. There are times when our limiting beliefs keep us from harm and are worth keeping, however, many of us err on the side of perceived safety.

Next time the event or experience presents itself, just see what happens first. Is it the thought? ‘I can’t, just in case.’

What if you changed that thought to… ‘I’m doing this and I’m really going to enjoy it’!

A final reflection: Do you ever wear sunglasses as you go into a dark room? You can’t see anything and fumble around trying to figure out where you are.

This is the same as embracing your world. Your vision becomes so dark at times that you may miss the wonderful things right there before you.

Take my challenge now, lift those shades off now, have a good look around and embrace life!

Get in touch:

Twitter: @RebeccaMaguire
National Advocacy Service

Advocates are people who work with you to understand your options and help you to make a decision. NAS advocates seek to empower people with disabilities to advocate for themselves when decisions are being made that affect them.

NAS advocates can help people with disabilities have their voices heard, and express their opinions to services, authorities, family and friends. NAS advocates can help in meetings, with writing letters and emails and by making phone-calls. NAS advocates are there to make sure that a person and their views are at the centre of the decision or process that is going to affect their life. NAS advocates are also there to assist people who are proactively making change in their life. For example, NAS advocates can assist with applications for particular services, requests for change of services, and moving accommodation etc.

People with disabilities are supported by NAS in relation to lots of issues, such as housing and residential placements, healthcare decisions, personal finances, justice issues and family/parenting/relationship issues.

The vision of NAS is one where people with disabilities can exercise their rights, with the capacity of people with disabilities to making their own decisions equally recognised with orders, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

NAS has approximately full-time, professional 50 staff working across the county to provide advocacy to people with disabilities. In 2017, we engaged in 3,628 pieces of advocacy and information support work, with 852 people receiving full, representative advocacy.

Get in touch
If you, or someone you know, would like help with an issue by working with a NAS advocate, you can call our national line at 0761 07 3000 or email us at info@advocacy.ie

Find out more:
- www.citizensinformationboard.ie/en/services/advocacy/
- www.twitter.com/AdvocacyIreland
- www.facebook.com/AdvocacyIreland/

Fundraising

MS Readathon 2018

8500 young readers and almost 300 schools took part in the 2018 Readathon. In doing so they read more than 80,000 books and raised an amazing €280,000 for people living with MS in Ireland.

Bobby the Bookworm was the newest addition to the Readathon family and we’ll be seeing more of him in 2019. There was great excitement at this year’s launch in the print museum with members of the Leinster Rugby squad and students from the John Scottus School helping to get things off the ground. Quite literally!

Two Dublin schools really made the grade this year with St Finian’s in Sutton raising an incredible €7832.80 and Scoil Bhride in Ranelagh raising a whopping €9775.20 including €600 raised by a sixth form cake sale. Shout out and huge THANK YOU to Panasonic Ireland for supporting our MS Readathon campaign and their generous donation of 30 sets of wireless headphones which were won by 30 lucky students.

Calendar

Our 2019 calendar photography competition was a great success, with hundreds of amateur photographers submitting entries on the theme As Time Goes By. Huge thanks to Novartis for kindly funding our calendar campaign again this year.

Thank you also to our monthly sponsors Tierney’s, Cusack Garvey, Merc partners, The Panel, O’Brien’s, Genomics, KBC, Daysha Dev Ops, Logos Publishing, Mallow Credit Union & Hogan Healthcare.
Kiss Goodbye to MS Ball

It’s back! As if we needed an excuse to get dolled up but what better reason than to raise funds for MS Research. We were so happy with how last year’s ball went, we’re doing it all over again.

As the culmination of the international Kiss Goodbye to MS campaign which runs for the month of May, the Ball will take place on Sat 25th May 2019 at the Morrison Hotel Dublin.

Tickets are €100 each, great value when you consider that not only will you receive a Prosecco reception, four course dinner followed by live music and dancing till the small hours, but also the guarantee of some spectacular dance moves from certain members of the MS Ireland team.

Tickets can be purchased through our online shop on our kissgoodbyetoms.ie website or by contacting Sally directly 01 678 1624.

Upcoming events

- Skydive | 19th May / 23rd June
- Mini Marathon | 2nd June
- Kilkenny Medieval | 14th September
- Hell and back | 15th June
- Slovenia Trek | 8th September
- Dublin City Marathon | 27th October
- New York City Marathon | 8th November

Run with Us

Remember to register for the Women’s Mini Marathon on the 2nd June then, contact us for a fundraising pack and join Team MS Ireland to raise funds and awareness. – Please contact melaniec@ms-society.ie for more information.

If you are thinking of something further afield – you could join Team MS Ireland and run the New York. If you want to try something different why not register for one of the many challenges or come up with your own. Contact melaniec@ms-society.ie for ideas.

Skydive with us

Are you looking for the ultimate adrenaline buzz? If the answer is yes then sign up for our skydive with The Irish Parachute Club on the 24th March, if this doesn’t suit Email melaniec@ms-society.ie for more information, future dates and register your place.

Thank you

Challenges

Thank you to the wonderful people who have taken up many and varied challenges to support Ms Ireland including all the runners who took part in the Dublin City Marathon and raised over 25k; teams who participated in Hell and Back; and groups of ladies who ran in women’s mini marathons up and down the country; and many others who completed wonderful challenges whilst raising funds for MS Ireland.

DOES YOUR COMPANY HAVE A CHARITY OF THE YEAR OR CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PROGRAMME?

If so, we want to hear from you!

Please contact Paul Halpin on paulh@ms-society.ie or 01-678 16 16 to see how you can get your company to work with MS Ireland.

Jordan Trek

Thank you to all the Trekkers who came with us to Jordan – this was a truly fantastic trek along though the Hashemite Kingdom from the Nature Reserve in the North to Wadi Rum in the South.

19th May | 23rd June
2nd June
14th September
15th June
8th September
27th October
8th November

Remember to register for the Women’s Mini Marathon on the 2nd June then, contact us for a fundraising pack and join Team MS Ireland to raise funds and awareness.

– Please contact melaniec@ms-society.ie for more information.

If you are thinking of something further afield – you could join Team MS Ireland and run the New York. If you want to try something different why not register for one of the many challenges or come up with your own. Contact melaniec@ms-society.ie for ideas.

As the culmination of the international Kiss Goodbye to MS campaign which runs for the month of May, the Ball will take place on Sat 25th May 2019 at the Morrison Hotel Dublin.

Tickets are €100 each, great value when you consider that not only will you receive a Prosecco reception, four course dinner followed by live music and dancing till the small hours, but also the guarantee of some spectacular dance moves from certain members of the MS Ireland team.

Tickets can be purchased through our online shop on our kissgoodbyetoms.ie website or by contacting Sally directly 01 678 1624.
Charity Research Ball
Sat 25th May
The Morrison Hotel, Dublin
7pm till late

www.ms-society.ie
E: sallys@ms-society.ie
T: 01 678 1624
RCN: 20007867