

MS Society North East News

Inside this issue:

-2006 Events Calendar - Stem Cell Update

-New Physiotherapy Position

May 2006

1 Church Lane

Carrickmacross

Co. Monaghan

Phone: (042) 966 4410

Fax: (042) 969 2812

Email: northeast@ms-society.ie

MS Helpline 1850-233-233

www.mssociety.ie

NEW ADVOCACY SERVICE FOR PEOPLE WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS IN THE NORTH EAST

Hi everyone,

My name is Pauline McKenna. I have recently been appointed as the Advocate for people with Multiple Sclerosis in the North East region. This service has been funded by Comhairle and is a *free, confidential, independent and impartial* service. As an MS Advocate, I see my role as empowering people with MS by supporting them to assert their views and claim their entitlements and where necessary to represent and negotiate on their behalf.



This may include:

helping people with MS to **identify** their social service needs,

providing people with MS with **information**,

enabling people with MS to make **informed** decisions

helping people with MS to **access** relevant social services,

enabling people with MS to feel empowered when dealing with social service providers,

supporting people with MS to make a **complaint** or an appeal,

negotiating on behalf of people with MS to service providers,

representing people with MS where required.

Each case is unique and the service is offered on a one to one basis. Some cases will be prioritised based on the urgency of the clients needs e.g. people with MS living rurally and highly disabled with difficulties accessing services, people with MS who have been inappropriately placed for long-term care, people with MS who have been inappropriately placed for respite care, lone parents with MS, people with MS who have concurrent mental health difficulties such as depression.

If you or someone you know are interested in arranging an initial consultation, please do not hesitate to contact me at the address or telephone number above or on my personal email paulinemc@ms-society.ie

I look forward to hearing from you,

Pauline McKenna (MS Advocate).

Teenagers Break Tanagh Centre

Last year 17 young people from the Region came together for an overnight at the Tanagh centre near Cootehill. After a few icebreakers and name association games the children soon settled down to enjoy their opportunity of coming together. After the late night 6 mile walk in the woods, with appropriate spooky stories the children tucked into a well deserved takeaway [a dietician's nightmare!] and fell off to sleep in the early hours!! Excitement and adrenalin soon waned the next morning when they were rudely awoken by Tess singing 'Un Bel Di' followed by a range of outdoor and indoor activities; soakings and cold weather. 'When's the next one?'

This year's Teen Break will take place in Tanagh on Thursday and Friday July 7th and 8th. Please contact the office to book your place asap.

Newly Diagnosed Event

Venue and date to be announced later in year. We will contact all those recently diagnosed with MS. There will be some clinical input which will give an opportunity for questions to be freely asked. The Team will be there to support you and it will also be a time to meet with others and share experiences.

Respite

There are several venues offering respite facilities. Na Driseoga in Navan, Struthán House in Dundalk, St Christophers in Cavan (which takes from the Region). If you are interested in availing of respite please contact the office in the first instance.

Care Assessments

Anyone with MS is entitled to a Health Board Assessment. If you have any queries please contact either Tess or Kevin especially if there has been a change in your condition or other factors which are effecting your well-being.

Aids and Appliances

There is funding available now for anyone requiring the following: Mobility aids or appliances (motorised wheelchairs, adjustable beds, etc.).

Primary Medical Certificates or Medical Card Appeals

If you require any help processing your claim for a PMC or Medical card, please contact the office.

Family Income Supplement

Family Income Supplement (FIS) is a weekly top-up payment for families, including one-parent families, at work on low pay. For more information contact your local Social Welfare Office or the Department of Social and Family Affairs at local 1890 662244 or check out www.welfare.ie or oasis.gov.ie

Financial Matters

It is of critical importance that anyone diagnosed with MS informs their car insurance company. If you have an existing policy the company should not increase your premium because of your MS (if they do, they can be challenged under anti-discrimination legislation- Disability Act). It is also equally important to inform your insurance company in relation to life assurance/mortgage protection if you are diagnosed with MS. **Failure** to disclose this relevant information can invalidate your policies and with regard to car insurance, leave you open to massive claims against you in the event of an accident. If you require more information, please contact the office or directly the Irish Insurance Federation (Paul Holohan or Frank Farrell 01 676 1820).

Research Matters

Stem Cell Treatment for MS

In MS it is hoped that Stem Cell research may be able to be used to repair or prevent damage in the central nervous system. It is hoped that it can do this by repairing damage to the brain, myelin sheath and enhance the immune system to prevent damage. However, this area of research is still experimental and expert opinion suggests that it will be some time before Stem Cell Therapy becomes available for people with MS.

If you are interested in more information, please see the following websites:

www.mstrust.org.uk, www.ms-ireland.ie, www.iicn.ie

Talking Therapy to Support Relationships in MS

An American study has found depression to be a key factor in relationship problems for people with MS. Fatigue was also found to be an important factor. The authors conclude that treatment for depression including anti-depressant therapy and counselling may help improve relationships. For anyone interested in availing in our confidential counselling service in the North East, please contact the office 042 966 4410 or the MS Helpline Freephone 1 850 233 233

Optimise and Empower Physiotherapy

MS Ireland North East in partnership with the HSE North East have been granted funding by the Enhancing Disability Services Programme for a Senior Physiotherapist position to work with people with MS in the region. The Physiotherapist will organise and implement the Optimise and Empower Project to provide structured and directed programmes of exercises at accessible local facilities. The Physiotherapist will also empower families to improve their physiotherapy skills to assist people with MS to live independently at home.



2006 Events Calendar for the North East

Friday—Sunday, 30th June,
1st, 2nd July

Northeast Summer Shindig, Park Inn
Hotel, Dundalk, Co. Louth

Ongoing

Respite

Thursday Friday 6th/7th July

Teenagers Break, Tanagh Centre

Summer

Optimise and Empower Physiotherapy
Programme (6 week Programme)

Autumn

Newly Diagnosed Event

Autumn

Branch Forum

Autumn

Optimise and Empower Physiotherapy
Programme (6 week Programme)

MS Helpline

1850 233 233

A lo-call helpline is available to people with MS, families, health professionals, etc. The helpline is open Monday to Friday from 10 am to 5 pm as well as Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 9:30 pm.

Accessible Hotels

A useful website(s) which rate hotels in Ireland depending on their accessibility is:

www.ireland.ie/vas.asp

www.radar.org.uk

It may be useful to check out if you are planning your summer holidays!

TESCO
IRELAND
Every little helps
Charity of the Year 2006

MSIreland
THE MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF IRELAND

MS Ireland are delighted to have been chosen as the 2006 Tesco Ireland Charity of the Year. Since it began in 2001, the Tesco Ireland Charity of the Year Programme has raised over €4 million for Irish charities. Being the beneficiary of this programme in 2006 offers MS Ireland a very exciting opportunity to introduce brand new services which will be of enormous benefit to our members over the coming years.

We would love to hear from you with news, articles, events, letters, etc. that might be of interest to the people with MS and Branch Members that receive our newsletter. Please contact the NE office or email us at northeast@ms-society.ie