

Mo Shaol

MS Ireland

South Mayo Branch

NEWSLETTER

Issue 81

Summer 2025

MS Ireland Mission:

To enable and empower people affected by Multiple Sclerosis to live the life of their choice to their fullest potential.



Dia Dhaoibh! Hello there! Well, that's a shocking picture, above.

One of the things that life with MS teaches us is that it can be quite fragile. Our balance is affected, for example. It is easy to fall. And, such a fall can be quite serious, even life-changing, in more extreme circumstances.

I was driving to Longford in early March to attend the AGM of the Longford branch of MS Ireland; I was attending as a representative of the Board of MS Ireland. I never got there. But – I was so very, very lucky! As I travelled along the N5 past the ancient historical site of Cruachan, down towards the small village of Tulsk, I had the misfortune to collide with/crash into a concrete gate post, and the gate post won. My car flipped through 360 degrees, fortunately for me landing back on its wheels, but straddled across the road. And this is where the help of others came in: I was (luckily) unhurt, but quite badly shaken. A couple of other motorists stopped to assist; they called for an ambulance and the Gardaí, and managed approaching traffic until these arrived. ***At times, we all need other people to be there for us, to help us in our time of need.*** That's why we in the South Mayo Branch of MS Ireland are here: to help when needed, in all sorts of ways. **We are here for you.**

Jackie writes



Summer Greetings to you all.

I hope that you are all keeping well currently and enjoying the little bits of sunshine we have been getting between the showers!

Spring 2025 has been very busy with us here in the Western Regional Office with May being the busiest with World MS events. We held out Newly Diagnosed Information Day on the 17th of May and then we had a Young Persons Lunch on the 24th of May. I also had a lovely Coffee & Calm morning in The Ellison Hotel, Castlebar where we had some coffee and mindfulness. Our Facilitator that day, Joan, is very open to running the same again and even some **mindfulness classes** so if people are interested in that please let me know.

At this stage we are looking at plans for September: we will be running an online **Fatigue Management Course** for 6 weeks commencing in September so if you're interested, please get in touch with me to place your name on the waiting list.

I am planning on having a **coffee morning** late August early – September in Westport so keep an eye on your emails. We have many excited young people from Mayo heading to **Delphi** on the 20th of August for some fun filled days!

As always, I am open to hear your ideas about **activities in person**, so if you are interested in meeting in person whether that be for classes in Physio, Yoga or mindfulness please let me know. I also can link you in with our amazing physio here in the West, Mary Burke. There will be online **drop-in physio classes** over the summer so get in touch if you would like further details. Our online peer support groups will be back in September.

Jackie

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Mayo Person with MS Attends World MS Day Briefing at Leinster House

The event featured moving testimonies from people with living with MS alongside insights from medical and service delivery experts. These voices highlighted both the lived realities of MS and the pressing need for targeted investment in services that improve quality of life for the over 9,000 people living with MS in Ireland today. More than 40 members of the Oireachtas attended the event.

Among those presenting was **Mayo's Louise Power** (second from left in the photo above.) Louise is a PwMS and is Secretary of the South Mayo Branch of MS Ireland.

Two urgent proposals for Budget 2026:

- **€1 million in sustainable funding** to expand **specialist physiotherapy services** nationally, enabling 9 senior physiotherapists to support over 1,400 individuals with MS and other neurological conditions. Research shows this investment could reduce disability-related healthcare costs by up to €19 million annually, with participants reporting:
 - 43.1% reduction in healthcare service usage,
 - 33% drop in A&E visits and 57.4% fewer bed days,
 - Notable improvements in quality of life, mental health, and reduced fall rates.
- **Allocation of funding to establish a Community Worker Post in Sligo-Leitrim**, the only region currently without this support.

We now wait to see whether the government will deliver on MS Ireland's ask – Ed.

Summer Outing to Athlone

17th – 19th August 2025



It's been a while since the Branch organised an outing that involved a couple of nights away – not since well before Covid! We're now doing it again. Our outing is to the **Sheraton Hotel, Athlone**, from Sunday 17th to Tuesday 29th August 2025. The package includes 2 nights Bed and Breakfast and dinner on Monday evening; wine-tasting on Sunday evening; access to the hotel's leisure facilities; subsidised spa treatment in the Siran Spa. The hotel is conveniently located in the centre of Athlone town adjacent to the shopping centre. We're looking forward to it – we hope you are, too!

Important details about the Outing

- ◆ **Booking** no later than 5:00 p.m. Friday 18th July 2025
- ◆ **Cost per person sharing:** €180; **deposit of €50** payable by each person going on the trip, including for companion/carer; the balance will be paid by the branch. ***Further details on how to pay the deposit to follow***
- ◆ **Accessible Rooms:** Six fully wheelchair-accessible rooms are available; these will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis
- ◆ **Sirana Spa Treatment:** the Branch will provide a voucher of €20 to any PwMS (person with MS) who wishes to avail of a treatment in the Spa; the Spa will offer a further 10% discount on the treatment. The rest of the cost will be borne by the PwMS availing of the treatment. Please note you must contact the Sirana Spa directly to book your treatment on 090 – 451 000. **Further details:** <https://siranaspa.com>
- ◆ **Transport:** If you do not have your own transport please contact Yvonne on 087 – 2830 652 and arrangements will be made to get you there.

Timetable

Sunday

Check in from 3:00 p.m. on Sunday 17th; Wine Tasting takes place at 5.30 p.m.; Sunday evening meal is by your own arrangement and at your own expense.

Monday

Breakfast is served between 7:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Monday lunch is by your own arrangement and at your own expense. Mindfulness session on Monday 12.30 p.m. to 1.30 p.m. Free time on Monday to avail of the hotel facilities and adjacent Athlone Town Centre. Dinner at 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday

Breakfast is served between 7:00 am and 10:30 am.

Check-out time is before 12:00 p.m. (midday)

Queries

If you have any queries, please call Yvonne on **087 – 2830 652** between 1.30 p.m. and 2.30 p.m. and after 6:00 p.m. Mon-Fri and anytime on Saturday and Sunday. Please feel free to text/WhatsApp at any time and Yvonne will get back to you as soon as possible.

Please note: Our timetable for booking this outing with the hotel is quite tight. The hotel requires our booking details by Saturday 19th July. If you wish to come along, please let Yvonne know no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday 18th July 2025. We will not be able to accept any booking after that time and date. This timetable has been set by the Sheraton Hotel.

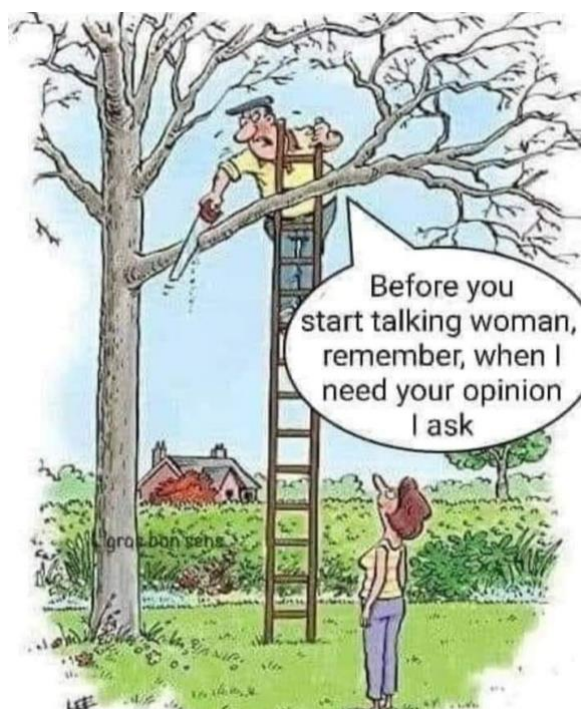
South Mayo Branch AGM

The Branch Annual General Meeting took place on Zoom in March last.

The meeting heard reports of what the Branch had been doing for its members over the last year and a report on the Branch's finances.

Several members of the out-going committee were re-elected for the coming year. One member, Seamus Burke, stood down; the meeting thanked Seamus for his service and wished him well. A new member was elected to the committee: Julie Martin, a Dubliner now living in Co. Mayo. Welcome to Julie!

Committee details below.



New research in the UK sheds light on the vitamin D puzzle

We know there's a link between low vitamin D levels and a higher risk of developing MS.

Researchers found that:

- participants who took high-dose vitamin D had a 34% lower risk of relapses or new lesions, compared to the placebo
- relapses and new lesions were seen less frequently in people who took high-dose vitamin D (60.3% vs 74.1% of participants on the placebo)
- people who took high-dose vitamin D had a longer average time to a relapse or new lesions (432 days, vs 224 days in the placebo group).

Further analysis showed the same benefits from vitamin D supplementation in people who would have been diagnosed with MS under the newer diagnostic criteria.

The results of this study suggest that vitamin D supplementation **may have** some benefit for **some** people with early MS. But it's important to note that the dose of vitamin D tested in this study was much higher than the recommended dose; and participants were monitored closely for safety purposes.

We know that vitamin D is important in other ways, including bone health. If you are concerned about your vitamin D levels, we recommend you speak to your health care professional to see what dose is right for you. (Adapted from a report on mssociety.org.uk)

Committee Members, South Mayo Branch MS Ireland, 2024-25

Name	Position(s)
Damen Barrett	Asst. Treasurer; Welfare Committee
Tony Candon	Chair; Council Delegate
Liam Cannon	Vice-Chair; Deputy Council Delegate; Welfare Committee
Yvonne Corrigan	Committee Member; Chair, Welfare Committee
Alison Dalleywater	Committee Member
Sharon Dillon	Treasurer; Welfare Committee
Julie Martin	Committee Member; Joint PRO
Louise Power	Secretary; Joint PRO

Contacting the Branch

If you want to contact us directly, please do so through our new email address: southmayobranch@ms-society.ie or through the Regional Community Worker, Jackie Keogh, details below.

Regional Community Worker: Jackie Keogh. Mob: 087-2502 031; E-mail: jackiek@ms-society.ie