

Charity Name	<b>MS Ireland</b>
Registration Charity Number (RCN)	20007867
Annual Reporting Period	1/1/2023 – 31/12/2023
Date approved by the Board of Charity Trustees	5/9/2024

Some information/links have been removed from this document because they are confidential

Under the [Charities Governance Code](#) all registered charities are required to complete this Charities Governance Code Compliance Record Form every year.

Please fill in this form to record:

- the actions that your charity takes to meet each standard of the Charities Governance Code; and
- the evidence that backs this up.

You should approve the Compliance Record Form at a board meeting before you report on your compliance to us.

**You are NOT required to file the Compliance Record Form with the Charities Regulator. However, you must keep your Compliance Record form as the Charities Regulator could ask you for it at any time.**

#### **What do we expect?**

The type of evidence we expect depends on the complexity of your charity.

The minimum expected of all charities would be to discuss and agree at board meetings how they will meet the standards and document their decisions in the minutes. For volunteer-only charities this will be enough to meet many of the core standards.

We would expect a charity with paid staff to provide more documentation like workplans and written policies as evidence of the actions they have taken.

We would expect more complex charities to provide more extensive documentation than other charities.

You can add or delete columns as required.

Please use the glossary within the [Charities Governance Code](#) when filling in the form and include dates where appropriate.

**Please click [here](#) for more information, guidance and templates.**

## Principle 1: Advancing Charitable Purpose **CORE STANDARDS**

### 1.1 Be clear about the purpose of your charity and be able to explain this in simple terms to anyone who asks.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
Each Board member has been provided with the most recent copy of MS Ireland's constitution, understands it and refers to it as necessary. At a Board member's induction, they are given a copy of the Constitution.	Constitution: <a href="https://www.ms-society.ie/sites/default/files/2020-10/Constitution%20of%20MS%20Ireland%20-%20Approved%2019.9.2020_1.pdf">https://www.ms-society.ie/sites/default/files/2020-10/Constitution%20of%20MS%20Ireland%20-%20Approved%2019.9.2020_1.pdf</a>
Our charitable purpose and objectives are clearly stated in the Annual Report	<a href="#">Annual Report 2023 -MS Ireland.pdf (ms-society.ie)</a>
At the top of each Agenda, two sample service case studies are read out. This is a reminder to Board members of the purpose and objectives of the organisation.	Case Study: Readathon Winner  Case Study: 73 year old man using services

### 1.2 Consider whether or not any private benefit arises ([see glossary](#)). If a private benefit arises, consider if it is reasonable, necessary and ancillary to the public benefit that your charity provides.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
MS Ireland is a public benefit entity – the benefit we provide is demonstrated through our work with people with MS (PwMS) and people affected by MS (PaMS) CE reports to the Board to show all our service delivery.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employee Assistance Programme - The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is a confidential counselling and specialist information service available to employees 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It provides</li> </ul>	

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>professional support and information on a wide range of topics. The EAP is available to all MS Ireland employees and their family members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pension – available to staff on successful completion of their probation period</li> <li>• Death in Service</li> <li>• Travel and subsistence expenses for community workers are in line with Civil Service rates</li> <li>• Board members understand expenses that can be claimed. Board expenses policy was approved at the Board meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee salaries – Note 10 page 42 of the Financial Statements. <a href="#">Audit Report - Irish Company/Group (Unlisted) (ms-society.ie)</a></li> <li>• Board expenses – See Note 9, Page 41 of the Financial Statements: <a href="#">Audit Report - Irish Company/Group (Unlisted) (ms-society.ie)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Minutes of Board Meeting – 28<sup>th</sup> Nov 2024</a></li> </ul>

### 1.3 Agree an achievable plan for at least the next year that sets out what you will do to advance your purpose.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>Strategic Plan 2020-2025 was discussed and agreed at meetings on 21<sup>st</sup> September and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019. Elements of the plan was discussed at meetings on 18<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021, 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec. 2021, 15<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2022;</p> <p>Updates to the budget are given at bi-monthly Board meetings.</p>	

**1.4 Make sure your charity has the resources it needs to do the activities you plan. If you don't have the resources, you need to show a plan for getting those resources.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>In 2023 we received 63% of our funding from the State (including Community Employment Schemes) and 30% from fundraising and 4 from other income. We engaged with the Health Service Executive (HSE) for our Service Level Agreements (SLA's) and the Department of Social Protection for our Community Employment Projects. In 2023 we received funds from Pobal under the Stability Fund. The Fundraising Department prepared a detailed budget for 2024, outlining every project and the Income and Expenditure for each of these projects.</p> <p>We have a Finance Audit Risk &amp; Strategy Committee (FAR&amp;SC) a sub-Committee of the Board. The FAR&amp;SC held joint meetings with the Board every two months and reviewed our accounts. MS Irelands accounts are SORP Compliant ("Statement of Recommended Practice").</p> <p>Every year MS Ireland's fundraising team raises funds to add to the funds we receive from the HSE (SLA's), the Department of Social Protection, legacies, Branch fundraising income and other income.</p>	<p>Financial Statements:</p> <p><a href="https://www.ms-society.ie/audit-report">Audit Report - Irish Company/Group (Unlisted) (ms-society.ie)</a></p>

**1.5 From time to time, review what you are doing to make sure you are still:**

- acting in line with your charity's purpose; and
- providing public benefit.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>Bi-monthly a report is prepared by the Chief Executive (CE) which is included in the Board Papers informing the Board of the current status of actions taken to achieve the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is prepared on the basis that it is in line with and complies with the Charity's objectives. MS Ireland provides public benefit as the services given are on the basis that they are available to people with MS, their families and carers</p> <p>The Board has appointed sub-committees to deal with specific areas of the Strategic Plan which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Innovation &amp; Technology Committee</li> <li>• Finance Audit Risk and Strategy Committee</li> <li>• Governance Committee</li> <li>• Nominations &amp; Remuneration Committee</li> <li>• Organisation and People Committee</li> <li>• Services Monitoring &amp; Evaluation Committee</li> <li>• Care Centre Review Group</li> <li>• Research Advocacy and Communications</li> </ul>	

**Principle 1: Advancing Charitable Purpose** **ADDITIONAL STANDARDS**

**1.6 Develop your charity's strategic plan and associated operational plans.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
Strategic Plan 2020-2025 was discussed and approved by the Board at their meetings on 21 <sup>st</sup> September and 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2019.	Board Minutes 21 Sept. 2019  Board Minutes 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2019  Strategic Plan
Our Strategic Plan is supported by an operational budget agreed on 1st December 2022. Operational plans are in place for 2023.	Strategic Plan

- 1.7 Make sure there is an appropriate system in place to:**
- **monitor progress against your plans; and**
  - **evaluate the effectiveness of the work of your charity.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:



CE on a bi-monthly basis reports to the Board on the progress of the Strategic Plan.

Senior Managers report on a bi-monthly basis on their progress in their operational plans so this can feed into the CE's report.  
Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis have one to one meetings with CE to monitor their progress and activities.

Since March 2022, all Community Workers and administrators report to the National Services Manager. In addition to regular team meetings and scheduled group supervision, the Services Manager schedules 1:1s with all Community Workers during the year. The community workers provide annual plans for their region, which are reviewed during the 1:1s.

The Services Development Manager – The focus of this role is service development within the organisation. A particular focus is on managing the development of health promoting physical activity and expanding to other neurological conditions through the Active Neuro programme, developing the role of Branch development within the voluntary Branch network of the organisation, expanding the research and advocacy function of the Organisation and expanding the role of information and the information line. One of the groups that supports this function is the Regional Services Working Group, (RSWG)

The RSWG was established in 2020, with representation from regional departments (Senior Management, Community Worker Service and the Physio & Exercise Service. The purpose of the RSWG is to review and be concerned with the **delivery** of services. The RSWG informs the Services Monitoring

<p>and Evaluation Committee (SMEC) whose role is to focus on high level strategic initiatives.</p> <p>The Care Centre holds departure meetings with residents staying at the Centre to get feedback from them on their stay at the Centre. At the end of every stay at the Care Centre all residents are given the opportunity to give feedback on every aspect of their stay. This meeting is facilitated by a Senior Staff member and the recommendations and suggestions are incorporated into our programme where appropriate.</p> <p>A Care Centre Review Committee was established in 2021 and has a role in reviewing services provided to ensure we are meeting the needs of people with MS. The Committee closed in Oct 2023 as they had worked through their objectives.</p>	
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**1.8 From time to time, consider the advantages and disadvantages of working in partnership with other charities, including merging or dissolving (winding up).**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>The Board considered a possible merger with other organisations at their Board meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022.</p>	<p>Board Meeting Minutes 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022:</p>
<p>MS Ireland are members of Care Alliance Ireland, Charities Institute Ireland (CII), Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI), Irish Platform for Patients' Organisations, Science &amp; Industry ("IPPOSI"), My Legacy, Health Research Charities Ireland (HRCI), Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI), The Wheel, European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP) and Multiple Sclerosis International Federation (MSIF), European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (ECTRIMS)</p> <p>In 2023 MS Ireland partnered with MSIF on the global fundraising campaign 'The May 50K' , as part of the agreement 70% of the funds raised would be spent on Irish MS services provided by the society the remaining 30% of funds would be spent by our partner MSIF on international MS research and advocacy projects.</p>	<p>We participated in the following events:</p> <p>Care Alliance (National Carers Week)</p> <p>IPPOSI (advocacy activities)</p> <p>Home Care Alliance (advocacy activities)</p> <p>NAI (advocacy activities)</p> <p>MSIF (various activities including updating the Atlas etc)</p> <p>EMSP (various activities, MS Nurse Pro Steering Committee, member of the executive committee, Accelerator Project for young people)</p> <p>AIMS Research Network (various research activities)</p> <p>List of Committees</p> <p>We attended bi annual meetings of European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP) and Multiple Sclerosis International Federation (MSIF) to ensure we can share resources and materials and not duplicate on our efforts. We work with our MS International organisations to capitalise on fundraising activities that have been run successfully in other countries.</p>

## Principle 2: Behaving with Integrity **CORE STANDARDS**

2.1 Agree the basic values that matter to your charity and publicise these, so that everyone involved understands the way things should be done and how everyone is expected to behave.**Actions our charity takes to meet standards:**

**Evidence of our actions:**

**We carried out a Values survey for MS Ireland in 2017.**

**Concept:** The idea behind this task was to ask those closest to MS Ireland what MS Ireland means to them and what values they would like to be associated with MS Ireland.

Once we identified the values for MS Ireland they are used in all publications and promotional activities of the organisation and are values that all staff adhere to and do their utmost to maintain.

Core values are the fundamental beliefs of our organization. These guiding principles dictate behaviour and can help people understand the difference between right and wrong. Core values also help companies to determine if they are on the right path and fulfilling their goals by creating a guide.

**Method:** We collected responses in several ways. At each regional integration meeting we went about asking attendees to list words that they would like to represent MS Ireland's Values and also discussed this process with the board and the Senior Management team.

Furthermore, we created a survey monkey link which was shared to the general public via our social media channels and the link was also shared internally to all our staff. In the survey, respondents were asked the simple question *"Please list 5 words that describe the values that you would like to see associated with MS Ireland"*

**Results and findings**

In Total we had 53 words generated from the regional integrated meetings of which the most popular are listed below.

1. Transparency
2. Supportive
3. Honesty
4. Information/informative
5. Empowerment

[Our Mission, Vision and Values | MS Ireland \(ms-society.ie\)](https://ms-society.ie/Our-Mission-Vision-and-Values)

For the survey monkey method in total we had 84 responses with 334 words, including repeats. The results of which are outlined below. Top 10 most used words from survey monkey were:

1. Supportive
2. Caring
3. Informative
4. Transparency
5. Understanding
6. Respect
7. Community
8. Helpful
9. Advocacy
10. Honest

## Conclusions/ Recommendations

When selecting which values to use after analysing both sets of results, the 4 words that were selected to represent our values are as follows:

1. Supportive
2. Transparent
3. Informative
4. Empowering

**Supportive-** we support individuals whether they are PWMS, staff or volunteers so that we can work together to fulfil our mission.

**Transparency-** being open and honest in everything that we do.

**Informative-** communicate reliable, accurate and useful information.

**Empowering-** through the provision of information, advocacy and support services we enable people to make informed choices.

These values are publicised in literature we produce, in our Annual Report and on our Website.

- Roll out of the values
  - o Our values were rolled out throughout 2018
  - o Our values are now used in every presentation/slide deck and report for the organisation along with our vision and mission, an example being at the annual national conference.
  - o Pull up stands created for each of our values. Stands are brought to all large events.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Values included on our website and were distributed via our e-news.</li> <li>○ Values are included in the recruitment process</li> </ul>	

**2.2 Decide how you will deal with conflicts of interests and conflicts of loyalties. You should also decide how you will adhere to the Charities Regulator's guidelines on this topic.**

<b>Actions our charity takes to meet standards:</b>	<b>Evidence of our actions:</b>
<p>MS Ireland has a Conflict of Interest and a conflict of Loyalty Policy.</p> <p>Conflict of interest is a standing item on the agenda, with any declared conflicts of interest included in the minutes.</p> <p>At the start of Board meetings, members are asked to declare any conflict of interest or loyalty that they have with any items on the Agenda. We have a Register of Interests to record any conflicts arising.</p>	<p>Conflict of Interest &amp; Conflict of Loyalty Policy</p>

**2.3 Have a code of conduct for your board that is signed by all charity trustees. It must make clear the standard of behaviour expected from charity trustees. This includes things like maintaining confidentiality and what to do in relation to:**

- gifts and hospitality; and
- out-of-pocket expenses.



Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>MS Ireland's Code of Conduct for new and existing Board &amp; Council Members, Committee Members, Chairperson, Secretary and Chief Executive is given to all newly appointed Board members as part of their induction training. Board members sign a letter of their appointment to the Board and agree that they will agree to the terms and conditions of their letter of appointment and Code of Conduct</p> <p>The Code of Conduct includes requirement of maintaining confidentiality and of not being able to accept gifts and hospitality</p>	<p>Code of Conduct:</p> <hr/>

### Principle 3: Leading People **CORE STANDARDS**

#### 3.1 Be clear about the roles of everyone working in and for your charity, both on a voluntary and paid-basis.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>Roles of Board, Secretary and CE are outlined in the Code of Conduct. All staff members have their roles detailed in their job descriptions. The Employee handbook is in line with our internal policies and procedures, employment legislation and HR. Volunteers and Branch Committees roles are outlined in the Branch Handbook. We also have a Volunteer Policy.</p> <p>MS Ireland has a Code of Conduct for new and existing Board and Committee Members, Chairperson, Secretary and Chief Executive – Code of Conduct was approved at a Board Mtg on 30/11/2019</p> <p>CE is charged with leading and managing staff and volunteers of the organisation so that the organisation's mission, vision and strategies are fulfilled within the context of its values.</p> <p>A briefing webinar on the Employee Handbook was held for all staff on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018. An Employee Handbook for all staff members which was updated in May 2019 and November 2020 and was circulated to all staff.</p> <p>In 2021 a new Branch Handbook was introduced.</p>	<p>Code of Conduct:</p> <p>Board application information is reviewed annually by Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson:</p> <p>Employee Handbook:</p> <p>Branch Handbook:</p>
Board members understand their legal duties and responsibilities. Board members are informed of their legal duties and responsibilities at their induction meeting.	
Chairperson and Secretary's roles are outlined in the Code of Conduct	Code of Conduct:
<div> <div>3.2 Make sure there are arrangements in place for the effective involvement of any volunteers, including what to do if any problems arise</div> <div> <div>Actions our charity takes to meet standards:</div> <div>Evidence of our actions:</div> </div> </div>	

<p>In 2021 a Volunteer policy was drafted by Branch Development Committee</p> <p>Volunteers in MS Ireland have different levels of involvement depending on their volunteering roles: Director, Council Representative, Branch Committee Member, Branch Member and occasional fundraiser, fundraisers, administrator, data collectors.</p> <p>MS Ireland has a network of 29 voluntary Branches that are supported by MS Ireland nationally by MS Ireland's Branch Development Officer and regionally through MS Ireland's network of Regional Community Workers. Voluntary Branches are run for people affected by MS by people affected by MS and their friends and family. The overall direction of the voluntary Branches is coordinated by MS Ireland. MS Ireland's Constitution, Bye-Laws and Branch Handbook offer a number of guidelines to Branches on their work. The role of the Branch involves providing a range of support services to PwMS and their families</p>	<p>Volunteer Policy:</p> <p>Information on volunteering:</p> <p>Constitution:  <a href="https://www.ms-society.ie/sites/default/files/2020-10/Constitution%20of%20MS%20Ireland%20-%20Approved%2019.9.2020_1.pdf">https://www.ms-society.ie/sites/default/files/2020-10/Constitution%20of%20MS%20Ireland%20-%20Approved%2019.9.2020_1.pdf</a></p> <p>Bye-Laws  <a href="https://www.ms-society.ie/sites/default/files/2024-03/Bye-Laws%20-%202022%20.pdf">https://www.ms-society.ie/sites/default/files/2024-03/Bye-Laws%20-%202022%20.pdf</a></p> <p>Branch Handbook:</p>
<p>Volunteer induction procedures are outlined in the volunteer policy document. Induction procedures for volunteers are done on an individual basis.</p>	<p>Volunteer Policy:</p>
<p>We hold Regional Integrated meetings (RIM's) where branch volunteers meet with staff to discuss and agree services that will be provided to PwMS.</p> <p>Council meetings are organised two to three times annually by the assistance of the Branch Development Officer. This is when branch representatives come together to voice the concerns of their members while receiving updates from the CE and Chairperson on developments in MS Ireland.</p>	<p>Council Meeting Minutes of 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023</p>

**3.3 Make sure there are arrangements in place that comply with employment legislation for all paid staff including:**

- **recruitment;**
- **training and development;**

- **support, supervision and appraisal;**
- **remuneration (money paid for work); and dismissal.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>MS Ireland has policies and procedures in place for each of the above matters. These are all included in the Employee Handbook.</p>	

MS Ireland has an Employee Handbook which was updated and disseminated to staff in November 2020.

MS Ireland has a Nominations and Remuneration Committee (sub-Committee of the Board). See excerpt below from its Terms of Reference in relation to the actions of the Committee:

“On behalf of the Board, the Committee will do the following:

4.1 Consider, evaluate, monitor and report its recommendations to the Board in respect of all matters broadly relating to the Structure and Membership of the Board of MS Ireland as well as preside over the MS Ireland’s National Awards

4.2 Draw up and circulate a list of the desired requirements for the effective operation of the Board of MS Ireland

4.3 In relation to Board membership the Committee will:

- Take into account the range of skills necessary for Board membership and where possible, the geographical spread, gender balance, experience and qualifications of the candidates.
- Maintain a live panel of applicants for consideration by the Nominating Committee. The candidate will be removed from the panel after 3 years and will not be considered further for Board membership
- Evaluate all candidates on its panel of applicants
- Recommend to the Board, from the names on its panel of applicants, no more than the number of candidates requested by the Board. The decision of the Committee on the names being recommended for candidacy will be final and will be communicated to the Board.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recommend the co-option of a Member to the Board</li> </ul> <p>4.4 Satisfy itself that ALL candidates for Board membership have, in advance of MS Ireland issuing notice of an Annual General Meeting, submitted a declaration of eligibility to be a member of the Board, and have satisfactorily completed Garda Síochána vetting.</p> <p>4.5 Consider, evaluate, monitor and report its recommendations to the Board in respect of all matters broadly relating to the performance and remuneration of the Chief Executive and Senior Management of MS Ireland</p> <p>4.6 Set the Chief Executive’s objectives</p> <p>4.7 Assess the Chief Executive’s performance, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Performance in previous year</li> <li>- Particular success and difficulties, if any</li> <li>- Identification of any learning and development needs</li> <li>- Support for the Chief Executive in general</li> </ul> <p>4.8 Provide feedback to Chief Executive on his/her performance</p> <p>4.9 Set the Chief Executive’s remuneration and review all supporting documentation, to ensure they comply with what was agreed at the beginning of the year, including the Chief Executive’s End of Year Summary Statement and expenses (Note: The Company credit card statements are reviewed by the Chairperson of the Board throughout the year).</p>	
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4.10	Oversee arrangements for service contracts of MS Ireland staff who report directly to the Chief Executive, including reviewing their End of Year Summary Statement and expenses.	
4.11	Report the outcomes of the appraisal process using the Society's processes and key outcomes of the Chief Executive's appraisal process to the Board.	
4.12	Ensure the Board has been properly updated by the Chief Executive on staff terms and conditions of service, and other staffing arrangements.	

**3.4 Agree operational policies where necessary, to guide the actions of everyone involved in your charity.**



Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>Board, staff and Branch members are guided by MS Ireland's Constitution and Bye-Laws in their operational practises.</p> <p>Board, Company Secretary and CE duties are detailed in the Code of Conduct</p>	<p>Constitution:  <a href="https://www.ms-society.ie/sites/default/files/2020-10/Constitution%20of%20MS%20Ireland%20-%20Approved%2019.9.2020_1.pdf">https://www.ms-society.ie/sites/default/files/2020-10/Constitution%20of%20MS%20Ireland%20-%20Approved%2019.9.2020_1.pdf</a></p> <p>Bye-Laws  <a href="https://www.ms-society.ie/sites/default/files/2024-03/Bye-Laws%20-%202022%20.pdf">https://www.ms-society.ie/sites/default/files/2024-03/Bye-Laws%20-%202022%20.pdf</a></p> <p>Code of Conduct:</p>
<p>Operational guidelines to assist staff are detailed in the Employee Handbook</p> <p>Operational policies: child and vulnerable adult protection; complaints and grievance procedures; data protection; freedom of information policy, conflicts of interest and conflict of loyalty policy.</p>	<p>Employee Handbook:</p> <p>Operational Plans:  Health and Safety Statements  Financial Policy and Procedures  HIQA standards</p> <p><a href="#">Standards and Quality   HIQA</a></p>

Branches are guided by the Branch Handbook which includes details of the duties of Branch Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer	
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**Principle 3: Leading People**   **ADDITIONAL STANDARDS**

- 3.5      Make sure to document the roles, legal duties and delegated responsibility for decision-making of:**
- individual charity trustees and the board as a whole;
  - any sub-committees or working groups;
  - staff and volunteers.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:

Evidence of our actions:

<p>Directors' duties and the Board's area of responsibilities are detailed in the Code of Conduct. The Board review and agree annually the Terms of Reference of each of the sub-committees of the Board.</p>	<p>Code of Conduct:</p>
<p>Staff roles are documented in their job descriptions. Staff contracts and job descriptions are available for all staff.</p>	<p>Terms of Reference of Sub-Committees</p> <p>Finance Audit Risk &amp; Strategy Committee:</p>
<p>Volunteer roles are detailed in the Branch Handbook</p> <p>The Care Centre complies with statutory requirements for staff to have competency in a number of areas. All staff at the Care Centre are offered a comprehensive training programme on an annual basis.</p> <p>Community Workers participate in an annual calendar of training to ensure best practice and competency in their roles in the community.</p> <p>Physio/Exercise MS Ireland has a National Physio Coordinator whose role is to ensure good clinical governance across MS Ireland's health promoting physical activity programme. This is in respect of the development and dissemination of policies and procedures, creating a community practice and seeking mainstream funding opportunities to ensure continuance.</p> <p>Department of Social Protection Community Employment Programme (CEP)</p>	<p>Nominations &amp; Remuneration Committee:</p> <p>Organisation &amp; People Committee:</p> <p>Governance and Sustainability Committee</p> <p>Research, Information, Advocacy &amp; Communications</p> <p>Services Monitoring and Evaluation Committee</p> <p>Care Centre Move Working Group</p>

Participants of the Community Employment Programme have an individual learner plan which records for each individual participant the training undertaken, career planning, briefing notes, progression planning and work plans including details of outcomes and awards achieved to date.	

**3.6 Make sure that there are written procedures in place which set out how volunteers are:**

- recruited; supported and supervised while within your charity; and
- the conditions under which they exist.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>Outlined in the Volunteer Policy</p> <p>We are in the process of garda vetting relevant Committee volunteers</p> <p>The Organisation and People Committee monitors branch activity and evaluates it to determine the impact, quality and effectiveness of branch volunteers.</p> <p>We advertised and recruited a Services Development Coordinator with particular focus on volunteer development.</p>	<p>Volunteer Policy</p>

**3.7 Decide how you will develop operational policy in your charity. You also need to decide how your charity trustees will make sure that the policy is put in place and kept up-to-date.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
The operational policy is developed from the Strategic Plan. CE reports on a bimonthly basis to the Board on progress made with the annual operational plan.	CE Report – November 2023
We ensure that new employees are familiar with our policies and procedures. Employee handbook is signed.	
Employee handbook is a single manual and copies are available to all employees . A briefing webinar on the Employee Handbook was held for all staff on 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2018. An Employee Handbook for all staff members which was updated in May 2019 and was circulated to all staff. A further Update to the Employee Handbook was provided on 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2020.	Employee Handbook:
Policies and procedures are reviewed periodically.	

## Principle 4: Exercising Control **CORE STANDARDS**

### 4.1 Decide if your charity's current legal form and governing document are fit for purpose. Make changes if necessary, telling the Charities Regulator in advance that you are doing so.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>MS Ireland is a Company limited by Guarantee with no share capital. MS Ireland is a registered charity. MS Ireland undertook a review of its Constitution which was approved by its members on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2020. It is in compliance with the requirements of and is listed on the Register of the Charities Regulatory Authority.</p> <p>Its Constitution is reviewed on a 3 yearly basis to ensure it is fit for purpose by the Governance Committee. In early 2020 the Board reviewed its Constitution and submitted some minor changes to its Articles of Association.</p> <p>Constitution was reviewed and amended – meetings of 21<sup>st</sup> September 2019, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2020</p>	<p>Constitution: <a href="https://www.ms-society.ie/sites/default/files/2020-10/Constitution%20of%20MS%20Ireland%20-%20Approved%2019.9.2020_1.pdf">https://www.ms-society.ie/sites/default/files/2020-10/Constitution%20of%20MS%20Ireland%20-%20Approved%2019.9.2020_1.pdf</a></p>

### 4.2 Find out the laws and regulatory requirements that are relevant to your charity and comply with them.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
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The following national legislation (including amendments thereto), regulations and codes of practice are particularly relevant to the affairs of MS Ireland as a charitable organisation:

- Companies Act 2014 and Companies Act 2017
- Statement of Recommended Practice in line with Financial Reporting Standards (FRS 102)
- Charities Act 2009
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Employment legislation
- Freedom of Information Act 2014
- Health Act 2007
- Lobbying Act 2015
- Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016
- Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Street and House to House Collections Act 1962
- Criminal Justice (Theft and Fraud) Act 2001 (relevant portions thereof)
- Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 (Sections 207, 208 and 609 thereof)
- The Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations ([www.governancecode.ie](http://www.governancecode.ie))
- The Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising (Charities Institute Ireland, [Guidelines for Chari | Charities Institute Ireland](#))

in addition to any legislation, regulations etc. relating to MS Ireland's activities as an employer, an owner of properties and a provider of health services.

MS Ireland annually files its annual returns with the Companies Registration Office and the Charities Regulatory Authority.

MS Ireland is signed up and compliant with the Governance Code.

MS Ireland's accounts adhere to the SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities) accounting standards. Accounts for the year ended December 31st 2023 are available on the Website. Our accounts are audited

- Due Diligence – Know your Donor list has been activated.

Financial Statements 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

[Audit Report - Irish Company/Group \(Unlisted\) \(ms-society.ie\)](#)

<p>annually. The branches are separately audited and they are then consolidated into the company's accounts.</p> <p>MS Ireland is also compliant with the Charities Institute Ireland's (CII) Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising. The principles set the standard for best practice in fundraising in Ireland. It was developed by a steering group set up in response to the Charities Act 2009</p> <p>The Statement exists to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve fundraising practice</li> <li>- Promote high levels of accountability and transparency by organisations fundraising from the public</li> <li>- Provide clarity and assurances to donors and prospective donors about the organisations they support</li> </ul> <p>We submit returns in relation to the Freedom of Information Act 2014</p>	<p><a href="#">Statement of Compliance with Guiding Principles for Fundraising   MS Ireland (ms-society.ie)</a></p>
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**4.3 If your charity raises funds from the public, read the Charities Regulator's guidelines<sup>1</sup> on this topic and make sure that your charity adheres to them as they apply to your charity.**

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<sup>1</sup> See Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public - available from: <https://www.charitiesregulator.ie/media/1083/guidance-for-fundraising-english.pdf>

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:

The National Office spot checks branch's fundraising activities to ensure that they are operating according to Society procedures in respect of outdoor and church gate collections.

### **Readathon**

MS Ireland decided to bring the Readathon online in 2020. A new, fundraising website was built and we encouraged people to take part via the website. For those not wishing to participate online, we offered them the option of taking part in the traditional way.

- Sponsorship is lodged or sent in to the Fundraising Department by each participating school.
- Collating forms which state the name of each child and how much they raised are completed by teachers and sent back to the Readathon Fundraiser.
- The totals on the collating forms should match or be 10% less than the amount uploaded from TAS Books (our accounts software package) into Salesforce (our customer relationship management tool) by Fundraising Administrator. However on some occasions, individual teachers may have incorrectly added up the total on their collating form, or they may have forgotten to add a student etc. If the total in Salesforce uploaded from TAS is significantly different to the total on the collating form entered into Salesforce, Readathon Fundraiser will contact the school.

### **MS Readathon Website**

A fundraising platform was built to take the MS Readathon online. It is open to schools, children, grown-ups and teams. The Readathon manager manages the site, updating content, troubleshooting, helping fundraisers with set up etc. Funds raised through the website come directly through STRIPE payments or paypal directly to the MS Ireland bank account.

### **Walks**

- Walks reconciliations are done on a monthly basis. TAS records and sales force records should match – to ensure that all monies received was recorded accurately

[MS Readathon 2023 | MS Ireland \(ms-society.ie\)](https://ms-society.ie/MS-Readathon-2023)

[International walks organised by MS Ireland are no longer running.](#)

<p>and coded properly. At the end of the particular walk, reconciliations are made and any cards missing are followed up on.</p> <p><b>Mini Marathon</b></p> <p>- At the end of each marathon, reconciliations are made and any cards missing are followed up on.</p> <p><b>Collection Boxes/Buckets</b></p> <p>- A register is maintained of all pre-numbered collection boxes in use by MS Ireland. It is communicated that all boxes are sealed during collections and the seal is broken in the presence of two people at the end of the collection event.</p> <p><b>Raffle</b></p> <p>If a ticket is purchased online the donor will buy the ticket through <a href="http://www.idonate.ie">www.idonate.ie</a>, they will pay at the secure checkout and MS Ireland will receive their details and funds will be deposited to the MS Ireland bank account monthly.</p> <p>Offline:</p> <p>- A register is kept of all people sent Raffle tickets. All money from tickets and any unsold tickets are collected and receipts are sent to the seller. A reminder letter is sent to any person who has not either returned unsold tickets or money from ticket sales. MS Ireland TAS and Salesforce keep a record of returned funds.</p>	
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**4.4 Make sure you have appropriate financial controls in place to manage and account for your charity's money and other assets.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>The Financial Controls Manual details the control processes for staff to follow. We also comply with the Code of Fundraising Practise and are working towards compliance on Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public.</p> <p>MS Ireland's accounts adhere to the SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities) accounting standards. Accounts for the year ended December 31st 2021 are available on the Website. Our accounts are audited annually. The branches are separately audited, and they are then consolidated into the company's accounts.</p>	<p><a href="#">Statement of Compliance with Guiding Principles for Fundraising   MS Ireland (ms-society.ie)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Financial Statements 31 Dec 2023</a> <a href="#">Audit Report - Irish Company/Group (Unlisted) (ms-society.ie)</a></p>

**4.5 Identify any risks your charity might face and how to manage these.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>Risks were identified in our Risk Register and we have a risk appetite statement. There is also a Risk Register for the Care Centre which is reviewed regularly.</p> <p>At the Care Centre there are quarterly quality and safety meetings held which are attended by senior staff. There are agendas and minutes of all these meetings. At these meetings issues pertaining to quality of the service provided and the safety of residents and staff are discussed.</p> <p>There is a Services Risk Register which captures the risks identified in Community Worker Services, Exercise-related Activities, Information, Research and Advocacy.</p> <p>Risk is reviewed by the Board annually and bi-annually by the Finance Audit Risk and Strategy Committee.</p> <p>On the 30<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023 the Finance Audit Risk &amp; Strategy Committee and the Board reviewed the Risk Register.</p> <p>MS Ireland has a Reserve Policy in place.</p>	<p>Risk Register – 18 Jan 2023</p> <p>Services Risk Register - 20<sup>th</sup> May 2023</p> <p>Care Centre's Top 10 Risks – 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022</p> <p><a href="#">Reserve Policy – Page 25 of the Financial Statements Audit Report - Irish Company/Group (Unlisted) (ms-society.ie)</a></p>

#### 4.6 Make sure your charity has appropriate and adequate insurance cover.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
CE identifies services we provide to our insurance broker who ensures that we have adequate cover.	Insurance Cover for 2023/2024:
We also have Directors and Officers/Pension Trust and Fidelity Guarantee Liability insurance., Material Damage Policy, Computer Policy, Engineering Inspection Policy, Commercial Motor Policy. Employment Practices Liability Policy, Buildings and general contents cover and household policy cover, DSP CE Schemes Policies	
The main Insurance renewal is in June each year and the Board reviewed the insurance cover at their meeting on 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2023.	Minutes 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2023



**Principle 4: Exercising Control** **ADDITIONAL STANDARDS**

**4.7** You should have written procedures to make sure that you comply with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Protection Policy</li> <li>• Finance Controls Manual</li> <li>• Fundraising Procedures</li> <li>• Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>• HR and Employment procedures</li> <li>• Complaints Policy</li> <li>• Whistleblowing Policy</li> <li>• Conflict of Interest Policy &amp; Conflict of Loyalty Policy</li> <li>• Pharmaceutical Policy</li> <li>• Remote Working Policy</li> <li>• Data Retention Policy</li> <li>• Volunteer Policy</li> </ul>	<p>Employee Handbook contains the Data Protection Policy, Health &amp; Safety responsibilities, HR and Employment Procedures, Remote Working Policy, Whistleblowing Policy</p> <p>Complaints Policy  <a href="https://ms-society.ie">Complaints   MS Ireland (ms-society.ie)</a></p> <p>Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Loyalty Policy</p> <p>Pharma Policy</p> <p>Volunteer Policy</p>
<p>At every Finance meeting, the CEO and Financial Controller are asked to make statements regarding operational/Services, fraud and financial matters that need to be brought to the attention of the Finance Committee to include any legal claims or pending claims</p> <p>Each Board member in their Letter of Appointment agrees to the following statement:</p> <p>“The Board conducts its role in accordance with all legal and regulatory requirements”</p>	<p>Directors’ Letter of Appointment:</p>

#### 4.8 Make sure there is a formal risk register that your board regularly reviews.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
Risk Register is reviewed by the Finance Audit Risk and Strategy Committee and the Board.	Risk Register – 18 Jan 2023

**4.9 Consider adopting additional good practice standards that are relevant to the particular work that your charity does.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MS Ireland was awarded Triple Lock membership by the <a href="#">TRIPLE LOCK STANDARD   Charities Institute Ireland</a>. It operates to the Triple Lock standards - transparent reporting, good fundraising and governance.</li> <li>MS Ireland is signed up to the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising and we are compliant with the Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public <a href="#">Guidelines for Chari   Charities Institute Ireland</a>.</li> <li>Annual Financial Statements are in compliance with Charity SORP (FRS 102). Financial Statements are on our website</li> <li>MS Ireland is signed up to complying with the Governance Code.</li> <li>Charities Governance Code Compliance Record Form is reviewed annually. Annual Returns are submitted to the Charities Regulator</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">TRIPLE LOCK STANDARD   Charities Institute Ireland</a></p> <p>Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Guidelines for Chari   Charities Institute Ireland</a>.</li> </ul> <p>Financial Statements 31<sup>st</sup> Dec. 2023:  <a href="#">Audit Report - Irish Company/Group (Unlisted) (ms-society.ie)</a>  Charities Governance Code Compliance Record Form:  <a href="#">Charity Detail   Charities Regulator</a></p>
<p>Our MS Care Centre is HIQA registered and provides the highest standard of quality respite</p> <p>The CE carries out unannounced visits with the Services Manager to the Care Centre which is part of HIQA's requirements.</p>	<p><a href="#">HIQA report on MS Ireland's Care Centre – 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022 Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland - MS Care Centre   HIQA</a></p>
<p>Annually the Board members participate in a review of how they, the Board and CE are performing. The outcome of the survey is then considered at an upcoming Board meeting to assess how they can perform better and to provide training if necessary to Board members that feel they require support. A review was carried out and recommendations were made at a Board meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023</p>	<p>CE Appraisal Form</p>

## Principle 5: Working Effectively **CORE STANDARDS**

- 5.1 Identify charity trustees with the necessary skills to undertake:**
- any designated roles set out in your governing document; and
  - other roles as appropriate within the board.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>Each spring the Nominating Committee meet to consider Board requirements for the upcoming elections at the AGM in September. They assess the skills need on the Board and the capabilities of the current Board members. They put a call out for Board members when vacancies arise. They review applications and recommend applicants to the Board. Subject to the Board's approval, these candidates then go forward for election to the Board by the members at the AGM.</p> <p>Sub-committees are drawn up based on the skills, experience and abilities of the Directors.</p> <p>Relevant courses provided by the Wheel and Carmichael Centre are offered to Board members.</p> <p>The Chairperson participates in Carmichael Centre's Chair network.</p>	

**5.2 Hold regular board meetings. Give enough notice before meetings and provide prepared agendas.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>Our Board meet 6 times a year, mostly bi-monthly. Members are informed after the AGM of the dates of meetings for the coming 12 months. Agendas and Board papers are circulated a week before the meeting takes place.</p> <p>Board meetings dates in 2023 are</p> <p>23rd Feb. 2023</p> <p>5th April 2023</p> <p>25th May 2023</p> <p>29th June 2023</p> <p>24<sup>th</sup> July 2023</p> <p>30<sup>th</sup> August 2023</p> <p>30<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023</p>	<p>See below standard Agenda</p>
	<p>Board Agenda – Standard Items</p>
<p>Meetings are called and run in accordance with governing document and, if relevant company law.</p>	

**5.3 At a minimum, your board agendas should always include these items:**

- **reporting on activities;**

- review of finances; and
- conflicts of interests and loyalties.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
The following items are always on our board agendas: Conflicts of interests and loyalties Reports on activities Review of finances	Minutes of meetings and records of decisions Sample Agenda:
Minutes are taken of Board meetings and all other formal decisions of the board are properly recorded	
Consistent minutes of meetings are kept that record attendance, decisions, and actions	

**5.4 Make sure that your charity trustees have the facts to make informed decisions at board meetings and that these decisions are recorded accurately in the minutes.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
CE report is presented at Board meetings on a bi-monthly basis; Management Accounts were circulated to the Board on 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 and 24 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	CE Report – November 2023

**5.5 Consider introducing term limits for your charity trustees, with a suggested maximum of nine years in total.**



Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>When elected a Board member can stay on the Board for three years. S/he can be re-elected for a maximum period of nine years as per our Constitution:-</p> <p>“54.</p> <p>(1) A retiring member of the Board shall be eligible for re-election to the Board provided that no person shall be entitled to serve on the Board for more than three terms and Section 1196 (5) of the Act shall be modified accordingly”.</p>	<p>List of Board members with appointment dates is maintained.</p>
<p>Length of service of Board members and any requirement for meeting attendance is in line with the governing document. Terms of office for board members are staggered with one third retiring every three years.</p>	<p>Copy of Constitution link is at 1.1 above</p>
<p>Charity trustees are appointed, resign or retire according to our governing document and we keep appropriate records regarding trustees with details of when their term is up and if they are eligible for re-appointment</p>	<p>Copy of Constitution link is at 1.1 above</p>

#### 5.6 Recruit suitable new charity trustees as necessary and make sure they receive an induction.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>Each spring the Nominating Committee meet to consider Board requirements for the upcoming AGM in September. They assess the skills need on the Board and the capabilities of the current Board members. They put a call out for Board members when vacancies arise. They review applications and recommend applicants to the Board. Subject to the Board’s approval, these candidates then go forward for election to the Board by the members at the AGM.</p>	

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
Once appointed, induction training is provided to all new board members by the Chief Executive and Chairperson.	
<p>The following items are covered in the induction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vision, Mission, and values</li> <li>MS Ireland's stakeholders</li> <li>Council &amp; branches</li> <li>Strategic priorities</li> <li>Management</li> <li>Organisational chart</li> <li>Governance Code &amp; Codes of Conduct</li> <li>MS Ireland's services, conferences and awards</li> <li>Communications and social media</li> <li>Fundraising, Volunteering</li> <li>Board meeting dates</li> <li>Board agenda</li> <li>Major issues</li> </ul>	
Potential charity trustees are aware of the time commitment of the role from the outset. This information is provided in the application material and also covered in the induction meeting.	
Board induction and training takes place for all Board members. A day is set aside as a Board training day. All new Board members have induction training.	
Recruitment and selection process discussed and documented at the Nominating Committee Meeting. As there were no Board vacancies in 2022, this did not happen.	See above for information on prospective board members
Due diligence carried out on all prospective charity trustees. Chairperson and CE meet with prospective charity trustees	

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:

**5.7 Make sure all of your trustees understand:**

- their role as charity trustees;
- the charity's governing document; and
- this Code.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>The CE carries out induction training with all new Board members. At that meeting she informs them of their role and about the organisation, its structure, and the rules and regulations that it adheres to. Board members are circulated with the Code of Conduct, the Constitution, Bye-Laws and the Governance Code at the induction presentation given by the Chief Executive.</p> <p>All Board members sign a Letter of Appointment.</p>	<p>Directors' Letter of Appointment</p>
<p>Board members reviewed the Constitution in 2020. Constitution was reviewed and amended at Board meetings on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2019, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2020. Minor amendments were made and it was approved at the AGM on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2020</p>	<p>See 1.1 above for link to constitution.</p>

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
Board members reviewed this Governance Code at their meeting on 15 <sup>th</sup> September 2022	

- 5.8 Commit to resolving problems and emerging issues as quickly as possible and in the best interests of your charity.**  
**Actions our charity takes to meet the standards.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>Excerpt from the Code of Conduct</p> <p>“Board members will debate all issues in a friendly and measured manner encouraging contributions and consensus. Board members will facilitate the hearing of all sides of a debate before decisions are made.”</p> <p>See our Complaints Policy – It is outlined under Question 6.4</p>	
<p>Any problems are brought to the attention of the Board and any actions and resolutions are agreed and documented</p>	
<p>We ensure that enough time is allocated for discussion</p> <p>We ensure that all meetings are quorate.</p> <p>Our Chairperson has support training and access to advice.</p>	
<p>Key issues are escalated to the Board for decision and it is clear where decision making lies for each area of the charity’s activities/business</p>	<p>See Code of Conduct regarding areas of responsibility</p>

## 5.9 From time to time, review how your Board operates and make any necessary improvements.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>Annually the Board members participate in a review of how they, the Board and CE are performing. The outcome of the survey is then considered at an upcoming Board meeting to assess how they can perform better and to provide training if necessary to Board members that feel they require support. A review will be carried out and recommendations will be made at a Board meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023.</p>	
<p>CE is asked to leave the Board meeting once a year for one agenda item when the Board are given feedback from the Remuneration Committee on CE's performance review. Board members are asked if they are happy with the performance of the CE. It is a check in and an opportunity for the Chairperson to seek the Board's views on the CE's appraisal and performance.</p>	

**Principle 5: Working Effectively** **ADDITIONAL STANDARDS**

**5.10 Make sure you send out board packs with enough notice and include all relevant reports and explanatory papers to enable informed decision-making.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
Board packs are generally sent out a week in advance of the meeting. There is a standard form template used for any proposals to the Board.	Standard form template is used to assess any proposals requiring Board approval
Regular and clear reports are received on the charity's current financial position and its future sustainability.	Management Accounts were circulated to the Board on 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 and 24 <sup>th</sup> October 2023
Charity trustees receive regular information regarding our organisation's activities, assets and resources and progress against targets.  At every Board meeting the CE provides an update on activities in her C.E. report.	

**5.11 Make sure that you have a charity trustee succession plan in place and consider how you can maximise diversity among your charity trustees.**

MS Ireland has a Nominations & Remuneration Committee (sub-Committee of the Board) and the Committee's Terms of Reference on behalf of the Board, is the following:

**4.1** Consider, evaluate, monitor and report its recommendations to the Board in respect of all matters broadly relating to the Structure and Membership of the Board of MS Ireland as well as preside over the MS Ireland's National Awards

4.2 Draw up and circulate a list of the desired requirements for the effective operation of the Board of MS Ireland

4.3 In relation to Board membership the Committee will:

- Take into account the range of skills necessary for Board membership and where possible, the geographical spread, gender balance, experience and qualifications of the candidates.
- Maintain a live panel of applicants for consideration by the Nominating Committee. The candidate will be removed from the panel after 3 years and will not be considered further for Board membership
- Evaluate all candidates on its panel of applicants
- Recommend to the Board, from the names on its panel of applicants, no more than the number of candidates requested by the Board. The decision of the Committee on the names being recommended for candidacy will be final and will be communicated to the Board.
- Recommend the co-option of a Member to the Board

4.4 Satisfy itself that ALL candidates for Board membership have, in advance of MS Ireland issuing notice of an Annual General Meeting,



submitted a declaration of eligibility to be a member of the Board, and have satisfactorily completed Garda Síochána vetting.

- 4.5 Consider, evaluate, monitor and report its recommendations to the Board in respect of all matters broadly relating to the performance and remuneration of the Chief Executive and Senior Management of MS Ireland
- 4.6 Set the Chief Executive's objectives
- 4.7 Assess the Chief Executive's performance, including:
- Performance in previous year
  - Particular success and difficulties, if any
  - Identification of any learning and development needs
  - Support for the Chief Executive in general
- 4.8 Provide feedback to Chief Executive on his/her performance
- 4.9 Set the Chief Executive's remuneration and review all supporting documentation, to ensure they comply with what was agreed at the beginning of the year, including the Chief Executive's End of Year Summary Statement and expenses (Note: The Company credit card statements are reviewed by the Chairperson of the Board throughout the year).
- 4.10 Oversee arrangements for service contracts of MS Ireland staff who report directly to the Chief Executive, including reviewing their End of Year Summary Statement and expenses.
- 4.11 Report the outcomes of the appraisal process using the Society's processes and key outcomes of the Chief Executive's appraisal process to the Board.

<p>4.12 Ensure the Board has been properly updated by the Chief Executive on staff terms and conditions of service, and other staffing arrangements.</p> <p>-</p> <p>The Nominations &amp; Remuneration Committee meet twice yearly to consider the skills mix and experience of Board Members. They then meet again after the application deadline for nominees to consider which candidates best meet the skills set required.</p> <p>Meetings were held on 20/2/2023; 24/4/2023; 18/5/2023 and 9/6/2023</p>	
<p>Our governing document details a transparent system for both the recruitment and removal of trustees with fixed terms of office and an effective and manageable board size. This is covered under MS Ireland's Constitution. See list of Board members with dates when they joined the Board</p>	<p>List of Board Members &amp; Dates on becoming a Board Member:</p>
<p>Our Board members are appointed, resign or retire according to our Constitution and we keep appropriate records of trustees with details of when their term is up and if they are eligible to stand again.</p>	<p>Up to date register of Board members</p> <p>Charities Regulator and Companies Registration Authority are informed of any changes to our Board members.</p>
<p>The adverts are open long enough to attract the right people to the Board using multiple channels.</p>	<p>In 2023 the three board members retiring, stood for re-election.</p>

**5.12 Put in place a comprehensive induction programme for new charity trustees.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>An Induction presentation is given by the Chief Executive to newly appointed Board members. It covers the vision and values of the organisation, its stakeholders and strategic priorities. It informs the Directors of all our services, research, advocacy and communications within MS Ireland. It also covers information on our volunteers, PR and fundraising activities. It provides information on our Board, upcoming meeting dates in the year ahead, how the organisation is structured and governed. CE gives an insight as to where the organisation is going.</p>	<p>Induction meeting is held usually in October each year after the AGM.</p>

**5.13 Conduct a regular review that includes an assessment of:**

- the effectiveness of your board as a whole, office holders and individual charity trustees
- adherence to the board code of conduct; and
- the structure, size, membership and terms of reference of any sub-committees.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>Annually the Board members participate in a review of how they, the Board and CE are performing. The outcome of the survey is then considered at an upcoming Board meeting to assess how they can perform better and to provide training if necessary to Board members that feel they require support. A review was carried out and recommendations were made at a Board meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023.</p> <p>The Committees, and membership of committees are reviewed annually in terms of size and members' experience. After the AGM the terms of reference of the Committees are also reviewed.</p>	
<p>The Boards terms of reference reflect good practice, are documented and available to members and stakeholders.</p> <p>A skills matrix is maintained so gaps can be identified and addressed.</p>	

**5.14 Do regular skills audits and provide appropriate training and development to charity trustees and staff. If necessary, recruit to fill any competency gaps on the board of your charity.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
Having carried out a self-assessment evaluation, the Board review the results and Board members determine whether they need appropriate training. Outside of this, training is provided if requested by a Board member.	
Skills audit is undertaken by the Nominating Committee to determine any skills gaps on the Board.	
Staff appraisals and evaluations are carried out on an annual basis	

- 6.1      Make sure that the name and Registered Charity Number (RCN) of your charity is displayed on all of your written materials, including your:**
- **website;**
  - **social media platforms; and**
  - **email communications.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>The RCN number is used on our literature, fundraising materials, website, social media platforms, headed paper and emails.</p>	<p>Example of e-mail signature: Multiple Sclerosis Ireland Website   Facebook   Twitter   YouTube   MS &amp; Me Blog</p> <p>A: 80 Northumberland Road, Dublin 4 T: (01) 678 1600   F: (01) 678 1601   E: info@ms-society.ie MS Information Line: 1880 233 233</p> <p>Mission Statement: 'To enable and empower those affected by MS to live the life of their choice to their fullest potential'</p> <p>Private, Confidential and Privileged. This email and any attached files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. The content of this email and any file or attachment transmitted with it, may have been changed or altered without the consent of the author. If you are not the intended recipient, please note that any review, dissemination, disclosure, alteration, printing, circulation or transmission of this email and/or any file or attachment transmitted with it, is prohibited and may be unlawful. If you have received this email or any attachment transmitted with it, in error, please notify dataprotection@ms-society.ie</p> <p>The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland is a limited company registered in Dublin, Ireland with registered offices at 80 Northumberland Road, Dublin 4, Ireland. Company Registration Number 296573. Charity Number 5365. Charities Regulatory Authority Number: 20007867</p>

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## 6.2 Identify your stakeholders and decide how you will communicate with them.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
We developed a stakeholder map in 2015 and updated it again in 2017. We determined how best to communicate with each stakeholder. This was then discussed at Board level on one of the Board's training days (14 April 2018). They considered the power of each stakeholder and our relationship with each one and determined what we wanted to achieve from our relationships with key stakeholders. Senior Management Team held a meeting in August 2018 to review our stakeholders	See Stakeholder Map  Board Training Day – 14 April 2018
We are clear about who our beneficiaries and key stakeholders are.  Accurate and up to date register of members, records of service users and details of funders.	
We produce an annual report with details of our organisational purpose, accounts and activities every year, which is available on our website	<a href="#">Annual Report 2023 -MS Ireland.pdf (ms-society.ie)</a>



**6.3 Decide if and how you will involve your stakeholders in your:**

- **planning;**
- **decision-making; and**
- **review processes.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>Depending on the stakeholder and their level of involvement with the organisation, we include our stakeholders in planning, decision making and review processes. For example in developing our new strategy for 2020-2024, we conducted a survey with our stakeholders to determine what services they wanted the organisation to offer to members and to people affected by MS.</p> <p>We had representative stakeholders on the Strategic Planning Team who were involved in the development of the new Strategic Plan 2020-2024.</p> <p>Members are represented at Council meetings by Council Representatives. Council then selects 3 members as their representatives on the Board</p>	<p>Types of decisions taken at Board level are outlined in the Code of Conduct.</p> <p><a href="https://ms-society.ie/Board-Profiles">Board Profiles   MS Ireland (ms-society.ie)</a></p>
<p>We hold an annual general meeting with our members in line with our Constitution to report on our activities</p>	

**6.4 Make sure you have a procedure for dealing with:**

- **queries;**
- **comments; and**
- **complaints.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>The following is an excerpt from our complaints policy which is on our website (<a href="#">Complaints   MS Ireland (ms-society.ie)</a>): “As a valued supporter of MS Ireland, the board know it is important that we facilitate any feedback or complaints that you may have. If for any reason, you should feel aggrieved then we will endeavour to do our utmost to make sure that we come to a satisfactory resolution. We feel it is important that we learn from our mistakes so your feedback is very important to us.</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring that all our communications and dealings with the general public and supporters are of the highest possible standard. We listen and respond to your views so that we can continue to improve.</p> <p><b>Therefore we aim to ensure that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it is as easy as possible to make a complaint;</li> <li>• we treat as a complaint any clear expression of dissatisfaction with our operations which calls for a response;</li> <li>• we treat it seriously whether it is made by telephone, letter, fax, email or in person;</li> <li>• we deal with it quickly and politely;</li> <li>• we respond accordingly - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, and information on any action taken etc;</li> <li>• we learn from complaints, use them to improve, and monitor them at our Board.</li> </ul> <p>If you do have any feedback, or a complaint about any aspect of our work or the conduct of our staff or volunteers, you can contact the Multiple Sclerosis Society by email, post, telephone or in person.</p>	<p>In the MS Care Centre we operate a “Comment Box” where service users can give feedback on their stay at the Centre. We also hold “Departure Meetings” where meetings are held with residents before they depart to get feedback on their stay. There is a Complaints Policy for the Care Centre.</p> <p>See Statement of Purpose for the Care Centre</p>

<p><b>A complaint should include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happened and when?</li> <li>• What are you concerned about?</li> <li>• What do you want to happen now?</li> </ul> <p>In the first instance, your feedback or complaint will be dealt with by a staff member who will endeavor to resolve the issue, or forward it to the most appropriate person to respond. Please give us as much information as possible and let us know how you would like us to respond to you, providing relevant contact details.”</p>	

**6.5 Follow the reporting requirements of all of your funders and donors, both public and private.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>HSE &amp; Pobal funders – we complete and comply with the terms as set out in the Service Level Arrangements we have with the HSE.</p> <p>Pharmaceutical donors – we meet the terms, conditions and restrictions in funds donated to us. We have a Pharma Policy</p>	

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
<p>HIQA – The MS Care Centre is a registered designated Centre for people with disabilities under the Health Act of 2007. The Centre is registered with HIQA and therefore must make both six monthly and quarterly returns to HIQA. In relation to the quarterly returns, they are the use of physical restraints and alarm activation. Six monthly returns are made regarding theft and burglary, injury of a resident, death of a resident, outbreak of notifiable disease, abuse of a resident, fire, loss of power &amp; heating.</p> <p>DSP – we comply with DSP funding procedures</p> <p>We have three CE Schemes – The schemes run on a 3-year application basis with contracts being renewed annually. After the scheme ends the accounts are audited by an external auditor.</p> <p>The CE supervisors reports to the Board on a bi-monthly basis. Bi-annual meetings are held with the Department of Social Protection.</p> <p>Any donations which have been given by donors for a restricted purpose are used or held for that purpose</p>	
<p>Pobal – having received funding, an audit is carried out and information provided on the actions taken with respect to the funding provided.</p>	

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
HSE Annual Financial Monitoring Return is completed in the February following the financial year where funding is provided	

## Principle 6: Being Accountable **ADDITIONAL STANDARDS**

### 6.6 Produce unabridged (full) financial accounts and make sure that these and your charity's annual report are widely available and easy for everyone to access.

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
Audited financial accounts and annual reports are on our website. These statements are filed with the Companies Registration Office and the Charities Regulatory Authority. All requests for the financial statements are duly complied with.	Link to our annual reports and accounts: <a href="#">Annual Report 2023 -MS Ireland.pdf (ms-society.ie)</a> <a href="#">Audit Report - Irish Company/Group (Unlisted) (ms-society.ie)</a>
Our accounts adhere to the SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities) accounting standard.	
We adhere to the ICTR (Irish Charities Tax Research) Guiding Principles for Fundraising. The principles set the standard for best practice in fundraising in Ireland.	
We are compliant with the Charities Governance Code.	

**6.7 Make sure all the codes and standards of practice to which your charity subscribes are publicly stated.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
The Codes and Standards of Practice that we adhere to are included on our website. <a href="#">Codes of Conduct/Guiding Principles   MS Ireland (ms-society.ie)</a>	<a href="#">Codes of Conduct/Guiding Principles   MS Ireland (ms-society.ie)</a>

**6.8 Regularly review any complaints your charity receives and take action to improve organisational practice.**

Actions our charity takes to meet standards:	Evidence of our actions:
Any complaints made are duly acted upon and we comply with our complaints policy	

**Reviewed by Governance Committee on**

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