



# Annual Report & Accounts 2024

# Mission, Vision, Aims & Values

## Mission

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

## Vision

MS Ireland has a vision of Irish society where all people affected by MS live positive and active lives in the community

## Aims

**The principal objectives for which MS Ireland exists are:**

- » to facilitate people with MS to control their lives and environment, to live with dignity and participate in the community
- » to provide support for the families and carers of people with MS
- » to co-operate with the medical, scientific, social and caring professions
- » to promote scientific research into the cause of, cure for and management of MS, and the alleviation of medical and social symptoms
- » to exchange and disseminate information relating to MS
- » to provide an identifiable focal point by developing an efficient, effective and empathetic organisation to serve the needs of people affected by MS

## Values

### Supportive

“We support individuals whether they are People with Multiple Sclerosis (PwMS), staff or volunteers so that we can work together to fulfil our mission”

### Transparent

“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”

## Page 4

Stakeholder Map

## Page 5-7

Chief Executive & Chairperson Welcome

## Page 8

Strategic Priorities

## Page 9-27

Goal: Service Delivery

## Page 28-34

Goal: Sustainable Finances

## Page 35-46

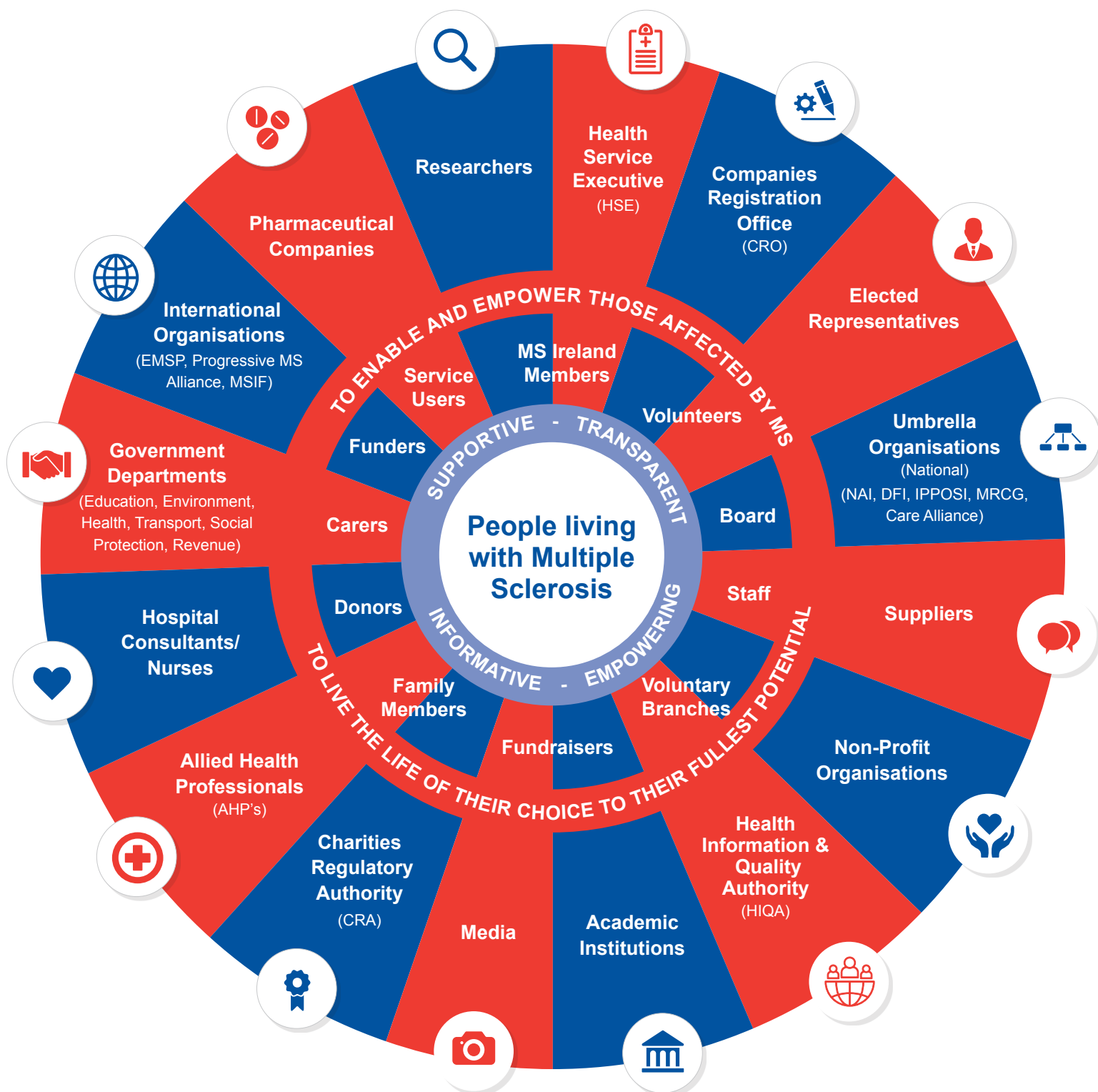
Goal: Innovation

## Page 47-50

Goal: People And Culture



# Stakeholder Map





# CE & Chairperson Welcome



The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland (MS Ireland) is the only national organisation providing information, support, and advocacy services to the MS community. We work with people living with MS, their families, and carers, alongside health professionals, researchers, and wider stakeholders, to ensure that people affected by MS have access to the care, information, and opportunities they need.

At MS Ireland, 2024 was a year defined by connection, resilience, and the power of community. As we entered the fourth and final year of our Strategic Plan, we continued to strengthen and expand the services we provide to people living with MS, their families, and communities across the country. Our work was grounded in our commitment to improving quality of life, fostering independence, and amplifying the voices of those living with MS.

This year, 2,538 people received one-to-one support through our casework service from newly diagnosed individuals seeking guidance to families navigating the daily challenges of MS. Among them were 63 newly diagnosed individuals, including five young people under 18. For one young client, being able to speak to a Community Worker “felt like someone finally understood what I was going through.” It’s in these moments of empathy and reassurance that our mission comes alive.

In our physiotherapy and wellness programmes, more than 13,000 treatment sessions were delivered. One participant shared how being part of a Move Smart MS class gave them “the confidence to get back out walking with my grandchildren,” a simple joy that MS had threatened to take away. These stories remind us that the impact of our services is measured not just in exercises completed, but in the moments of independence regained.

The MS Care Centre provided over 3,000 respite bed nights to 407 individuals. For families, the Care Centre is often described as a lifeline—a place where loved ones are cared for with dignity and compassion, while carers find the rest and support that they so deeply need. The additional funding secured this year meant the Centre could open full-time, ensuring more families could access this vital service.

Beyond services, our advocacy and research work gave voice to the challenges people face every day. Almost 1,000 people took part in the My MS, My Needs survey, shining a light on issues like long waiting times for neurology and the urgent need for better community-based supports. By sharing their lived experiences, participants ensured that policymakers and the wider public could no longer ignore the realities of MS in Ireland.

Fundraising and community spirit once again shone brightly in 2024. From the May 50K challenge to the much-loved MS Readathon, thousands of people walked, ran, read, and rallied to raise vital funds. Highlights included 11,000 children and families taking part in the much-loved MS Readathon to 31 runners raising €65,000 in the Dublin Marathon, our community showed extraordinary creativity and commitment. Stories like that of Ciarán Coakley — a student who ran 10k every day for 25 days and raised €14,000 remind us that acts of courage and kindness ripple out, changing lives.

Through powerful media campaigns, social storytelling, and events like World MS Day, which reached over 1.2 million people, bringing the lived experience of MS to the forefront of public awareness.

Financially, thanks to the generosity of supporters and the careful stewardship of resources, MS Ireland ended the year stronger, with a 23% increase in income and a surplus that will allow us to protect and grow services in the years ahead.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the dedication of our staff, board, volunteers, branches, corporate partners, and most importantly, the MS community.

As we look forward to 2025, we carry these stories with us—stories that inspire, connect, and strengthen our determination to ensure that everyone living with MS in Ireland can live the life they choose.

We are delighted to present our Annual Report for 2024, which highlights the achievements, challenges, and progress made throughout the year. Guided by our 2020–2024 Strategic Plan, our work continued to focus on service delivery, advocacy, research, sustainability, innovation, and building a strong community of support.

## Objective 1: Service Delivery & New Service Models

- 2,538 individuals supported through casework, including 266 new clients and 63 newly diagnosed.
- 13,439 physiotherapy and exercise treatment sessions delivered across the country.
- The MS Care Centre provided 3,053 respite bed nights for 407 people.
- Expanded initiatives included Active Neuro and Move Smart MS, offering tailored physiotherapist-led symptom management and physical activity programmes.

## Objective 2: Research

- Launched the My MS, My Needs 2024 survey with 979 respondents, guiding future services and advocacy.
- Collaborated with MSIF and EMSP on international projects, including the Atlas of MS.
- Worked with Maynooth University on peer support research and volunteer experience studies.

## Objective 3: Advocacy

- Delivered briefings to the Oireachtas Health and Disability Committees.
- Advanced campaigns for long-term neurorehabilitation services and equitable access to neurology.
- Produced the Your Vote Matters 2024 guide, supporting civic participation.
- World MS Day reached over 1.2 million people, amplifying the voices of people living with MS.

## Objective 4: Grow Sustainable Income Base

- May 50K raised over €170,000 with 900 participants.
- MS Readathon generated almost €200,000 with 11,000 registrations.
- Community fundraising and direct appeals brought vital additional income.
- Launched Renew MS Ireland, a major fundraising drive for the Care Centre and new Limerick Resource Centre.

## Objective 5: Develop Partnerships

- Strengthened collaborations with Novartis, Merck, Roche, and Viartis supporting campaigns, services, and the National Conference.
- Partnered internationally with MSIF, EMSP, and the International Progressive MS Alliance.
- Expanded community and corporate partnerships nationwide.

## Objective 6: Develop Digital Operations & Governance

- Advanced roll-out of Salesforce Casework system.
- Improved website functionality and user experience.
- Grew digital engagement: website visits up 19%, YouTube subscribers up 317%.

## Objective 7: Develop and Invest in Our People


- Provided staff training in areas such as LGBTQ+ Awareness and Lone Worker Safety.
- Completed pay increases under Section 39 agreements.
- Updated the Employee Handbook and supported Community Employment schemes with over 40 participants.

## Objective 8: Grow Branch and Community Volunteer Base

- Branches supported local peer groups, therapies, and fundraising.
- Many adopted hybrid meeting formats, blending in-person and online.
- Volunteers contributed 5,070 hours across services, fundraising, and governance.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ava Battles".

**Ava Battles**  
**Chief Executive**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Restan".

**Anne Restan**  
**Chairperson**



# MS Ireland Strategic Priorities

In 2024, MS Ireland worked towards achieving our strategic priorities, as set out in our Strategic Plan 2020-2024. The Board of MS Ireland is committed to building a Society that is integrated, effective, outcome-driven and accountable.

The key objectives of the Strategic Plan 2020-2024 are as follows:

## Goal: Service Delivery

### Objective 1:

#### Services Development and New Service Models

Provide a sustainable service model that delivers quality of life, maximum independence and client satisfaction to our community and stakeholders.

### Objective 2:

#### Research

Ensure service design and development informed by research, international best practice and outcomes.

### Objective 3:

#### Advocacy

Improve access to services to ensure people with MS can exercise choice over their lives and careers.

## Goal: Sustainable Finances

### Objective 4:

#### Grow Sustainable Revenue Base

Increase HSE services and develop regular and recurring giving campaigns to help sustain vital services and new programmes.

### Objective 5:

#### Develop Partnerships

Leverage and grow our partnered programmes to support service development, funding and delivery.

### Objective 6:

#### Develop Digital Operations & Governance

Develop digital operations and governance structures and strategies to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.

## Goal: People & Culture

### Objective 7:

#### Develop & Invest in Our People

Ensure a fit-for-purpose organisational design and develop a workforce model for the future, recognising that as the capabilities of our people improve, so too does the quality of service we deliver to clients.

### Objective 8:

#### Grow Branch & Community Volunteer Base

Grow our volunteer base across our branch network through diverse volunteer opportunities, programmes and ways to get involved.





**Goal: Service Delivery**

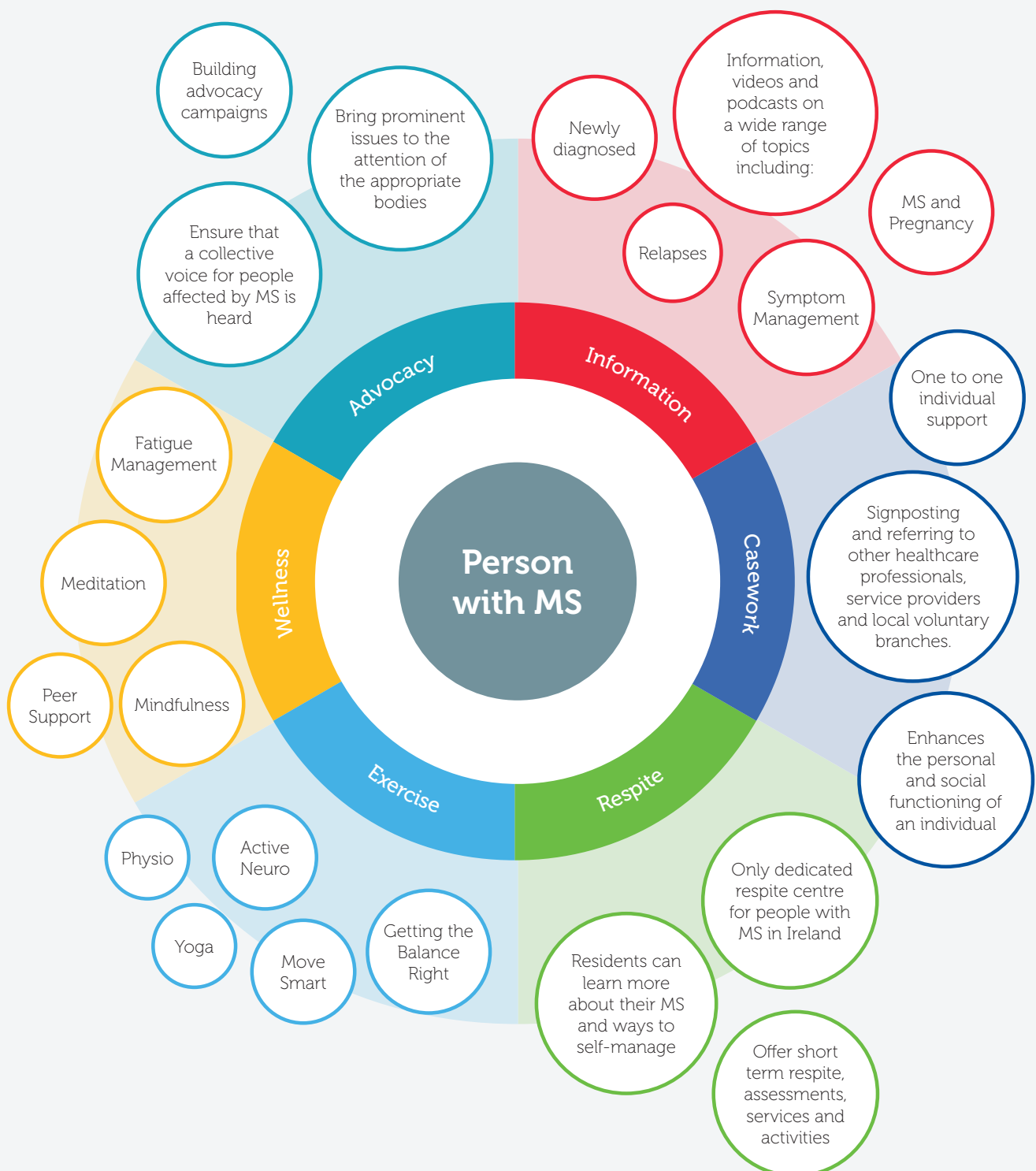


## Objective 1: Services Development & New Service Models

Description: Provide a sustainable service model that delivers quality of life, maximum independence & client satisfaction to our community and stakeholders.

During 2024, MS Ireland entered the fourth year of its Strategic Plan. We continued to review and develop our suite of services delivered by professionals and volunteers. The provision of online services continued. This was an exciting development resulting in many of our programmes being accessible regardless of location and therefore reach a wider audience. This offered us an opportunity to build the capacity of our staff, volunteers, and MS community with improved digital literacy.

### MS Ireland's Model of Care







## Regional Community Work

In 2024, MS Ireland ensured the provision of practical and emotional support through the casework services. Ten Service Level Arrangements (SLA) exist with the HSE in the NorthWest, NorthEast, Dublin (NA,ECA,SWA), SouthEast, Southern, Mid-West, West and Midlands areas. In 2024, 2,538 individuals received a 1:1 casework service nationally. There were 266 new referrals accepted into the casework service in 2024, 63 of those were newly diagnosed in 2024 and 5 were under 18. All reviews were completed on the National Ability Supports System (NASS) database.

The Casework Salesforce Project commenced in 2024, to implement the recommendations from the Framework for Multiple Sclerosis Service ("FRAMES") report and the Quality Matters project.

Community Workers facilitated the delivery of community physiotherapy and other health-promoting physical activity programmes, as well as health promotion initiatives coping strategies and well-being to PwMS and their families.



**2,538**

Individuals Receiving  
1:1 Casework



**63**

Newly Diagnosed  
Contacts



**266**

New Clients to the  
Casework Service

## Casework



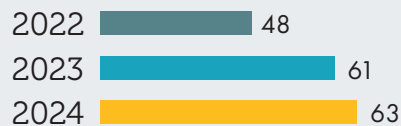
### Individuals who received a 1:1 Casework Service



### Number of New Clients to the Casework Service



### Number of Newly Diagnosed Clients



### Top issues arising during casework

- Emotional Support
- Financial Welfare
- Accommodation
- Aids and Appliances
- Home Support
- Access to Healthcare
- Respite

### In 2024 there were:



**941**  
clients supported



**349**  
programmes delivered



**13,439**  
physiotherapy  
treatments given



**98** (603 participants)  
non-exercise  
programmes  
(e.g. coffee mornings)

## Exercise And Physical Activity Programmes

MS Ireland ran several different programmes as part of our exercise and physiotherapy services. Our focus was on exercise and physiotherapy programmes to enable people to live well at home, reduce disability and symptom severity and improve quality of life. We have a team of directly employed physiotherapists, along with independent physiotherapy, yoga and fitness contractors around the country, delivered these services.

Evidence gathered in 2024 showed that our programmes have a range of benefits including improvements in symptoms and quality of life, reductions in fatigue and mental health issues, reductions in falls and improved confidence to be physically active and reduced healthcare utilisation.



## Getting The Balance Right

In 2024, Getting the Balance Right physiotherapy, yoga and fitness instructor-led programmes ran across all ten of our regions and relied on fundraised income and provided by contractors, 50% of those contractors are funded by branches. The service in the West is provided by our directly employed senior physiotherapist and a team of physiotherapy assistants. New initiatives in 2024 included summer physio assistant led drop-in programmes.

In 2024 we provided:

**207**

**Physiotherapy  
Programmes**

*555 participants*



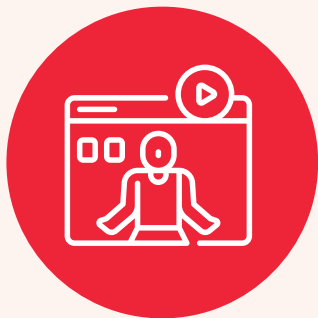
**55**

**Yoga  
Programmes**

*220 participants*







## Move Smart MS

48  
Programmes

345  
Participants

Move Smart MS programmes are tailored for ability and time since diagnosis and address specific symptoms using an exercise and education approach that enables peer learning and social support. Move Smart MS was funded by Rethink Ireland Disability Participation and Inclusion fund in 2024.

We ran programmes of High-Level Fitness, Dizziness and Balance, Better Balance for Falls prevention, Step it up to the Exercise Guideline, Newly diagnosed, Strength and Balance, Pilates and Seated Fitness.



## Physio West

17  
individual programs with the physio assistant

55  
Individual programs with the physiotherapist

} 426 hours of treatment

In Galway, Mayo and Roscommon we have a directly employed full time physiotherapist and 0.5 WTE physiotherapy assistant funded by the HSE. In addition, we have a team of physiotherapy assistants through the Community Employment scheme. The senior physiotherapist conducted 71 new assessments.

That team runs Getting the Balance Right in person and online classes, Active neuro in person and online classes, and individual assessments and treatments including the intensive, semi-supervised programme.



## Active Neuro

44  
Programmes

207  
Participants

The Active Neuro programme ran in the West, Mid-West and Dublin in 2024 and was funded by the HSE. This extension of the Sláintecare Integration fund project in the Midwest provides physiotherapist led physical activity and symptom management programmes for people with MS and other neurological conditions and provides greater availability of and access to physio programmes for people with MS in those regions.

## Wellness Programmes

MS Ireland offered programmes designed to improve the overall well-being of people with MS. These programmes were facilitated by a combination of MS Ireland staff, external contractors, volunteers and partner organisations (such as the HSE and Education and Training Boards (ETB)). They aim to improve overall well-being by providing up-to-date information, encouraging peer engagement like coffee mornings and book clubs, and support and providing opportunities to improve symptom management.

### FACETS

In 2024, the Community Worker team facilitated FACETS (Fatigue: Applying Cognitive behavioural and Energy effectiveness Techniques to lifestyle). It is a six-week evidence-based group fatigue management programme run online or in-person specifically for PwMS.



During the year, staff facilitated four programmes (two national programmes and two regional programmes). Each programme is facilitated by two MS Ireland Regional Community Workers. Adaptations to the programme were undertaken using a co-design methodology to better reflect the experience of people with MS that are wheelchair users.



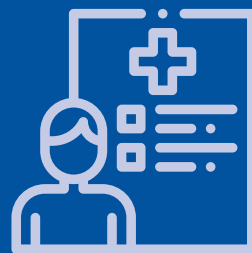
4

FACETS Programmes delivered  
(2 national, 2 regional).



49

people registered on  
FACETS programmes



17

MSI CW's & MS Nurse  
trained to deliver

# Information Line

The MS Information Line is a confidential service that offers reliable, accurate information and support. It provides tailored responses to people affected by MS, their families, and health professionals. The service can be accessed by phone at 0818 233 233, by email at [msinformationservice@ms-society.ie](mailto:msinformationservice@ms-society.ie), or through social media messaging. For many, it is the first point of contact following a diagnosis or when seeking guidance. In addition to answering queries, the Information Line can direct callers to other relevant supports, including the Community Worker service, as well as external services and agencies.

In 2024, 531 contacts were made to the MS Information Line.

## Common Reasons For Making Contact Included:



General Information



Transportation



Helpline Support



Travel



Entitlements and Services



Query Diagnosis



Treatments



Accessibility



Information on Counselling



Health Care Professional



Short Term Respite



Moving to Ireland





## The MS Care Centre

The MS Care Centre is a 12-bed respite facility. 12 residents can be accommodated, with lengths of stay options of 7/12 nights in 2024. 407 individuals availed of respite in the Care Centre, with high dependency beds having the greatest demand. In July 2024, the Care Centre received an additional €250,000 in funding, enabling it to operate on a full-time basis, including every weekend.

The MS Care Centre is registered with the Health Information Quality Authority ("HIQA"). The Care Centre is monitored every three years by HIQA and was approved for re-registration in October 2020. The Care Centre had an announced inspection on 16 November 2024. The Clinical Nurse Manager and the Quality Manager at the Care Centre ensure that the standards and regulations set by HIQA are maintained.



**407**

Respite Stays



**251**

Individuals



**3,053**

Bed Nights





# Find Your Local MS Ireland

To learn more about services available in your area, contact your local Regional Office. All voluntary Branches can be contacted through their associated regional office.

## Dublin North & Fingal Regional Office

Providing services in north county Dublin and city

na@ms-society.ie | (01) 490 5933

## Midlands Regional Office

Providing services in Laois, Offaly, Longford and Westmeath

midlandsr@ms-society.ie | (042) 975 4304

## Midwest Regional Office

Providing services in Clare, Limerick and Tipperary North

midwest@ms-society.ie | (061) 303 802

## North East Regional Office

Providing services in Cavan, Monaghan, Louth, and Meath

northeast@ms-society.ie | (042) 975 4304

## North West Regional Office

Providing services in Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim

northwestr@ms-society.ie | (074) 918 9027

## South East Dublin & Wicklow Regional Office

Providing services in Wicklow and areas of south Dublin

eca@ms-society.ie | (01) 490 5933

## Southern Regional Office

Providing services in Cork and Kerry

southern@ms-society.ie | (021) 430 0001

## South East Regional Office

Providing services in Kilkenny, Wexford, Carlow, Waterford and South Tipperary

southeastr@ms-society.ie | (056) 7777 771

## South West Dublin & Kildare Regional Office

Providing services in Kildare and areas of South West Dublin

swa@ms-society.ie | (01) 490 5933

## Western Regional Office

Providing services in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon

westernr@ms-society.ie (091) 768 630

# Voluntary Branches

Carlow	Fermoy	Limerick	Tipperary
Cavan	Kerry North	Louth	Tipperary South
Clare	Kerry South	Longford	Tralee/West Kerry
Cork City	Kildare	Mayo South	Tuam
Donegal	Kilkenny	Meath	Waterford
Dublin South	Laois	Monaghan	Wexford South
East Wicklow	Leitrim	Roscommon	

## Voluntary Branches

In 2024, MS Ireland staff continued to support local Branches and facilitate hybrid meetings, as several Branches still held their meetings online. Branch activities included support groups, social events, therapeutic services, and, in some cases, financial assistance. Capacity-building opportunities and training were also provided to all Branches. This vital support for people with MS at the local level is made possible through voluntary fundraising efforts within communities.



*Louth Branch*



*Cavan Branch*



*Donegal Branch*

## Community Employment Schemes

The provision of services and supports throughout the country relies on the valuable contribution of our Community Employment Scheme participants. They contribute hugely to the work of MS Ireland on a day-to-day basis.

In 2024, there were 23 Community Employment participants assisting in the work of the MS Care Centre, 13 Community Employment participants assisting with the exercise training plans for PwMS in the Western region and 13 visiting PwMS in their homes, in the North West region. All regions have a number of Community Employment participants that assist with data collection for the Health Research Board.



## Social Media Highlights



Facebook 23,574 Followers



75,900

Page visits

+17%  
on 2023



Instagram

+21%  
on  
2023



7,154

Followers



YouTube

1,714

Subscribers

+317% on 2023



2,249

Watch Time

+186% on  
2023



9,400

Followers



LinkedIn 2,416 Followers



160,130

Impressions

+56%  
on 2023

## Social Media & Website Detailed Statistics

Channel	2024	2023	% Change
<b>Facebook</b>			
Followers	23,574	22,400	+5%
Visits	75,900	64,700	+17%
Reach	1,500,000	1,393,500	+8%
<b>Instagram</b>			
Followers	7,154	5,900	+21%
<b>YouTube</b>			
Subscribers	1,614	387	+317%
Views	98,647	80,890	+22%
Watch time	2,249	787	+186%
<b>Twitter</b>			
Followers	9,400		
<b>LinkedIn</b>			
Followers	2,416	1,838	+31%
Impressions	160,130	102,504	+56%

Website Overview	2024	2023	% Change 24/23
Visits	131,959	110,722	+19%
Unique Page views	259,644	223,349	+16%
<b>Top Entry Point</b>			
Search Engine	65,831	55,143	+19%
Direct Entry	37,916	24,554	+54%
Campaigns	12,936	523	+2373%
<b>Top Entry Page</b>			
News	24,659	11,986	+106%
MS + Me Blog	12,821	11,584	+11%
About MS	12,888	10,979	+17%
What is MS	5,669	5,223	+9%
<b>Movers and Shakers</b>			
	<b>2024 increase versus 2023</b>	<b>% Change 2024 versus 2023</b>	
News	+13,863	+85%	
Events	+3,830	+80%	
Community Worker Services	+1,707	+321%	
Physio and Exercise	+1647	+193%	



## Marketing Communications

Throughout 2024, our communications work remained central to how we connected with the wider public and raised awareness of multiple sclerosis, helping to amplify our message, engage with relevant communities, and highlight the lived experiences of people with MS across Ireland.

Through national and regional media campaigns we continued to build awareness and drive participation in key events and initiatives whilst focusing on highlighting the lived experiences of people with MS—bringing real voices and real stories to the forefront. By combining traditional media with digital engagement, video storytelling, and interactive webinars, we expanded our reach and worked to grow the understanding of MS across Ireland.

## Public Relations and Media Engagement

Our PR work in 2024 centred on raising awareness through strong national and local coverage. Press releases and targeted campaigns supported major fundraising activities including the MS Readathon,

The May 50K, Dip a Day, Steptember and Dip for Diagnosis, securing widespread coverage across newspapers, radio, and online platforms.

World MS Day in May achieved exceptional coverage, with appearances across TV, radio, and print. Local radio stations played a central role in telling the stories of regional staff and people living with MS. In total, our World MS Day media activity achieved a reach of 1.2 million, with interviews across 15 different radio and podcast platforms, as well as appearances on TG4 News. Seven feature articles, including coverage in the Irish Independent, Irish Sun, Irish Star, and Irish Mirror, brought a further reach of over 750,000. Also #WorldMSDay trended at No. 5 on Twitter on World MS Day, amplifying our voice online.

We launched the MS Readathon campaign in August with a photo shoot and press release that secured national coverage in The Irish Independent and The Herald that emphasised the benefits of reading together as a family. There were dual Readathon launches in Monaghan and Dublin, with authors such as Eoin Colfer and ambassador Orla Marron participating. Orla's media impact was significant,



including appearances on Virgin Media's Ireland AM, TG4's Cúla4, RTÉ's News2Day, and multiple radio and print interviews. The campaign reached over 3 million people, with an estimated media buy equivalent of €200,000.

MS Ireland partnered with Oceans of Hope to host two 'Introduction to Sailing' days in Dun Laoghaire, with 16 participants and a waiting list of over 40. Coverage in The Examiner and Afloat.ie complemented a strong social media campaign.

We helped launch the My MS My Needs Survey with wide ranging media coverage. The Irish Times ran a feature article, with The Irish Independent and Irish Country Living preparing follow-ups. MS Ireland voices also featured on Newstalk Breakfast Briefing, Community Radio Kilkenny, Phoenix FM, and Clare FM.

## Digital Media and Video Content

2024 was also the year we expanded our video storytelling. We produced interviews with fundraisers and campaign ambassadors, hosted on our YouTube channel and amplified via social media. These videos not only shone a spotlight on fundraisers but also inspired new supporters to get involved.

The MS & Me Blog remained one of the most popular sections of our website, drawing consistent traffic and engagement on social media.

Our webinar programmes also grew in scope and popularity.

- The Unspeakable Bits series, hosted by Trevis L. Gleason, addressed vital topics including bladder dysfunction, fatigue management, and the challenges of leaving employment due to MS. Across live and recorded formats, the series attracted thousands of views, with the July session on 'What if you cannot work?' surpassing 600 views online - the highest to date. The year concluded with a special November edition featuring international MS leaders, who looked ahead to challenges and opportunities in 2025.
- The MS Writers' Workshop webinar series brought together authors, editors, and industry experts to inspire creativity in the MS community. Topics ranged from 'The Art of Storytelling' to 'The Publishing Process' and 'Making Your Writing Findable Online'. There were four webinars in total with more than 500 people attending the webinars live.





## World MS Day

On May 30th, MS Ireland joined people living with MS and other MS organisations around the world to mark World MS Day. The theme for World MS Day 2024 was 'Diagnosis', focusing on raising awareness about the barriers to timely and accurate diagnosis.

MS Ireland's campaign highlighted the importance of early diagnosis, access to quality care, and the support networks that help people navigate life with MS.

## Information Resources

During 2024, information resources were developed in the areas of fatigue management, an online mental health resource and a printed resource for children with a family member with MS. In addition to this, general information about MS Ireland's services was also highlighted.

## AGM

The 2024 AGM was held online via zoom on 16th September 2024 at 4.00pm. There were 28 members in attendance.

## National Conference

In November 2024, MS Ireland proudly hosted its second consecutive in-person National Conference, held in County Monaghan. The event brought together over 240 delegates from across the country, offering an invaluable opportunity to connect, share experiences, and gain insights. A diverse panel of expert speakers delivered engaging sessions on key topics including nutrition, emerging MS treatments, fatigue management, assistive technology, and entitlements, ensuring attendees left informed and supported. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the value of in-person events and the practical relevance of the sessions delivered.







## Objective 2: Research

**Description:** Service design and development informed by research, international best practice and outcomes

Sharing opportunities with our community to engage in and learn more about MS research is an important part of the work that MS Ireland does. Throughout 2024, we provided numerous opportunities with our community members and shared findings through our eNews, website and social media platforms. MS Ireland collaborated with Multiple Sclerosis International Federation (MSIF) on updates to the Atlas of MS and the European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP).

MS Ireland continued to develop the 'Researchers Profiles' section on our website. This involved keeping up-to-date researchers profiles and call outs on our website and ensuring this section was easy to navigate for people with MS and researchers alike.

MS Ireland remained active within the research space throughout 2024 through collaboration with the All-Ireland MS Research Network (AIMS-RN) as well as through Maynooth University and other research organisations. During the year preliminary work with Maynooth University took place regarding a research project focusing on the needs of people

with MS regarding peer support and engagement. This research was designed to support the direction of peer support engagement projects in the future. In addition, MS Ireland undertook a short piece of research on the role and experience of volunteers in the organisation. This research will support the developments to support volunteers associated with the organisation.

The My MS, My Needs survey data collection was undertaken in 2023 with a total of 979 respondents. This is a repeat of the 2016 survey. The results will help MS Ireland to plan and possibly improve services and will inform ongoing advocacy work over the coming years. The report was launched in 2024.



## Objective 3: Advocacy

**Description:** Improve access to services to ensure PwMS can exercise choice over their lives and careers

Throughout 2024, the Advocacy and Research Officer focused on supporting people with MS through information provision, advocacy, community engagement, and collaboration with policymakers and health-system partners. Priorities for the coming year included sustaining progress in service delivery, continuing to reduce barriers to care, and strengthening the visibility and understanding of the needs of people living with MS across Ireland.

MS Ireland believes in the power of working in partnership with other organisations. By doing this, we use our collective voice to be heard more clearly.

In 2024, MS Ireland continued to work with the Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI) on some issues including a campaign to highlight the postcode lottery associated with access to neurology and neurorehabilitation.

### Service Development

In September, MS Ireland marked the expansion of the National MS Respite Centre, made possible through additional government funding. This enabled the Centre to remain open full-time for the remainder of the year.

Ongoing advocacy focused on securing long-term neurorehabilitation services are available beyond the standard 12-week rehabilitation period, recognising the critical role of voluntary providers in delivering community-based supports.



### Editorial and Information Resources

In 2024, the Advocacy and Research Officer coordinated the release of *MS Ireland's Annual Research Ezine*. This edition covered a broad range of topics including stigma, cognitive reserve, nutrition, body image, and clinical research. The publication brought together contributions from professionals and aimed to inform and support people living with MS.

In advance of local, European, and presidential elections and referendums, the 'Your Vote Matters 2024' guide was developed and launched. The guide provided practical information about voting procedures, accessibility, and civic engagement, supporting individuals with MS to participate fully in democratic processes.

### Policy and Advocacy Activities

During the year, the focus remained on progressing policy priorities and representing the needs of the MS community:

- **Role in the Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI):** MS Ireland was appointed Vice Chair of the NAI, contributing to coordination and advocacy across more than 30 neurological organisations.
- **Engagement with Oireachtas Committees:** MS Ireland delivered briefings to the Oireachtas Committee on Health and the Committee on Disability Matters, highlighting gaps in community neurorehabilitation services and the need for sustainable funding beyond short-term rehabilitation.
- **Pre-Budget Advocacy:** MS Ireland participated in pre-budget meetings and discussions to secure increased investment in neurology services, including consultant neurologists in regional hospitals and the expansion of Community Neurorehabilitation Teams.
- **Meetings with Government and HSE:** Regular engagement with Minister Anne Rabbitte,



Minister Stephen Donnelly, the HSE CEO and senior officials to progress commitments under the National Neurorehabilitation Strategy and support the expansion of services.

## Community Engagement and European Collaboration

Community-focused work continued in 2024 through several national and European activities:

- Supported the *Young Persons Network* event with the European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP), involving young delegates from across Europe.
- Represented MS Ireland in Brussels during the *One Million Minds* campaign, meeting Members of the European Parliament to promote improved care and support.
- Contributed to voter engagement initiatives ahead of the European elections, supporting accessible participation for the MS community.

## Awareness-Raising and Media Work

Media and public engagement included:

- Interviews with Newstalk and Clare FM to share findings from the *My MS My Needs* survey, drawing attention to waiting times for neurologist appointments, low awareness of

neurorehabilitation services, and financial pressures on individuals and families.

- Promotion of the General Election Manifesto, encouraging voters and candidates to engage on issues such as accessible healthcare, income supports, housing adaptations and transport.
- Participation in Brain Awareness Week events and public education sessions, including collaboration with St Vincent's University Hospital and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

## Events and Stakeholder Forums

Several events and forums were organised or supported:

- Chaired a panel discussion on Patient and Public Involvement in research during the All-Ireland MS Research Network Symposium.
- Launched the *My MS My Needs* survey report at an Oireachtas briefing on World MS Day, sharing key insights with policymakers.
- Participated in the National Disability Strategy consultation and the National Disability Survey consultation, contributing perspectives on the lived experience of people with neurological conditions.
- Supported the delivery of the annual National Conference and other awareness initiatives, including World MS Day events and regional activities.





**Goal: Sustainable Finances**



## Objective 4: Grow Sustainable Revenue Base

**Description:** Increase HSE services and develop regular and recurring giving campaigns to help sustain vital services and new programmes.



In 2024, we experienced the closure of Facebook fundraising in Ireland, which had a significant impact on our individual online challenges. As a result, we scaled back activity in this area. However, we continued to test and explore new platforms to diversify our online fundraising strategy and future-proof this important income stream.

In response to the shifting fundraising landscape, we focused on developing our corporate and major giving income streams, including increased efforts in securing building grants and foundation support.

These efforts contributed positively to our income growth and aligned with our strategic goal of achieving sustainable finances.

### MS Readathon 2024

In November 2024, more than 11,000 registrations were received from children, schools, and adult participants. While participation levels were consistent with previous years, fundraising declined once again. Nonetheless, the campaign remained a strong success overall.

Throughout the month, a range of activities—including author visits, illustration workshops and the support of our volunteer school ambassadors—helped engage children and teachers nationwide. Recognising that a fully online format does not suit everyone, MS Ireland offered a hybrid approach, with many schools opting to return to traditional sponsorship cards in addition to online participation.

The MS Readathon generated just under €200,000, a testament to the generosity and commitment of participants and supporters. In 2024, the prize structure was refreshed, moving away from screen-based rewards such as iPads and instead focusing on more traditional options. Every participant also received a medal, which was especially well received by children.

We are very grateful to our sponsors, Languages Connect and Eason, for providing book bundles in support of the campaign. Looking ahead, a new three-year plan is being developed in 2025 to further strengthen the MS Readathon. We extend our sincere thanks to all who contributed to its success.





## The May 50K 2024

The May 50K returned in 2024 with strong participation, as over 900 individuals registered for the challenge, consistent with previous years. This initiative provided an important platform to collaborate with the Multiple Sclerosis International Federation (MSIF) and with other international MS societies, including MS Germany and MS UK, while also generating support for MS services in Ireland and contributing to global research efforts.

The campaign raised more than €170,000, representing a significant increase on 2023. We extend our sincere appreciation to all those who completed 50K in May - whether running, walking, or rolling. Their commitment and support were integral to advancing our mission and delivering meaningful progress for people affected by MS.

## Community fundraising

### Ad Hoc sport

MS Ireland is very lucky to have the support of many intrepid sportspeople who undertake all sorts of challenges to raise funds – including Ciarán Coakley

who ran 10k every day for 25 days on top of school and other commitments raising more than €14,000.

Seán Keane and his team of cyclists did an East to West cycle from Dublin – the Áras to Crossmolina raising an incredible €8,600 and Helen Doyle – who organised a spinathon last May raising €5,000 along with many others.







## Women's Mini Marathon

50 ladies joined the MS Ireland Team for what is always a great day out raising over €20,000 in the process.

## Dublin Marathon

We had 31 runners in the Dublin Marathon and they raised a phenomenal €65,000 - a record-breaking year.



## Community

So many people did wonderful things to raise funds such as: The Bearded Villains who joined in with the May €50,000 but also held their own events raising over €11,000; The Flanagan sisters, who continue to fundraise via their Easter Walk, yoga and music; Catherine Hayes who cut her hair on the anniversary of her first fundraiser six years ago, and Mick Fogarty who held a fishing event – a first for MS Ireland!

## Golf

Many thanks to Windward Management, colleagues, and friends who hosted their annual charity golf day and charity walk for MS Ireland - this was a fantastic way to raise funds and we are very grateful for their continuing support. Leopardstown Wednesday Hotshots, Enniscrone Golf Club and Conlon's BMW also hosted charity golf days for MS Ireland.

## Skydive

Among our skydivers this year were two sets of sisters, Emma and Aoife Geraghty, and Louise and Michele Cannon, who raised significant funds in support of MS Ireland.

## Treks

Treks and particularly the Camino have long been a part of MS Ireland fundraising. This tradition continued in 2024, with fundraisers completing self guided Caminos. Many thanks to Anne Marie Harrington, Derek and Emer Grogan and Dorothy Rowley for their generous support.

## Charity partners

Our 2024–2025 charity partner was Aurivo – Homeland Stores. The entire Aurivo team actively supported fundraising from the outset, organising annual events, participating in MS Ireland initiatives, and creating new ones such as STEPtober.

We also benefitted from significant partnerships with the Access Foundation for the Miesta Fiesta.





## Corporate Support

Special thanks to ACCA for hosting their Christmas lunch for MS Ireland - a very special event, beautifully organised by the committee which was reflected in the generous donations received.

## Workplace Training

The Information and fundraising teams now offer MS in the Workplace training, which was successfully delivered to several companies in Dublin and Galway.



## Direct Mails

In 2024, MS Ireland continued its tradition of connecting meaningfully with supporters through two major direct mail campaigns - in the Spring and again at Christmas. These appeals shared powerful personal stories from individuals living with MS and highlighted the tangible difference supporters' contributions make to our services.

The Spring Appeal focused on the MS Care Centre, shining a light on the only respite centre of its kind in Ireland for people living with MS and other neurological conditions. It contrasted the stories of

Bridget and Christina, respectively a longtime service user and a young person with MS who recently discovered the service. The campaign highlighted the critical need to sustain and expand this 'home away from home' for the MS community, and the incredible difference it makes in the lives of those who stay there, but also their families and carers.

The Christmas appeal shared the hopeful story of Naomi, a mother living with MS, and her young son Evan. It not only illustrated the challenges of parenting with MS but also offered a reflection on how far care and treatment have come in Ireland. Naomi's grandmother was also diagnosed with MS at a time when it was often viewed as a life sentence, with few supports available. Today, thanks to decades of advocacy and service development by MS Ireland, people with MS have access to a wide range of services, information, and community resources that allow them to live fuller, more independent lives.

## Video Series

In 2024, MS Ireland launched a brand-new video series designed to showcase the breadth and impact of our services nationwide. Blending real stories from PwMS with on-the-ground perspectives, the series highlights how our work makes a tangible difference through the voices of those who deliver and benefit from our support.

From physiotherapy and respite care to casework support and advocacy, each short video offers a window into how MS Ireland walks alongside people throughout their journey and empowers them to lead the life they choose. This initiative not only amplified awareness of our services but also celebrated the voices and resilience of the MS community.





## Renew MS

Towards the end of the year, we launched the Renew MS initiative, alongside the corresponding website: [renewmsireland.ie](https://renewmsireland.ie). Through this project, corporate and individual donors alike have the opportunity to contribute essential capital items, monetary donations and/or volunteer their skills to remodel our existing facilities and enable us to expand our services to meet the growing needs of the MS community.

We aim to carry out large-scale renovations and refits in the MS Care Centre to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and can serve as a National Services Hub for MS Ireland.

In the Midwest, the new MS Ireland Resource Centre in Limerick will be a welcoming and supportive space dedicated to enhancing the well-being of people living with MS. The centre will proudly feature Limerick's first and only fully accessible gym, ensuring that everyone, regardless of mobility, can participate in tailored fitness programmes. Here, individuals will also benefit from physiotherapist-led group exercise sessions designed to improve mobility, strength, and overall physical health.

## Christmas Cards

A big thank you to everyone who bought Christmas cards from the fundraising shop. We ran an art competition for children who have loved ones living with MS to design our Christmas cards. This was a great way to showcase the creativity of our community and to sell one-of-a-kind Christmas cards. Thanks to our artists Leila Roddy, Eliza O'Dwyer, Max Carton, Ava Dillon and Chloe Dillon.



## Objective 5: Develop Partnerships

**Description:** Leverage and grow our partnered programmes to support service development, funding, and delivery.

We continue to invest time and resources in building and strengthening our corporate partnerships, and we saw encouraging results in this area in 2024. We maintained strong relationships with our existing partners while actively seeking and developing new collaborations. A particular focus this year was on fostering local partnerships to support the work of our regional offices, where we achieved several notable successes.

At MS Ireland, we are proud to work alongside a passionate and committed community. In 2024, our supporters continued to show exceptional dedication by organising a diverse array of fundraising activities. These partnerships – both corporate and community-based – remain central to our mission and play a vital role in sustaining and expanding our services nationwide.

- Aoife Kirwan, MS Ireland’s Information Officer, serves on the Board of the European MS Platform (EMSP), the umbrella organisation representing MS societies and organisations across Europe. MS Ireland also supported projects such as the IMSS survey, in which people across Europe were asked about their experiences of MS Symptoms.
- MS Ireland engages with MSIF and the International Progressive MS Alliance on areas such as policy, shared goal setting, research, and governance. In addition, MS Ireland contributes to MSIF’s *Atlas of MS* as a member of its working group.
- Our Advocacy Officer Alison Cotter is a member of the NAI board, our CE Ava Battles is a member of the MSIF board and Aoife Lambe is a member of the DFI board. We also have many staff on working groups and committees.
- Pharmaceutical companies; in particular Novartis, Merck, Viatris and Roche partnered with MS Ireland on projects and activities supporting our information services. We would particularly like to highlight following collaborations in 2024:
  - MS Ireland partnered with Novartis to deliver a World MS Day initiative in which people living with MS wrote personal letters about their experiences. These letters were displayed in St Stephen’s Green and shared across social media, offering insights into the writers’ thoughts, feelings, and—at times—the messages they wanted others to understand about life with MS. Through this initiative, MS Ireland was able to meaningfully engage with the wider public and deepen awareness and understanding of MS.
  - Novartis, Merck, and Roche supported MS Ireland’s National Conference, helping to bring expert knowledge and information directly to people living with MS and their supporters. The conference was delivered in both in-person and online formats, ensuring broad access.
  - Viatris supported the Information Fair held as part of the National Conference, giving attendees the opportunity to engage directly with a wide range of services and companies, and to access the information most relevant to them.







Goal: Innovation



## Objective 6: Develop Digital Operations & Governance

**Description:** Continue to strengthen the governance and regulation of MS Ireland ensuring compliance with relevant regulatory bodies.

We focused on developing digital operations and governance structures and strategies to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness. Ensure the Organisation has a robust ICT (Information & Communication Technology) strategy roadmap and execution plan, including the financial, tactical, and strategic benefits of proposed major ICT initiatives.

- We planned and budgeted the rollout of Salesforce across the organisation.
- We built a new website [www.renewmsireland.ie](http://www.renewmsireland.ie) as part of a National fundraising campaign for the care centre renovations and the new MS Resource Centre Limerick.
- Casework: Enclude continued with the Salesforce Casework project based on the recommendations of the Quality Matters Report in 2024, with a schedule of work planned for 2024.
- Recruitment: We recruited a Systems Administrator to assist with testing and reviewing systems e.g. Salesforce and Accounts IQ.
- Website: Work was completed to enhance user experience and navigation on the Community Work and Physiotherapy & Exercise pages.
- Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) & Google Adwords: We engaged a digital agency on retainer to manage our google ad word accounts and a series of campaigns. The first two campaigns launched in early July.

## Who We Are

### Patron

MS Ireland is delighted to have Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland, as sole patron.

## Organisation Details

### Auditor

Forvis Mazars  
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm  
Block 3, Harcourt Centre  
Harcourt Road  
Dublin 2, D02 A339

### Principal Bankers

Bank of Ireland  
College Green  
Dublin 2

### Solicitors

Joynt & Crawford  
8 Angelsea Street  
Dublin 2

### Registered Office

80 Northumberland Road, Dublin 4

### Charity Number

CHY 5365

### Charity Regulatory Number

20007867

### Company Number

296573

### Date of Incorporation

19th November 1998

### Year MS Ireland was founded

1961



# The Board

MS Ireland is governed by a Board of 11 voluntary members, each bringing a diverse range of experience and skills. This includes individuals with MS and family members of people with MS, as well as professionals with backgrounds in law and other fields.

The Board is responsible for promoting our vision, aims, and values and directs the Chief Executive to achieve these goals through the various departments, services and resources. In 2024, the Board convened eleven times, focusing on significant work in finance, funding, governance and strategy.

● BOARD MEMBER 2023/2024

CHAIRPERSON

● Anne Restan

VICE CHAIRPERSON

● Aveen Murray

● Robin Bradley

● Noelle Burke

● Tony Condon

● Jacinta Kelly

● Rebecca Maguire

● Sean Martin

● Paddy Mulhall

● Rory Mulcahy

● Maurice O'Connor

● Martin Power

● Niall Rooney

● Mary Sheehan Lonergan

● Auke van der Werff

● Leslie Warren

● BOARD MEMBER 2024/2025

Resignations/Changes

Noelle Burke, Rory Mulcahy and Mary Sheehan Lonergan on 30/09/2024

Appointments

Paddy Mulhall, Niall Rooney and Auke van der Werff on 30/09/2024

MS Ireland Annual Report & Accounts 2024 37

## New Board at AGM 2024

- Anne Restan continued as Chairperson of the Board.
- Aveen Murray continued as Vice Chairperson.
- Maurice O'Connor continued as Company Secretary.
- Mary Sheehan Lonergan stepped down as the Council Representative.
- Paddy Mulhall, Niall Rooney and Auke van der Werff were elected to the board at the AGM.

## Board Committees

The Board is responsible for the strategy and appoints committees as required. The following committees were appointed by the Board to aid in the internal workings of MS Ireland:

1. Finance, Audit, Risk and Strategy Committee
2. Services, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee
3. Research, Information, Advocacy and Communications Committee
4. Nomination and Remuneration Committee
5. Governance and Sustainability Committee
6. People and Organisation Committee

## Board attendance 2024

	8 Feb	11 Apr	27 Apr	15 May	23 May	27 Jun	19 Aug	5 Sep	30 Sep	31 Oct	28 Nov	TOTAL
Robin Bradley	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	6/11
Noelle Burke	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	5/8
Tony Candon	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	9/11
Jacinta Kelly	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10/11
Dr Rebecca Maguire	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	8/11
Sean Martin	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	8/11
Aveen Murray	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	9/11
Rory Mulcahy	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	6/8
Paddy Mulhall	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	✓	3/3
Maurice O'Connor	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓*	✓*	x*	
Martin Power	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10/11
Anne Restan	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	9/11
Niall Rooney	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	✓	3/3
Mary Sheahan-Lonergan	✓	✓	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	5/8
Auke van der Werff	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	✓	3/3
Leslie Warren	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	11/11



## Conflicts of Interest and Loyalties

At every Board meeting, members are asked to state if they have a conflict of interest and/or conflict of loyalty. A register is kept, and Board members are asked to complete a form stating their conflict of interest if they have one. MS Ireland also has a Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Loyalty policy.

## Recruitment and Induction of Board Members

Three of our eleven Board Member vacancies are filled rotationally from the council branch representatives. Notification of the remaining vacancies for Board members is advertised in MS News, eNews and on the MS Ireland website.

Prospective Board members complete an application form considered by the Nominating Committee, who then make recommendations to the Board. Once approved by the Board, the chosen candidates stand for election by the members at the AGM.

New Board members are given one afternoon's induction training by the CE to familiarise them with their duties as Board members, their legal obligations, the governance of the organisation and policies and procedures. Further training can be made available if required.

## Skills and Experience

Annually, the Nomination and Remuneration Committee together with the CE determine the skills required on the Board. When the Nomination and Remuneration Committee recommend candidates to the Board, they ensure that the skills gap is filled. Candidates are required to be committed to MS Ireland's development, share in its values and be problem solving in their approach, as well as having proven professional skills.

MS Ireland's Board members have expertise in a wide range of areas including accounting, legal, banking, and strategic marketing. For full board profiles log on to our website, [www.ms-society.ie](http://www.ms-society.ie).

## Length of Terms Served by The Board

A Board member is elected on to the Board for a period of three years. The Board member can opt to stand for re-election for a further three years. Each

board member can serve no more than three terms of three years on the Board, so a maximum of nine years' service as a Board member is permitted.

## Decision Making Processes

Decisions reserved for the board and those delegated to CE are listed in the organisation's Code of Conduct. Schedule of Matters of the Board are detailed in the Code of Conduct. Log on to our website to read the Code of Conduct: [www.ms-society.ie](http://www.ms-society.ie).

## Risk Management Policies and Processes

Risks are detailed in a Risk Register reviewed by the Board, the Finance, Audit, Risk and Strategy Committee and the senior management team.

## Engagement with Stakeholders

MS Ireland communicates with its stakeholders via email, eNews, the website, social media, MS News, council meetings, regional integrated meetings, staff meetings, and through correspondence and meetings with third parties.

## Governance/Administrative Details

MS Ireland is the only national organisation working for people and families living with MS. It is a limited company with charitable status. It is governed by a Board of Directors, which is accountable for the financial dealings and overall execution of the Society’s vision. MS Ireland’s structure enables it to develop as an organisation that continuously meets the needs of the MS community in a professional and accountable manner.

### The Council

MS Ireland’s Council is a representative body of the voluntary Branch network. It encourages communication on a range of issues and enhances co-operation between all structures of the Society. Two Council meetings were held in 2024.

All Branches are represented on the Council. Three Council members are elected by Council representatives and sit on the Board of Directors of MS Ireland.

### Voluntary Branches

27 voluntary Branches operate across Ireland.

### Management and staff

The management and staff carry out the day-to-day activities of the Society through various services, departments and facilities. These are directed by the Senior Management Team, headed by the Chief Executive. MS Ireland employs 92 people across national and regional offices and 54 Community Employment participants. MS Ireland’s work is supported by committed volunteers around the country.

## MS Ireland’s Senior Management Team

**Ava  
Battles**

Chief  
Executive

**Aoife  
Lambe**

National  
Services  
Manager

**Caitriona  
Hughes**

Fundraising  
Manager

### Remuneration

The number of employees whose emoluments, excluding employer pension contributions, were greater than €60,000 in 2024 is set out below:

<b>5</b>	€60,000 - €70,000	<b>2</b>	€70,000 - €80,000	<b>1</b>	€80,000 - €90,000	<b>1</b>	€100,000 - €125,000
----------	----------------------	----------	----------------------	----------	----------------------	----------	------------------------

The Nominating and Remuneration Committee, a sub-committee of the Board, is responsible for making decisions regarding remuneration of the Senior Management Team and those who report directly to the Chief Executive.

The Workplace Relations Committee awarded pay increases to 539 employees of not-for-profit organisations as follows:

- A 3% increase effective from 1 April 2023
- A 2% increase effective from 1 November 2023
- A further 3% increase effective from 1 March 2024



## Codes of Practice

MS Ireland operates in accordance with a number of codes applicable to our work. These codes are a combination of best practice guidelines, policies and procedures that protect the people we work with and ensure that our work is transparent and above reproach.

### The Governance Code

MS Ireland is fully committed to the standards outlined in the Governance Code.

Since 2017 MS Ireland is a member of the Charities Institute of Ireland Triple Locked Standard – Best Practice in Transparency and Accountability.

### Guiding Principles For Fundraising

The Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising is a guide to best practice developed by a steering group set up in response to the Charities Act 2009. MS Ireland is fully committed to achieving the standards contained within the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising.

#### The Statement exists to:

- » Improve fundraising practice.
- » Promote high levels of accountability and transparency by organisations fundraising from the public.
- » Provide clarity and assurances to donors and prospective donors about the organisations they support.

### National Financial Assistance Regulations

MS Ireland can offer financial assistance to people with MS to help cover the costs of some expenses associated with the condition. Voluntary Branches raise this money through their fundraising activities.

### Codes Of Good Practice to Protect Children

MS Ireland is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of all the children and young people with whom we work. Our policy on child protection is in accordance with Children First, the national guidelines for the protection and welfare of children.

### Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

MS Ireland is dedicated to implementing and promoting measures to protect the right of all service users to be treated with dignity and respect, and is committed to ensuring that the organisation provides a safe environment which is free from all forms of abuse, including discrimination, bullying, harassment or sexual harassment, neglect and mistreatment. In achieving this aim, MS Ireland is committed to ensuring that there are policies, procedures, guidance and training for staff and service users that prevent any infringement of this right.

**Visit our website for further details of all the Codes of Practice MS Ireland subscribes to: [www.ms-society.ie](http://www.ms-society.ie)**

## Extract From Audited Financial Statements

	Unrestricted Funds 2024 €	Restricted Funds 2024 €	Total Funds 2024 €	Total Funds 2023 €
<b>INCOME</b>				
Income from generated funds:				
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
Grants and service contract income				
- Community services	18,762	2,373,836	2,392,598	2,359,232
- Respite care services	214,828	1,555,142	1,769,970	1,518,568
- Governance	-	513,994	513,994	519,839
	<u>233,590</u>	<u>4,442,972</u>	<u>4,676,562</u>	<u>4,397,639</u>
<b>Donations and legacies</b>				
- Donations and fundraising	1,637,794	1,578,669	3,216,463	2,002,449
- Legacies	89,626	12,500	102,126	104,292
	<u>1,727,420</u>	<u>1,591,169</u>	<u>3,318,589</u>	<u>2,106,741</u>
<b>Total income</b>	<u>1,961,010</u>	<u>6,034,141</u>	<u>7,995,151</u>	<u>6,504,380</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
- Community services	159,754	3,315,656	3,475,410	2,762,032
- Respite care services	2,363	2,041,584	2,043,947	1,979,771
- Governance costs	-	652,519	652,519	924,543
- Branch services	391,910	-	391,910	408,595
	<u>554,027</u>	<u>6,009,759</u>	<u>6,563,789</u>	<u>6,074,941</u>
<b>Raising funds</b>				
- Fundraising	614,174	93,202	707,376	637,250
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<u>1,168,201</u>	<u>6,102,961</u>	<u>7,271,162</u>	<u>6,712,191</u>
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>	792,809	(68,820)	723,989	(207,811)
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds brought forward	7,524,417	2,623,479	10,147,896	10,355,707
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>	792,809	(68,820)	723,989	(207,811)
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	(1,059,929)	1,059,929	-	-
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<u>7,257,297</u>	<u>3,614,588</u>	<u>10,871,885</u>	<u>10,147,896</u>

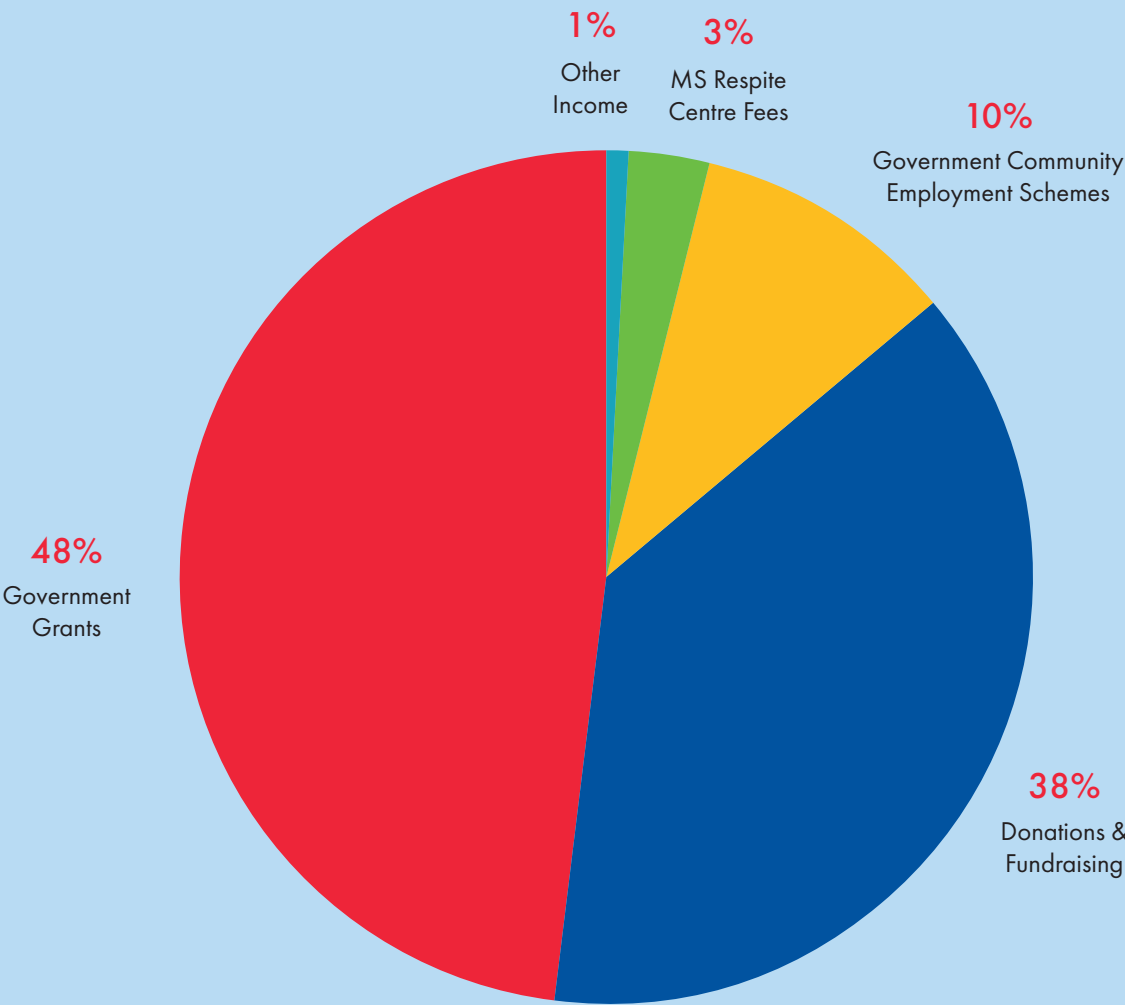


Income Analysis 2024

€7,995,151

Income of €7,995,151 was received of which 48% was funding from Government Grants mainly HSE, 38% was Donations and Fundraising, 10% was from three Department of Social Protection schemes we have in Donegal, Galway and Dublin, 3% was from fees received from Respite Centre residents and 1% from miscellaneous income.

	2024 (€)	2023 (€)
Government Grants	3,830,185	3,259,535
Donations & Fundraising	3,048,784	2,106,742
Government Community Employment Schemes	806,871	785,876
MS Respite Centre Fees	214,828	272,991
Other Income	94,483	79,237
TOTAL	7,995,151	6,504,381

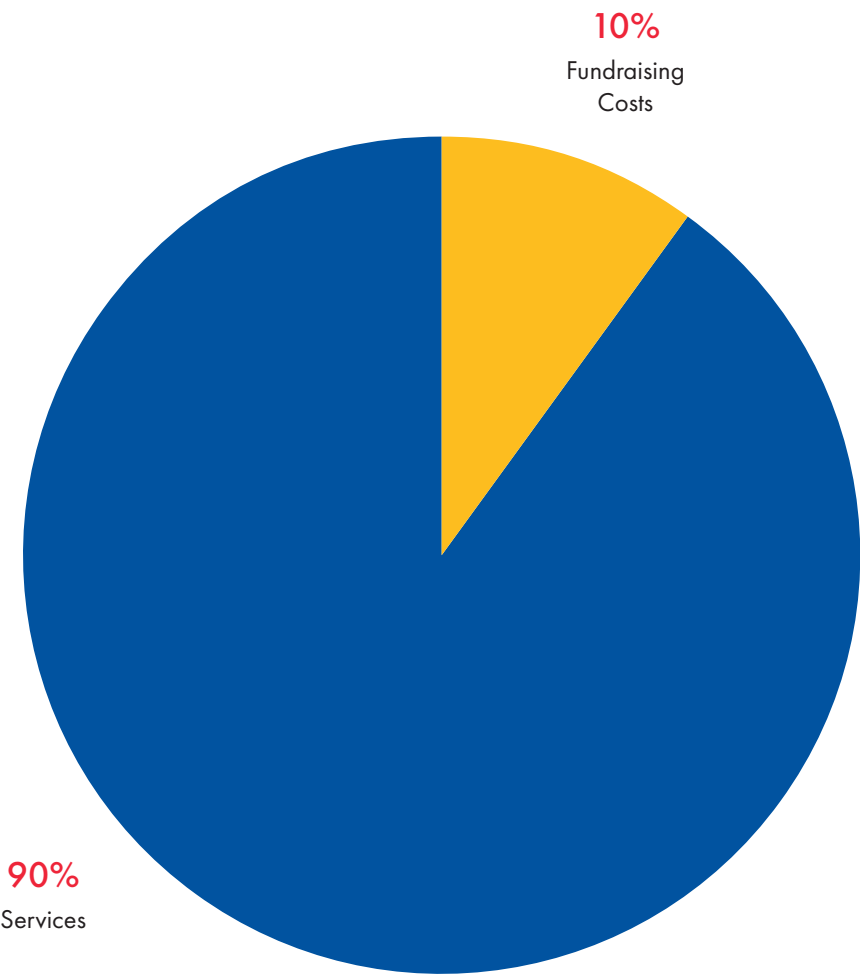


Operational Expenditure Analysis 2024

€7,271,162 (excluding exceptional items)

€7,271,162 before exceptional items was spent in 2024 of which: 90% was spent on Community services, Care Centre respite services and Research; and 10% on Fundraising.

	2024 (€)	2023 (€)
Services - Community, Local MS & Respite Care, Research	6,520,540	5,716,785
Fundraising Costs	750,822	995,406
TOTAL	7,271,162	6,712,191



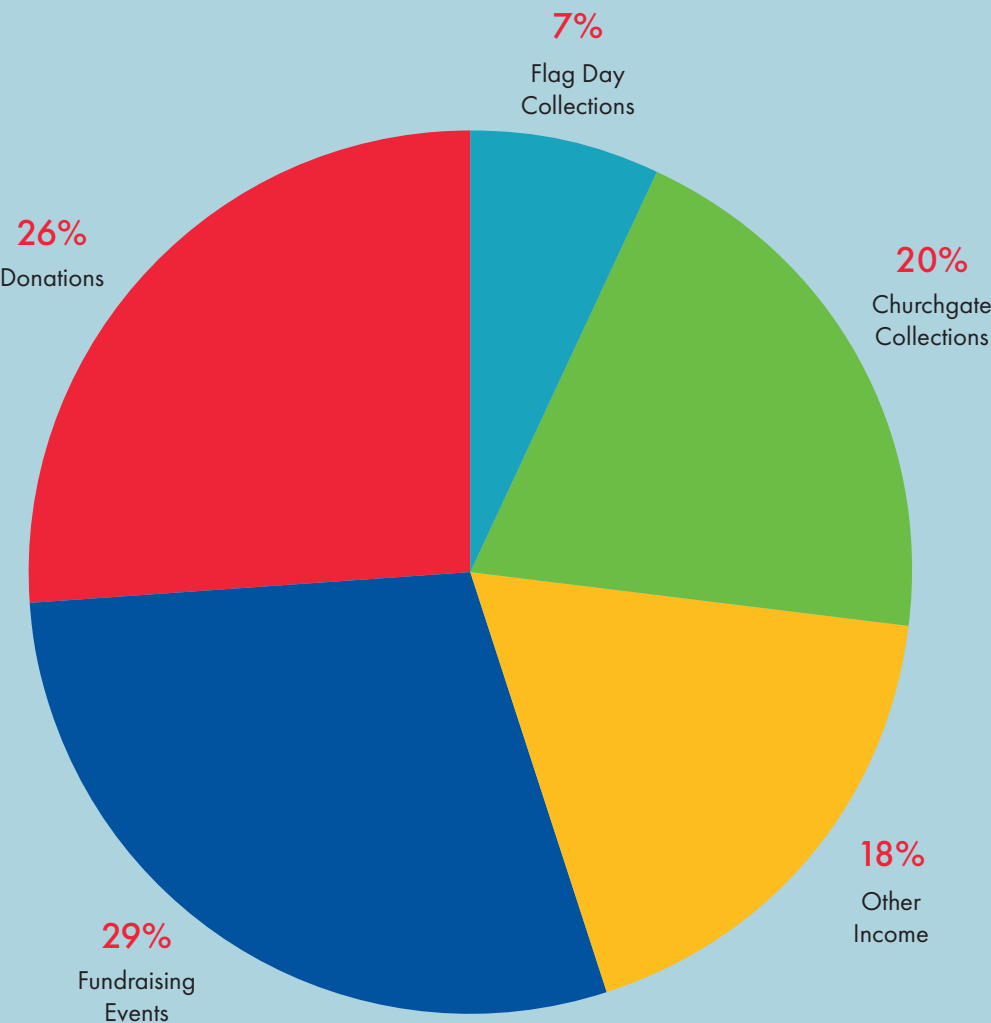


Branch Income Analysis 2024

€526,547

There were 27 Branches in operation during the year. All the funds raised by the Local Branches are spent locally to provide services for people with MS. Income of €526,547 was received, of which 29% came from fundraising events, 26% from donations, and 18% from other income.

	2024 (€)	2023 (€)
Donations	136,611	183,461
Fundraising Events	154,678	135,489
Other income	94,301	123,698
Churchgate Collections	103,374	106,881
Flag Day Collections	37,683	40,234
TOTAL	526,547	589,763

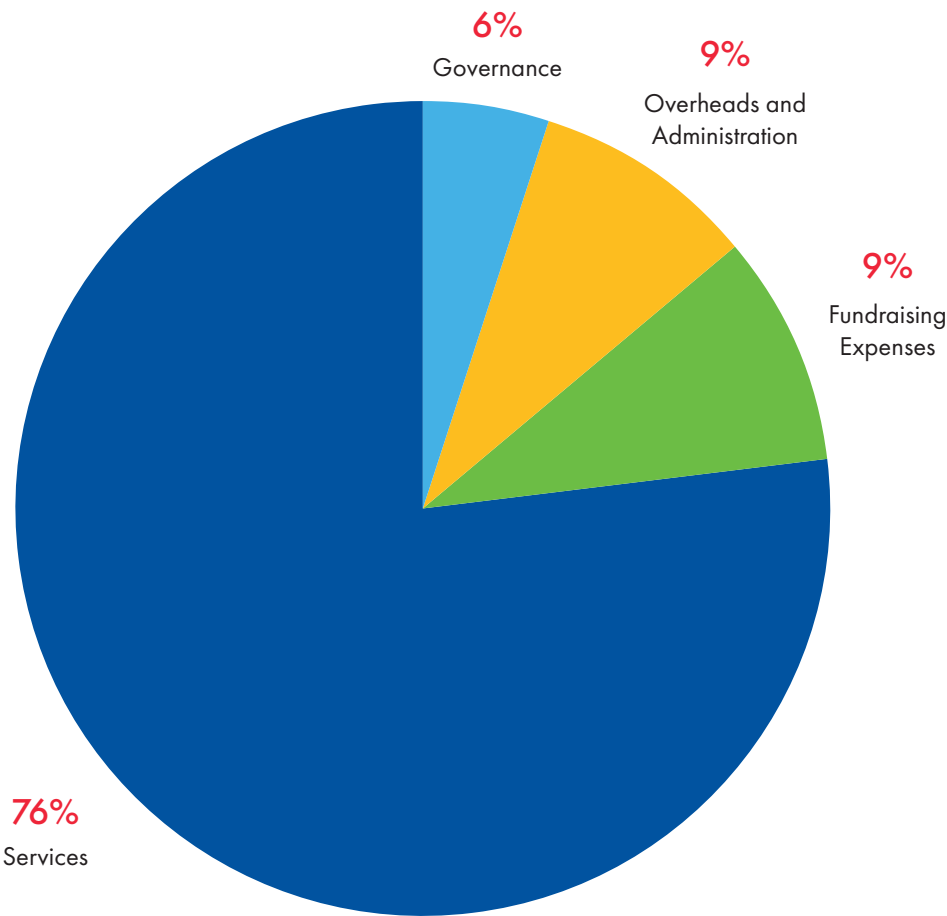


Branch Expenditure Analysis 2024

€457,389

€457,389 before exceptional item was spent in 2024 of which 76% was spent on providing services & Financial assistance to members, 9% Overheads and Administration expenses, 9% on Governance and 6% on fundraising expenses.

	2024 (€)	2023 (€)
Services and Financial Assistance to Members	348,664	334,514
Fundraising expenses	43,246	50,886
Overheads and Administration expenses	40,563	46,557
Governance	24,916	27,524
TOTAL	457,389	459,481







Goal: People & Culture



## Objective 7: Develop and Invest in Our People

**Description:** Ensure a fit for purpose organisational design and develop a workforce model for the future, recognising that as the capabilities of our people improve, so does our overall service to clients.

### Human Resources

Recruitment of staff presented challenges during 2024 for certain departments. This was a national issue. Training was provided for employees and volunteers, including LGBTQ+ Awareness Training and Personal Safety & Lone Worker Training.

We continued to operate the remote working pattern in line with the Remote Working Bill and the Work Life Balance bill published in 2024.

Pay increases for Section 39 organisations was completed in 2024, in line with pay proposals secured under the Section 39, Section 56 and Section 10 Interim Agreements. As a result, salaries for the majority of MS Ireland employees were increased.

MS Ireland's Employee Handbook was reviewed and updated. Information sessions regarding changes to the Employee Handbook were provided to staff during 2024.

2024 was the twelfth year of the integrated model of working whereby local voluntary Branches and regional staff worked together to plan, organise and fund services for their respective areas.

In 2024, HR began exploring alternative HR platforms which would improve efficiencies and capture more reliable data for accurate reporting. This project will be completed in 2025.

### Voluntary Branches

Our voluntary Branches are a vital support network for people living with MS and their families in local communities. They raise funds locally for the provision of services in their respective areas, which can include providing a financial assistance service, access to a number of different therapies, and organising various social gatherings.

Our Branches participated in the meetings and contributed financially to the provision of regional

services. In each of our 10 regional areas, regional integrated meetings took place at least twice a year and often had a senior manager from National Office and/or Board member in attendance.

### Volunteering

MS Ireland would not exist without the invaluable support of our fantastic volunteers around the country. The majority of our volunteers work within our voluntary Branch network, directly supporting people affected by MS. Many more volunteers support us at fundraising events, through administration work, and increasingly through workplace volunteering schemes.

### Internships And Volunteers

MS Ireland continues to utilise a number of interns and volunteers in our National Office, Care Centre, and throughout the regions. Each brings their own skill set to the Society which contributes greatly to our work. Company

### Pension Scheme

The trustees of the scheme were satisfied with the running of the scheme and that there were no issues in 2024.

### Staff Training

In 2024, our staff participated in the Services Training Schedule. QQI Level 5 training in Health Skills areas was carried out in the three community Employment Schemes operated in Ireland.

## Objective 8: Grow Branch & Community Volunteer Base

**Description:** Grow our volunteer base across our branch network through diverse volunteer opportunities, programmes and ways to get involved.

### Branches

In 2024 we continued to work with the branches to improve their governance. Branch activities include support groups, social activities, therapies and in some instances, financial assistance. The provision of branch level supports is made possible by voluntary local fundraising. MS Ireland staff continued to

support Branches and delivered services via in person and various digital platforms.

**Annual General Meetings (AGMs):** A total of 25 Branch AGMs were held in 2024. The majority took place in person, while the remainder were conducted virtually using the Branch Development Zoom account.

### National Awards 2024



#### MS Person of the Year:

##### Kathryn Moroney

*Nominated by Dublin South Branch Committee*

Kathryn has been a valued Branch Committee member since the Branch was relaunched in 2014. In 2024, she marked 10 years of dedicated service to our members.

She has chaired the Branch Financial Assistance Committee with integrity, wisdom, and kindness, ensuring dignity and privacy for all involved while maintaining clear records and working closely with our Community Worker.

Alongside her committee work, Kathryn has consistently supported Branch collections, helping to raise both funds and awareness. Her commitment is all the more remarkable given the challenges of living with MS, caring for her mother in her 90s, and raising her family.



#### Carer / Helper of the Year

##### Patsy Fagan

*Patsy was nominated by his two daughters, Karen and Eva Fagan. Patsy cares for his wife, Elizabeth Fagan.*

Patsy often reflects on the night he met Liz, describing himself as lucky then and now. For 44 years, Liz has lived with MS, and Patsy has been her constant support throughout that time.

As a carer, he understands the daily challenges MS brings, both for the person living with the condition and for their family. Patsy has been a steady source of love, strength, and friendship for Liz, supporting her every day with unwavering commitment. In addition to his role as a carer, Patsy has also helped to raise awareness of MS in the community over many years.





## Volunteer of the Year

### Paul Ferguson

*Nominated by Ronnie van den Berg, Louth Branch*

Paul has been an active member of the Louth Branch for over 12 years. He takes part in every flag day across the county and coordinates the church gate collections in the north of the county.

He also supports the Branch's involvement in the Greenway Walk in Carlingford and regularly brings his brother-in-law, who has MS, to Branch events.

Quiet and reliable, Paul is always there when needed, and his steady commitment makes him a much-valued member of the Branch.



## Special Recognition Award

### Trevis Gleason & Emma Rogan

*Nominated by Caitriona Hughes, Fergal O'Keeffe and Diana Carthy*

Trevis Gleason and Emma Rogan have been actively involved with MS Ireland for many years. Together, they co-launched the MS and Me Blog, hosted on the MS Ireland website, which has provided people living with MS a valuable platform to share their stories and experiences.

Trevis, an award-winning chef, writer, and consultant diagnosed with MS in 2001, has also hosted MS Ireland's Unspeakable Bits webinars, leading important conversations about living with MS. Emma, a campaigner and advocate for people affected by neurological conditions, has worked with MS Ireland, and now with the European MS Platform (EMSP). She also produces and hosts The MS Agency Podcast, broadening awareness and support for the MS community.

In 2023, the MS and Me Blog celebrated its 10th anniversary, with Trevis and Emma stepping back from their roles on the editorial team and passing the leadership on to fellow bloggers Rosie and Nadia.

In 2024, Trevis and Emma published their book, *Living Well with Multiple Sclerosis*, now available internationally. The book brings together nearly two decades of experience, guidance, and insight into living with MS. Emma worked alongside Trevis over two years to help bring the book to completion, making it a true collaboration.

MS Ireland is deeply grateful for Trevis and Emma's dedication and the lasting impact of their contributions to the MS community.



**An Roinn Tithíochta, Pleanála,  
Pobail agus Rialtais Áitiúil**  
Department of Housing, Planning,  
Community and Local Government



**pobal**

government supporting communities

**Multiple Sclerosis Ireland,  
MS Care Centre, 65 Bushy Park Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6, D06 CV90**

T: (01) 678 1600 | MS Info Line: 0818 233 233

E: [info@ms-society.ie](mailto:info@ms-society.ie) | W: [www.ms-society.ie](http://www.ms-society.ie) | Charity Number: 5365 | CRN: 20007867