MS Trust Conference 2027

The MS journey: 30 years of progress

Sunday 31 January -
Tuesday 2 February 2027

Leonardo Hotel, Hinckley

Welcome

Celebrating 30 years of MS Trust education, connection and crucial changes in MS care from reactive to proactive. So we will be looking ahead to what people with MS, families and services need next.

Across three days, we will follow the MS journey from diagnosis through living well, changing needs and more complex care. We will reflect on how far care has come, recognise the people and professional communities who have made that progress possible, and bring energy and thought to the next chapter.

Programme content developed from multidisciplinary advisory-group discussions and aligned to the diagnosis-to-care journey.

Roche, Merck, Neuraxpharm, Juvisé, Biogen, Novartis and Sandoz have provided financial support for this meeting but have had no involvement in the agenda or arrangement of the meeting other than the stated organised presentation.

Please contact us via:
conference@mstrust.org.uk

Ruth Stross, Director of Services
Geraldine Conway, Head of Education
Tara Flynn, Senior Health Education Officer
Rosa Ormrod, Education Officer

Sunday

Day one - Sunday 31 January 2027 (12:00-17:30)

10:00 Registration and opening of conference exhibition

Objectives:

- Welcome delegates and support a smooth arrival and orientation.
- Provide early opportunities for networking and exhibition visits.

11:00 - 12:30 Brunch & networking:

11:45 - 12:30 UKMSSNA new nurse workshop / Therapists in MS (TiMS) new therapists meet and greet

Objectives:

- Support healthcare professionals who are new to MS roles.
- Build peer networks, confidence and professional belonging.
- Connect delegates with UKMSSNA, TiMS and ongoing sources of support.

12:30 - 12:45 Transition break

12:45 -12: 50 Welcome

Chair: MS Trust Trustee

12:50 - 13:15 Welcome: 30 years of change in MS care and education

Speakers:

Lucy Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, MS Trust

Ruth Stross, Director of Services & Healthcare Professional Lead, MS Trust

Chair:

MS Trust Trustee

Objectives:

- Welcome delegates and set the tone for a multidisciplinary conference.
- Introduce the programme journey from diagnosis through living with MS, complex care, research and service transformation.

Sunday continued

13:15- 14:45 Opening plenary: MS care across the UK - where are we now and where are we going?

Speakers:
Dr Stella Hughes, Consultant Neurologist, Belfast HSC Trust
Alice Struthers, Programme Director for the Neurological Alliance of Scotland, Neurological Alliance of Scotland

Speaking and chairing: Sue Thomas, Healthcare Consultant, Patient & Public Voice Partner Neurosurgery and Spinal Injuries Clinical Reference Group, NHS England

Objectives:

- Compare current priorities, neurology policies and service direction across the four UK nations.
- Explore how national plans, NHS and neurology service specifications and workforce pressures affect local MS care.
- Share practical examples of service delivery and identify opportunities for greater equity and shared learning.
- Connect policy ambitions with what MDTs can use to improve care.

14:45-15:15 Coffee break & networking

15:15- 16:00 Making each infusion count: value, convenience and patient choice in anti-CD20 therapy

Satellite symposium organised and funded by Neuraxpharm.

16:00 -16:15 Transition break

16:15 – 17:00 Symposium 3

Satellite symposium organised and funded by Roche.

Sunday continued

17:00 - 17:15 Transition break

17:15 – 18:00 Poster speed dating

Chairs: MS Trust Trustee and/or Head of Research & Development

Objectives:

- Showcase UK practice, service improvement and research.
- Give new and experienced presenters a concise platform to share learning.
- Encourage connections between clinical, research and service teams.

18:10 UKMSSNA and TiMS annual general meeting

19:30 Welcome dinner & quiz

Simon Webster, Helpline Manager, MS Trust

Monday

Day 3 - Monday 1 February 2027 (08:15-17:30)

08:15-09:15 Plenary: Cognition, mood and everyday life with MS

Speakers:

Dr Christine Longinotti, Highly specialist principal Clinical Psychologist, Chelsea & Westminster NHS Foundation Trust

Gillian Burdon, MS Specialist Occupational Therapist; Community Neuro OT Lead, Wye Valley NHS Trust

Objectives:

- Recognise common ways cognition, mood, fatigue and sleep can affect function in MS.
- Understand when cognitive or psychological changes may signal risk, reduced insight or need for further assessment.
- Consider how MDTs can respond practically, compassionately and within available services.

9:15- 9:30 Transition break

9:30 - 10:15 Cladribine Merck Real-World Evidence and MDT Patient Selection in NHS Practice

Satellite symposium organised and funded by Merck.

10:15 - 10:45 Coffee break & networking

10:45-12:00: Concurrent seminars

Monday continued

1. Cognition, capacity and safeguarding: how do clinicians move from concern to action

Speakers:

Dr Christine Longinotti, Highly specialist principal Clinical Psychologist, Chelsea & Westminster NHS Foundation Trust

Speaking and chairing: Gillian Burdon, MS Specialist Occupational Therapist; Community Neuro OT Lead, Wye Valley NHS Trust

Objectives:

- Apply a structured approach to identifying cognitive, mood, fatigue and functional concerns in routine MS care.
- Use case discussion to explore capacity, safeguarding, risk and collateral information.
- Identify practical actions, referral routes and documentation when specialist neuropsychology is limited.

2. Growing up with MS: moving from paediatric to adult services

Speakers:

Gillian Jones, Neurology and Demyelination Clinical Nurse Specialist, Neurofibromatosis Specialist Nurse, Alder Hey Children's Hospital

Speaking and chairing:

Jenny Slough, MS nurse lead and UKMSSNA co-chair, NHNN, London

Objectives:

- Identify what good transition planning should include for young people with MS and families.
- Explore how treatment, education, psychosocial support and independence can be addressed during transfer.
- Strengthen shared responsibility and communication between paediatric and adult services.

Monday continued

3. The MS workforce: specialist roles, multi-disciplinary teams and what comes next

Speakers:

Rhian O'Halloran, Specialist neuro-physiotherapist and co-chair Therapists in MS, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

Rachel Dorsey-Campbell,Consultant Pharmacist, Neurology, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

Speaking and chairing:

Mavis Ayer, Lead MS specialist nurse, University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust

Objectives:

- Clarify what different professions uniquely contribute to MS care and where role overlap can add value.
- Explore how MDTs can work safely at the top of scope through governance, supervision and shared pathways.
- Identify practical ways to demonstrate specialist value and support sustainable MS services.

4. Using outcomes to understand change and improve care

Speakers:

Dr Emma Tallantyre, Professor of Neurology, Cardiff University and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

Dr Elizabeth Davis, Consultant in Rehabilitation Medicine, Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust

Objectives:

- Identify feasible outcome measures that can support routine MS care and service improvement.
- Explore how teams can collect, interpret and use outcomes without adding unnecessary burden.
- Use data and patient-reported information to strengthen referrals, demonstrate value and improve pathways.

Monday continued

12:00 - 13:00 Lunch

13:00-13:45 Women's Health in MS and how this impacts disease treatment and outcomes.

Satellite symposium organised and funded by Novartis

13:45 -14:00 Transition Break

14:00-15:15: Concurrent seminars

1. Complex symptom management in MS: polypharmacy and co-morbidities

Speakers:

Lisa Perfect, Multiple Sclerosis Specialist Nurse, Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust

Kenneth Chu, Specialist Neuropharmacist, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Speaking and chairing:

Dr Rasha Abdel-Fahim, Consultant Neurologist and Clinical Lead for Neurology, Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

Objectives:

- Roles and responsibilities within this. Apply MDT problem-solving to one or two complex symptom scenarios where usual pathways are insufficient.
- Consider treatment burden, polypharmacy, comorbidity and safety when planning next steps.
- Identify when to escalate, refer or seek specialist input.

2. New MS treatments: helping services prepare

Speakers:

Dr Gillian Ingram, Consultant Neurologist, Swansea Bay University Health Board

Joela Matthews, Highly specialist pharmacist, Neurosciences lead, Barts Health NHS Trust

Monday continued

Objectives:

- Identify likely service implications of new and emerging Disease Modifying MS treatments.
- Consider practical requirements for prescribing, monitoring, infection risk, vaccination and escalation.
- Share examples of service models that support safe, efficient and equitable treatment delivery.

3. Health through life: family planning, menopause and men's health

Speakers:

Dr Paarul Prinja, Consultant acute and obstetric physician & honorary consultant obstetric physician, New Cross Hospital, Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust & Birmingham Women's Hospital

Denisse Bongol, MS Specialist nurse, NHNN, London

Speaking and chairing:

Dr Kate Petheram, Consultant neurologist, South Tyneside & Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust

Objectives:

- Build confidence to raise reproductive health, menopause and men's health in routine MS conversations.
- Clarify when MS teams can advise, when shared care is needed and when specialist referral is appropriate.
- Support inclusive, person-centred conversations about treatment, relationships, family planning and wider health.

4. Turning ideas from MS care into research and impact

Speakers:

Hannah Burns, Senior research nurse, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Speaking and chairing: Dr Gavin Brittain, Consultant Neurologist and NIHR fellow, Sheffield Institute for Translational Neuroscience, 1st open grant round winner

Monday continued

Objectives:

- Show how current MS Trust-supported research, including the smart wearables work with Dr Gavin Brittain, can inspire practical questions from everyday MS care.
- Explain practical routes for new researchers into research, service improvement, ethics, funding and PPIE involvement.
- Encourage collaboration between clinical teams, researchers, funders and people affected by MS so innovation is grounded in real service and patient priorities.

15:15-16:00 Coffee break & networking

16:00-16:45 Symposium 6

Satellite symposium organised and funded by Juvisé.

17:00-18:00 Helen Ley Lecture: earlier MS diagnosis in stretched services

Speakers:

Dr Nichola Osborne, Portfolio General Practitioner, Milford & Wistaria Surgeries, New Forest PCN

Terri Dixon, Lead MS Clinical Nurse Specialist, Nottingham University Hospitals

Speaking and chairing:

Professor Tarunya Arun, Consultant Neurologist, University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust

Objectives:

- Explore what the revised McDonald Criteria mean for earlier MS diagnosis and treatment access.
- Identify practical barriers to implementation, including MRI capacity, trained staffing, workforce pressure and competing service priorities.
- Consider how services can adapt pathways, communication and MDT working so people with MS are diagnosed and started on appropriate treatment as quickly as possible.

19:15-19:45 Welcome drinks

19:45 Celebration of 30 years conference dinner and dancing - poster winners announced

Tuesday

Day three - Tuesday 2 February 2027 (08:30-13:00)

08:30-09:45: Concurrent seminars

1. Driving, cognition and capacity: balancing independence and safety

Speakers:

Jo Hurford, Clinical Specialist Occupational Therapist, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Dr Anuraj Varshney, Strategic Director for Research, Education and Innovation, Driving Mobility; Consultant AHP Practitioner and Head of Service, South East DriveAbility, Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust

Speaking and chairing:

Joan Bradley, Lead nurse for MS and Rehabilitation, Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Trust

Objectives:

- Understand professional responsibilities around driving, cognition, capacity and documentation.
- Explore how to raise driving concerns supportively while recognising independence, work and identity.
- Identify referral routes, assessment options and variation across UK systems.

2. Living well with MS: lifestyle, diet and supported self-management

Speakers:

Dr Agne Straukiene, Consultant Neurologist and MS Service Lead, Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust

Farah Suleman, Senior Neuroscience Dietitian, University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust

Speaking and chairing:

Dan Kucharczyk, Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP) for Multiple Sclerosis, The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust

Tuesday continued

Objectives:

- Review what can be said safely about diet, lifestyle, movement and self-management in MS.
- Explore how teams can support realistic behaviour change without increasing guilt or burden.
- Clarify how dietetics, rehabilitation, nursing and medical teams can work together in supported self-management.

3. Conversations about progressive MS and future care

Speakers:

Anna Tucker, Speech and language Therapist, North Bristol NHS Trust

Dr Fiona Chiplen, Consultant in palliative medicine, Weston Hospicecare

Objectives:

- Build confidence in talking about progression, uncertainty and future care planning.
- Identify triggers for earlier conversations around swallowing, communication, respiratory health and long-term support.
- Use MDT working and shared decision-making to support people with MS and families before crisis points.

09:45-10:00 Transition break

10:00-10:45 Supporting self-administration in multiple sclerosis: real-world experiences of implementing home-based care

Satellite symposium organised and funded by Biogen.

10:45-11:15 Coffee break & networking

Tuesday continued

11:15-12:30 Closing plenary: The next 30 years of MS care

Speakers:

Dr Joyutpal Das, Consultant Neurologist, Deputy Clinical Director for Neurology, Neurophysiology and Metabolic Medicine, Birmingham
Gillian Kamara, MS Specialist Nurse, Newcastle Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Chairs:

Dr Wallace Brownlee, Consultant Neurologist and MS lead, NHNN, London

Objectives:

- Reflect on the changes that have most improved MS care over the last 30 years, including earlier diagnosis, DMTs, monitoring, rehabilitation and person-centred support.
- Show how AI, smart wearables, data and outcomes can help services identify need earlier, personalise support and focus resources where they make the greatest difference.
- Explore what MS teams need to turn treatment advances and innovation into practical, equitable care within real workforce and service pressures.
- Agree clear take-home actions that delegates can use to improve care, support families and strengthen MS services after the conference.

12:30-13:00 Closing

Speakers:

MS Trust Trustee, Lucy Taylor

Chairs:

MS Trust

Objectives:

- Synthesise the main themes from diagnosis, living well, complex care, research and service transformation.
- Identify practical priorities and collective commitments for the year ahead.
- Encourage delegates to take learning, connections and ideas back into their services.
- Formally close the conference.

13:00 Packed lunch and travel home