**Involvement & Inclusion Panel Terms of Reference**

**Aug 2021**

**Name of group: MS Trust Involvement & Inclusion Panel**

**Purpose / role of the group:**

The MS Trust is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. The Involvement & Inclusion Panel (I&I Panel) supports the MS Trust and our work by providing insight and advice to ensure we fully reflect the community we serve.

The Panel will use their lived experience and expertise to give advice and opinions on a broad range of issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. They will act as a sounding board for the MS Trust as we develop our EDI and involvement programmes and share insight to inform MS Trust policy and service delivery.

**Membership:**

The I&I Panel will be chaired by Head of Information and Engagement.

MS Trust staff and volunteers will attend the group as required.

There will be a maximum of 10 external representatives including people who live with MS and people who are affected by MS (including family, friends and carers of people with MS and health professionals with a specialism in MS). Other people may be invited to attend for specific meetings on an ad hoc basis. The MS Trust will appoint representatives following a selection process and will seek to balance membership across a range of lived experience including type of MS, age, disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. In addition we will consider the need for geographic diversity across the devolved UK nations.

Representatives will be appointed for an initial period of 2 years with the option to renew for a further 2 years.

**Ways of working**

We will meet 4 times a year with times agreed with attendees. Meetings will be scheduled for 2 hours. At least 4 panel members must be in attendance for a meeting to go ahead.

Meetings will be virtual with the potential for one face to face meeting a year if agreed with members.

Members are asked to prepare for and actively engage in meetings and to support some communication and collaboration outside of panel meetings, for example to provide additional insight or to feedback views in the case of non attendance at meetings.

Members will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement, to notify the MS Trust of any conflicts of interest and to manage conflicts of interest effectively. All discussions and papers are strictly confidential.

Members are asked to respect diversity, different roles and views and to support collective recommendations agreed by the Group.

We will publish details of the Panel including members details on the MS Trust website. Members will provide a short biographical statement and a photo to accompany this.

MS Trust will provide administrative support for the I&I Panel. We aim to keep papers and communication short and digital. Members should let us know if they have any accessibility requirements such as papers in alternative formats.

The MS Trust Senior Management Team, Board, the staff Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working group and the MS Trust Volunteer Manager will be informed of EDI panel meetings and activities.

Where possible any problems will be resolved informally led by the Chair. Where this is not possible the Chair will recommend actions to the MS Trust Director of Information and Engagement which could include removal from the panel.

**Remuneration**

This is a voluntary position, no direct remuneration will be paid to panel members. Travel expenses supported by receipts will be paid in accordance with MS Trust policy. Expense forms must be submitted for expense payments.

**Involvement at the MS Trust**

The MS Trust listens to and works with a wide range of people who live with or are affected by MS in addition to the I&I Panel. We plan to expand opportunities for involvement in the development and design of our services in 2021. Current activities include:

* Voice Volunteers – MS Trust readers: Reviews new and updated information products and content for accuracy, tone and usability.
* Voice Volunteers – Digital users: Tests the MS Trust website for accessibility and usability and provides insight on development projects.
* Expert Patients: MS Trust supports people to act as an expert patients on external consultations and panels
* Surveys and feedback: Targeted online surveys asking the MS community and people who use our services about their preferences and priorities. This year has included Comms survey, Enquiry Service survey, Website survey and Health Professional survey.
* MS Trust Advisory Group: Provides technical and medical advice and insight to inform MS Trust development and delivery.