Autumn 2025

MS Society

your Advances

Your support, your impact

Stop MS Appeal progress • Exciting research updates
Alison's Story • Success: PIP changes scrapped

Welcome

It's been a big year so far for our MS community.

Together, you've campaigned for fairer benefits and run, walked, or rolled for MS. And you've helped reach £96.66 million of our £100 million Stop MS Appeal target in its final year. Thank you.

Read on to discover some exciting new research developments which could drive forward our understanding of MS. You can also find out how your generosity has helped the campaign against unfair benefits cuts. And how our MS Helpline team can give lifechanging support.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of your Advances and seeing how your support makes a real difference to people affected by MS.

Thank you again for your kind support.

Nick Moberly,
Chief Executive

In this issue

Keep in touch

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Donate at:
mssociety.org.uk/advances
or by calling **0300 500 8084**
(Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

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Carriage House, 8 City North Place, London N4 3FU

STOP MS

Research updates

Stop MS Appeal: we’re nearly there!

Our Stop MS Appeal is now in its final year – and we’re just £3.34 million away from reaching the £100m target for MS research.

Back in 2015, we launched the Appeal to revolutionise the treatment of progressive MS, so no one has to worry about MS getting worse. In the last ten years we’ve made some amazing progress, but we can’t stop now.

One donation. Double the impact.

You may remember our matched giving appeal earlier this year which aimed to raise **half a million pounds** for MS research. Your response was incredible! Thanks to your kindness, **£338,419** was raised, and then doubled to **£676,838** by our generous match funders.

2025 appeal progress

This year so far you’ve helped raise **£4.97 million** for the Stop MS Appeal, through generous donations and taking part in MS Walks. That funding drives groundbreaking research like ChariotMS, RefuelMS and more.

The future of MS research

Last year’s winter appeal highlighted how vital Early Career Researchers (ECRs) are to the future of research and our understanding of MS. **In 2024 we funded one new ECR and three PhD students.** All thanks to your amazing support.

Research: what's new

From groundbreaking projects to a brand-new research hub, there's so much happening in MS research, all thanks to supporters like you.

Bringing together MS experts in Northern Ireland

Our new Northern Ireland MS Research Hub is now open at Queen's University Belfast. The Hub brings together neurologists, immunologists, ophthalmologists, and neuroscientists to drive progress in MS research.

Researchers are building on previous findings about the retina (the back of the eye). In MS these can become inflamed and lose nerve cells. The team will use cutting-edge technology to scan the retina in more detail than has ever been possible. This could provide faster, simpler ways to monitor how MS progresses. And how different people with MS respond to treatments. **Their findings could benefit people living with MS across the UK.**

Northern Ireland has one of the highest rates of MS in the world – **more than 1 in 350 people** live with the condition. And they're at the heart of the new hub, with the work shaped by their experiences.

"I am thrilled that MS research is getting a much-needed boost in Northern Ireland. This is a great opportunity for people with MS to get directly involved in research and hopefully bring us one step closer to stopping MS altogether. Without investment in research this can't happen."

Caroline Millar, from Northern Ireland, was diagnosed with MS at 25 and has been actively involved in MS research.

New digital programme to manage MS fatigue

Fatigue affects 90% of people with MS according to data from the UK MS Register. Yet fewer than a third are offered treatment for it as part of their routine care.

That's where **RefuelMS** comes in. It's a new clinical trial testing an app-based digital treatment to help people manage fatigue day to day with personalised support. Participants can focus on exercise, balance techniques or CBT (a form of talking therapy).

Around 380 people with MS will take part, randomly split into two groups. One group will continue with their usual care. The other will use the app over 16 weeks, completing weekly sessions online at home.

If successful, it could offer people with MS a personalised, practical way to manage their fatigue.

To find out more, visit mssociety.org.uk/refuel-ms

Clinical Trial Progress

Results from our **CCMR2 myelin repair trial** are due later this year. Watch this space.

ChariotMS, a trial hoping to help people with advanced MS maintain the use of their arms, has now reached its recruitment goal of 200 participants. Results are expected in 2027.

Stage 2 recruitment has started for our multi-arm, multistage clinical trials platform '**Octopus**'. Interim results from the trial are expected in 2026.

Your generous support helps fund these trials – thanks for helping us move closer to a day without the effects of MS.

Alison's story: Mummy has MS

Alison, who lives in Fife, asked the MS Helpline for advice on how to tell her daughter Bella about her MS.

Alison and Bella

"I was diagnosed with relapsing remitting MS in December 2023, but I first noticed symptoms in 2022. When I was first diagnosed, my daughter was six. I didn't know how to talk to Bella about my MS. So I decided to get in touch with the MS Helpline.

"The team sent me helpful resources like a special leaflet on how to talk to children about MS. And suggestions and some storybooks about the condition. And they gave me some really empathetic words of encouragement.

"Since then, Bella and I have found ways to help my MS in a way that works for our family. She knows my limitations and helps me in any way she can. I really feel she's become even more empathetic and kind since my MS diagnosis.

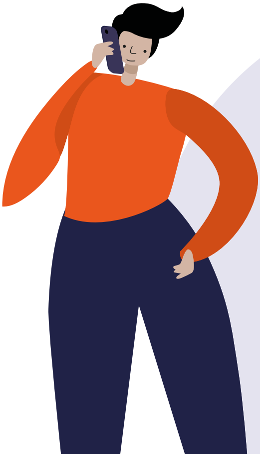
> "I couldn't have gotten through the last three years without her. And I couldn't have had such positive conversations with her without the help of the MS Society. Whatever you need advice or support with, the MS Society can help. Just reach out."

As you might know, living with MS is different for everyone. Whether you've just been diagnosed, have been living with MS for years, or are supporting a loved one. Everyone has different questions and experiences. But the MS Helpline is here for everyone affected by MS.

Thanks to support from wonderful people like you, the helpline team is able to answer over 1,000 enquiries every month, offering expert advice and a listening ear when it's needed most.

If you need to talk, call for free on 0808 800 8000 or email helpline@mssociety.org.uk

For more information about talking to children about MS, explore our new children's book **'What is MS to me'** and meet **Tingo**. A little nerve cell with a lot to say: **mssociety.org.uk/tingo**



9 out of 10
people found our MS Helpline service useful

89% of people felt better and more informed after calling the MS Helpline (Caller Survey 2024)

Fighting for your benefits

In March, the UK Government proposed changes to disability benefits in a new Welfare Bill. We were clear from the start. These changes could have caused people with MS to lose vital support and could have led to worsening health outcomes. But together with you, the MS community, we were able to stop the plans in their tracks and protect PIP. Thank you!

Our campaigning, funded by supporters like you, helped prevent people with MS from losing an estimated £100 million a year in vital benefits.

This is how powerful we can be when our MS community campaigns together. Thank you for using your voice.

89% of MPs received this postcard from our campaigns community urging them to stop the cuts!

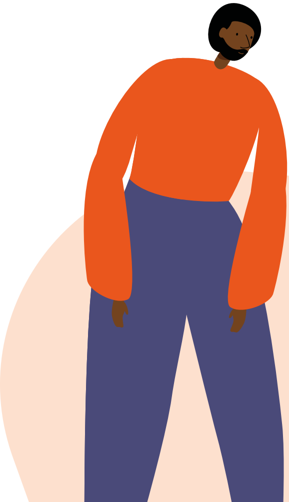
What happens next?

Protecting PIP is a victory and a campaign win, but it doesn't stop here.

The government has committed to carrying out a review of PIP. Sir Stephen Timms MP, Minister for Social Security and Disability, will deliver this review which is expected to conclude by autumn next year.

Importantly, the government have promised to not make any changes to PIP until after the review is completed.

The government says this will be 'co-produced' with disabled people and disability organisations. And will look at making the benefit 'fair and fit for the future'. With your support, we'll be campaigning to make sure the voices of people living with MS are heard in this review.



Let's keep campaigning together

Now we've got PIP on the front pages we can't afford to lose momentum. We must keep working together to push for a welfare system that works for people with MS, not against them.

Powerful campaigns can't happen without you. Whether you're sharing your stories, writing to your MP, or chipping in to support our campaign actions, we're stronger when we raise our voices together.

Rob, who has lived with MS since 2006, said:

"I think it is vital that as many people as possible share their lived experience with the government to provide them with a better understanding of what the impact of a PIP assessment means to people with MS."

Join us to campaign even harder to support everyone living with MS. Join our campaigns community here: **mssociety.org.uk/join-us**

Raising vital funds

Walking to stop MS!

In 2025 so far there have been three MS Walks, in Manchester, Belfast and Birmingham. Over 650 of you took part and have raised over **£80,000** for the Stop MS Appeal!

We have more walks coming up in Glasgow, Cardiff and London. To find out more or to take part, go to **mssociety.org.uk/fundraising**

Annual Lecture

In June, we held the final Stop MS Annual Lecture. Keynote speaker, Professor Alan Thompson, Chair of the Stop MS Scientific Ambassadors, spoke about the history of the Appeal and the progress over the last 10 years. The lecture raised a fantastic **£53,000** for MS research.

You can watch a recording of the lecture here: mssociety.org.uk/watch-annual-lecture

Sheena's Legacy

"Including a gift in my will to the MS Society will be my way of playing a small part in something much bigger than myself. For me, it's not just about finding new treatments, but also about ensuring that the services and support we all need continue to thrive."

To find out more about how to include a gift in your will, visit: **mssociety.org.uk/gifts-in-wills**

Dates for your diary

Exciting ways to get involved

13 Sep	**MS Walk** Glasgow
20 Sep	**MS Walk** Cardiff
27 Sep	**MS Walk** London
1–31 Oct	**My MS Woof**
6 Oct	**Christmas Raffle opens** (closes on 16 December). You could win £10,000! Enter here: **mssociety.raffleentry.org.uk**
7 Oct	**Ivo Graham** Some Nerve Comedy Event, London You can purchase tickets here: **somenerve2025.eventbrite.co.uk**
4 Dec	**Carols by Candlelight**, Westminster You can buy tickets here: **mssociety.org.uk/mscarols25**

For even more diary dates
and to take part visit:
mssociety.org.uk/fundraising

MS Society

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£10,000!

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