



MS

The Multiple Sclerosis Society  
Of South Australia and  
the Northern Territory (Inc)  
Annual Report 2014 -15

MS





## Contents

- 02 MS Society of SA & NT Board of Directors
- 03 President's Report
- 04 Chief Executive Officer's Report
- 05 Multiple Solutions Report
- 06 Treasurer's Report
- 08 Sponsors and Supporters



## About multiple sclerosis & The MS Society of SA & NT

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic condition that attacks the body's central nervous system (the brain, spinal cord and optic nerves), with unpredictable consequences.

No two cases of MS are identical. The progress, severity and specific symptoms of MS vary from person to person, and can include:

- visual disturbance;
- difficulties with walking, balance and coordination;
- altered sensations, such as tingling, numbness or pins and needles;
- bladder and bowel changes;
- slurring and slowing of speech;
- muscle weakness, tremors, stiffness or spasms.

For people with MS, this daily battle with the condition can be compounded with fear and uncertainty about the future. This is why the Multiple Sclerosis Society of South Australia & the Northern Territory (MSSANT) was formed, to offer immediate support to our Clients from the moment of diagnosis, and for the entirety of their journey.

All of this would not be possible without the help of our loyal supporters. We hope this report will provide valuable insight into our current activities, and our ambitious plans to provide a brighter future for Australians living with MS.

## The MS Society of SA & NT Board of Directors



**Anthony (Tony) Abbott AM**  
Honorary President  
Finance Committee  
Member



**Alan Scott**  
Honorary Vice President/  
Treasurer  
Chair Finance Committee



**Christine Hahn**  
Finance Committee  
Member



**Pamela Lockyer**  
Director



**Assoc Prof Mark Slee**  
Director



**Christine Umapathysivam**  
Director

## President's Report Anthony (Tony) Abbott AM

I am pleased to report that the past year of rationalisation and re-establishment was, in the circumstances, a very satisfactory one.

Regrettably, at the start of the year we had to cut back our services in some areas but, as the Chief Executive Officer's report and the financials show, our financial performance improved very significantly in the year just passed, recently enabling us to start to restore some services previously reduced.

This was made possible by the continued support of our sister societies who in 2013/14 provided us with loan funds on reasonable terms. During the year under report we borrowed a further \$300,000 from MS Australia and MS Western Australia. On behalf of the Board I extend continued thanks and appreciation to MSA and our sister societies for their magnificent support of our Society.

I also record the appreciation of myself and the Board for the work of our CEO Marcus Stafford and of his staff. It has, at all times, been a pleasure to work with them under what the Board understands would sometimes be difficult working conditions. Their skill, dedication and professionalism is reflected in the encouraging financial results and in the reports from Clients.

It is also important that I record the Society's thanks for the support from our loyal volunteers, donors and sponsors. We are confident that your continued faith in the Society will be rewarded by improvement in the lives of people with MS and, in the not too distant future we hope, a cure and improved treatments for MS.

The Society, both individually and through MSA, continues to advocate for the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) as soon and as fully funded as possible, although we do remain wary of the extent to which government will be able to fully meet the legitimate needs of people with MS. The Board also continues to believe that, notwithstanding the NDIS, there will still be a very important role for the Society and organisations like ours to deal with the considerable amount of unmet needs, which will not be covered by the NDIS, not least for those over 65.

Finally, I am also pleased to report that this year we were joined by two new Directors, Christine Umapathysivam and Christine Hahn. They have brought fresh perspectives and expertise to the Board which has been valuable to the 'old' Directors. I thank all my Directors for their continuing unstinting contribution and support.



"On behalf of the Board I extend continued thanks and appreciation to MSA and our sister societies for their magnificent support of our Society."







“As the needs of the individual change over time, the Society’s services will be there to match those changing needs.”



## Chief Executive Officer’s Report

### Marcus Stafford

As the State of South Australia and the Northern Territory find themselves navigating the uncertain environment of falling confidence and heightened fears about job security, the successful stabilisation of the MS Society has been very pleasing indeed.

Beyond expectation, the organisation has posted a small net profit/surplus for the year and has successfully begun to rebuild both confidence and Client services.

The Society’s charter continues to balance the interests of all stakeholders and, of course, the uncertain changes associated with a progressive and incurable condition means that everybody with MS endures their own individual journey. As the needs of the individual change over time, the Society’s services will be there to match those changing needs.

Never before has a strong, stable performance been more important. At the beginning of 2014, the organisation faced a very real threat to its survival. With the support of the broader MS family around the nation, loans were secured. The resulting restructure of the business was difficult and the impact on many good people was deeply regrettable, as the necessary process of stripping out costs and rebuilding revenues was pursued.

The successful stabilisation of the business was important in the short-term to create a foundation on which we could build Client services and once again become a funder of research.

With a medium-term horizon in mind, our success in turning the Society around has also allowed us to strengthen the organisation’s foundations in anticipation of the full roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The new marketplace will threaten the survival of organisations without a degree of scale and without the ability to attract ‘customers’ to their store.

The Board has approved a strategic plan that will, in future years, see a growing footprint in the metropolitan areas of Adelaide and ongoing coverage in the South Australian country areas and Darwin.

Our focus moving forward is to continue with the measured approach to decision making and managing the business that has been successfully deployed so far. By continuing with that approach, we can reduce our reliance on the injection of gearing and build a buffer of sensible levels of working capital. These will be particularly important in a world that relies on specific customer revenues flowing from the disability marketplace.

For just the second time in ten years, the Society has posted a surplus and has grown its net asset position. The balance sheet remains in negative territory, but pleasingly the quantum has been reduced markedly. The turnaround is expected to continue.

Stabilisation has led to steady, but unspectacular growth in Client services. This growth is expected to continue with an expansion in the allied healthcare area, offering real things for real people. They include such services as counselling, nursing, occupational therapy and physiotherapy.

I congratulate our 100 staff on some outstanding results in a challenging year that has required both hard work and courage. On paper, the 2014-15 year has seen the Society post a surplus and stabilise Client services. Easy to say, but very difficult to have achieved. Behind those results sit dedicated, professional staff each performing a key role.

In a human services business, like the MS Society, it is a real team effort.

My thanks go to our many stakeholders who have combined to make it all happen.

Whether you are a member of our Board, management, staff, volunteers, government partners, suppliers, business or retail customers, your efforts and support are greatly appreciated by people with MS who we serve.

Although we turn the page on the 2014-15 budget year with a sense of satisfaction and renewed confidence, we know that until the elusive cure is found, our focus must not waiver.



## General Manager’s Report

### Lachlan Barr



The 2014-2015 financial year saw Multiple Solutions celebrate 21 years of providing holistic assistance to Australians with disabilities and disadvantages in re-entering the workforce or joining it for the first time. Since 1992, when Multiple Solutions commenced operations under the auspices of the MS Society of SA & NT, the organisation has been improving the lives of people with disabilities and helping them realise their right to work and participate within their local communities.

Following a difficult period in 2013-2014, Multiple Solutions streamlined its operations in July 2014 and began to work towards both financial stability and strong Star Ratings, the measure by which the Australian Federal Government’s Department of Social Services determines the efficiency of a provider’s service delivery. While the Government’s Disability Employment Services Deed has a term until 2018, the provision for the government to reallocate market share from poorly performing providers to organisations with strong performance does exist at certain points within this contract. The first opportunity for this business reallocation to occur was in April 2015, based on the Star Ratings of December 2014.

Multiple Solutions enjoyed strong star rating performance in December with no competitor securing a higher star rating in any of the areas which they service. It was also the sole provider to secure a four star rating in any of these areas and, as such, had high expectations of a positive result during Business Reallocation. Although subject to significant delays, this has come to pass and during the upcoming financial year, Multiple Solutions will grow significantly in both Southern and Western Adelaide – becoming one of South Australia’s most prominent providers.

In 2014-2015 Multiple Solutions assisted 304 clients with disabilities or significant disadvantages to commence sustainable, open employment. While this represents a positive change in the lives of these clients, their families and their communities at large, it also translates to financial success. This performance led to it finishing with a year-end income ahead of its budget, while costs were lower than projected. Obviously this meant the overall dividend earned for the MS Society was larger than budgeted and with the expected growth in the next financial year this should be a result which Multiple Solutions can build upon.



## Treasurer's Report

### Alan Scott

The summary financial report provided here is an extract of, and has been derived from, the Multiple Sclerosis Society of SA & NT Inc's full financial report, for the 2014-2015 financial year.

The summary financial report does not, and cannot be expected to, provide a full understanding of the financial position of the MS Society as the full financial report.

Further financial information can be obtained from the full financial report which is available, free of charge, on request to the MS Society.

## Directors' Report

Your Directors submit their report and the financial statements of the consolidated entity of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of South Australia and Northern Territory Inc and the MS Society of SA & NT Foundation (MS Society) for the year ended 30 June 2015.

### Directors

The names of the members of the Board of Directors who serve in a voluntary capacity and are not remunerated, in office during the year and to the date of this report are:

Mr A N Abbott (Honorary President)

Mr A G Scott (Honorary Vice President & Treasurer)

Ms P Lockyer

Associate Professor M Slee

Ms C Umapathysivam (appointed, October 2014)

Ms C Hahn (appointed, November 2014)

### Directors' Benefits

No Director has received or become entitled to receive, during or since the financial year, a benefit as a result of a contract made by the MS Society with a Director, a firm of which a Director is a member or an entity in which a Director has a substantial financial interest, except as noted in the financial statements at Note 12.

### Principal Activities

The principal activities of the MS Society are the provision of Client services, education, information and the allocation of funds for research into the cause and subsequent cure for multiple sclerosis.

The MS Society also operates a Disability Employment Service that provides employment related services to people with a disability funded through the Department of Employment (DoE). This service is operated by the Employment Services Department under the brand name Multiple Solutions. Multiple Solutions has grown into a large operation, with the aim of attracting funding to support a range of people in need including people living with MS.

The MS Society established a charitable trust in June 2003, named the MS Society of SA and NT Foundation for the purpose of expanding specific MS Society activities. The MS Society of SA and NT Foundation was wound up during the year, with all net assets of the Foundation being distributed to the MS Society.

## Significant Changes

There were no significant changes in the nature of the activities of the MS Society during the year.

## Future Developments

There are no significant future developments identified by the MS Society.

## After Balance Date Events

There were no significant events subsequent to year end.

## Environmental Issues

The MS Society's operations are not regulated by any significant environmental regulation under a law of the Commonwealth or a state or territory.

## Indemnifying Officers or Auditors

The MS Society paid for the insurance premiums of Directors and Officers Liability Insurance policy indemnifying Directors and Officers. No indemnities have been given or insurance premiums paid, during or since the end of the financial year, for any person who is or has been an auditor of the MS Society.

## Proceedings on Behalf of the Entity

No person has applied for leave of a Court to bring proceedings on behalf of the MS Society or intervene in any proceedings to which the entity is a party for the purpose of taking responsibility on behalf of the entity for all or any part of those proceedings.

The MS Society was not a party to any such proceedings during the year.

## Benefits Payable to Directors and/or Officers

During the financial year:

(i) no officer of the MS Society;

(ii) no firm in which an officer was a member; and

(iii) no body corporate in which an officer has a substantial interest;

has received or become entitled to receive a benefit as a result of a contract between the officer, firm, or body corporate and the MS Society and no officer has received either directly or indirectly from the MS Society any payment or other benefit of a pecuniary value, except as noted in the financial statements at Note 12.

This report is signed for and behalf of the Directors in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.

A.N. Abbott  
Director

A. G. Scott  
Director

## Key Supporters & Sponsors



## Sponsors and Supporters

Adelaide 36er's – Mitch Creek | Adelaide Therapeutic Massage Services | Adelaide Zoo | Anytime Fitness Unley  
Aspire Magazine | Beerenberg | Brenton Ragless | Bunnings | Endota Spa | Maggie Beer | Nippy's | Old Tailern Town  
Red Bull | Table of Plenty | The Good Guys | Wallis Cinemas | Watch Around Water



For more information

08 7002 6500

[enquiries@ms.asn.au](mailto:enquiries@ms.asn.au)

[ms.asn.au](http://ms.asn.au)



The Multiple Sclerosis Society of SA & NT (Inc.)  
11-15 Fourth Avenue, Mawson Lakes SA 5095

