



20
19 | Annual
Report



MS North West
Therapy Centre Sligo

Providing essential services to people with Multiple Sclerosis,
related conditions and their families.





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MISSION STATEMENT



MS North West Therapy Centre Sligo

**Providing essential services to people with Multiple Sclerosis,
related conditions and their families.**

The Multiple Sclerosis North West Therapy Centre exists to enrich the lives of people with Multiple Sclerosis and other neurological conditions by providing essential services and supports to clients and their families.



Chairpersons Welcome





CHAIRPERSONS WELCOME



The Annual Report 2019 gives a brief overview of the Multiple Sclerosis North West Therapy Centre (MS Centre) and its services delivered through the Operational Plan 2019. The report also sets out the activities and plans for 2020/21 through the Strategic Plan – Mid Term Review.

The Financial Statements for 2019 will be presented to the Board of Directors for sign-off at the upcoming AGM.

The report includes an overview from our dedicated health care professionals on the services and activities during 2019.

Woodhaven, our state of the art holiday facility at Sea Road, continues to provide short-term breaks for people with MS and related conditions. We are appreciative to POBAL for continued funding for this wonderful facility.

As in previous years, there was a significant gap between the costs of running the MS Centre and the HSE funding for the services. Meeting this shortfall is dependent on fundraising and once again our committed fundraisers did amazing work to close out the funding gap. We are deeply grateful to all our donors for their generosity in making donations and running fundraising events during the year. Every euro donated goes towards the running of the services. I would like to take this opportunity to ensure all stake-holders that costs are very tightly managed and controlled. Every euro is put to good use.

I want to highlight one particularly significant donation made in 2019. We were extremely fortunate to be selected by the Northwest Neurological Institute for an incredibly generous donation towards upgrade of our Hyperbaric Oxygen (HBO) Chamber. The upgrade to the chamber was essential to bring it up to current standards, prior to the offer from the Northwest Neurological Institute the funding of the costly upgrade was a serious concern for us. We thank them here again most sincerely for their generosity. With that support we believe that the HBO chamber will bring relief of symptoms to many long into the future. We had some other notable events during 2019; these include World MS Day and the Band Aid Event in the Dunes Bar in Strandhill.

The risks for the MS Centre, both financial and physical are set out in a realistic fashion. The gap between HSE funding and the cost of running the MS Centre is a cause of ongoing concern. The income from Essential Seconds Charity Shops and the MS 300 Club Draw is critical. Our fundraising goal for 2020 is at least €100,000 to bridge the gap.

I wish to thank the Board members for their continued commitment and dedication towards achieving the goals of the MS Centre during the year. We wish our outgoing Chairperson,



Pat Dolan, well as he steps down from our board and we thank him for his many years of service to the board.

We very sadly lost our highly esteemed friend and dedicated board member Columb McBride to illness in November. The contribution that Columb made to this organisation since its inception is incalculable. His knowledge, wisdom and expertise was invaluable to the organisation. We extend our deepest sympathies to his family and many friends. May his gentle spirit Rest in Peace.

I thank our managers, staff and volunteers for their excellent work during the year. We are very fortunate in having a team of dedicated caring professionals. We wish Lorraine Dempsey well in her new career and we welcome Gina Gartlan into the role formerly held by Lorraine. We wish Mary Walsh well in her latest endeavours.

The three main governance programmes; Quality Assurance, Health and Safety and Safeguarding continue to maintain our standards at the highest possible level. We are engaging with the HSE and other State bodies to secure funding for a fulltime self-sustainable service.

Yours Sincerely,

Geraldine Gordon

Chairperson



SERVICE MANAGER'S REPORT



Throughout 2019, the MS North West Therapy Centre (MS Centre) worked diligently to support people with MS, their families and carers by providing a range of supports and essential services to help each person attending the Centre manage their MS. The MS Centre continues to be the only organisation providing essential rehabilitative and support services to people with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and other related neurological condition in the North West. In 2019, people with MS attended for treatment from Sligo and eight neighbouring counties from Longford to Donegal with a total of 6437 services delivered by the MS Centre. In addition throughout 2019, Woodhaven, provided 586 bed nights in the form of much needed short-term breaks for people with MS and other conditions.

Services at the MS Centre including Physiotherapy, Hyperbaric Oxygen, Hydrotherapy, Counselling, Complimentary Therapies, EKSO Skeleton Service, Foot Care Clinic, and access to HSE community based services, continue to experience increasing demand with 25 new Clients registering throughout 2019.

2019 was challenging in many ways, with our funding shortfall on the top of the agenda, the MS Centre managed to bridge the gap once again with a combination of tireless work by the fundraising committee, the MS Club draw initiative, Client donations and the support of the general public. Essential Seconds in Sligo and Ballymote continues to be an essential source of trading income (€30,000 in 2019) which is utilised for the provision of services at the MS Centre and Woodhaven.

To further enhance service quality, the Organisation has adopted the Improving Quality scheme which focuses on four core elements.

1. Accountable- This Element describes requirements for good governance, leadership and management
2. Welcoming- This Element is about people – involving service users, managing and developing staff and volunteers, equality and diversity, and working with others
3. Effective- This Element refers to the services that the organisation provides and the planning, delivery, monitoring, and evaluation that the organisation carries out
4. Sustainable - This Element covers how the organisation manages risk, money and the resources used to make service delivery happen.

In addition we have also adopted the new Charities Governance Code which was launched in 2019. The code consists of six principles of governance namely advancing charitable purpose; behaving with integrity; leading people; exercising control; working effectively; being accountable and transparent. Through our reporting with the Charity Regulatory



Authority, we continue to maintain the highest levels of governance, transparency and accountability in everything we do.

The Board and Management look for the support of the HSE and other voluntary organisations for the provision of funding and staffing to support the continuation of our services. We would like to thank Sligo Social Services and Sligo Leader Project for the provision of care staff, maintenance and administration personnel via their Community Employment projects. Without the collaboration of the aforementioned groups, service delivery could not be maintained. In addition, we would like to acknowledge and thank POBAL, the main funding stream for provision of services at Woodhaven.

This Annual Report highlights the progress of performance of the last year and only gives a basic insight regarding the full activities that took place during 2019. Finally, we would like to thank the voluntary Board of Directors for successfully driving the Organisation to achieve its goal, the wonderful staff, project workers, volunteers and clients who are dedicated and committed to the MS Centre and the success of its services. We are thankful to our wonderful clients who have contributed in so many ways, becoming involved in completing service reviews, World MS Day, fundraising events, supporting our two shops, and overall contributing to service quality improvements.

For 2020, we are again committed to constant improvement in everything we do hope that our stakeholders will continue to support the MS Centre and the MS Community in any way they can.

Tamara Mulhern



MS Centre, Management & Staff



Financial





AUDITED ACCOUNTS

Multiple Sclerosis North West Therapy Centre Limited (A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having Share Capital)

Balance Sheet

As at 31st December 2019

	2019		2018	
	€	€	€	€
Fixed Assets	<u>737,378</u>		<u>776,160</u>	
Tangible assets		737,387		776,160
Current Assets				
Debtors	15,429		25,426	
Cash at bank	<u>371,071</u>		<u>351,565</u>	
	387,017		376,991	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	<u>(44,858)</u>		<u>(23,278)</u>	
Net current assets		<u>342,159</u>		<u>353,713</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		1,079,546		1,129,873
Deferred Income		(153,210)		(157,538)
Net assets		<u>926,336</u>		<u>972,335</u>
Reserves		27,400		2,000
Capital contributions		190,444		-
Contingency reserve		708,492		970,335
Income and expenditure account		<u>926,336</u>		<u>972,335</u>

There financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Small Companies' Regime.



RESERVES POLICY

A formal policy on reserves was agreed by the Board of Directors as follows:

It states: The Board has set a reserves policy which requires:

- Reserves be maintained at a level which ensures that the MS North West Therapy Centre's core activity could continue during a period of unforeseen difficulty.
- A proportion of reserves be maintained in a readily realisable form.

The calculation of the required level of reserves is an integral part of the organisation's planning, budget and forecast cycle.

It takes into account:

- Risks associated with each stream of income and expenditure being different from that budgeted.
- Planned activity level.
- Organisation's commitments.

The following expenditure was considered for 2019:

- Working capital – Reserves up to 12 weeks to cover all operational costs for all MS North West Therapy services
- Capital Costs – €10,000 has been projected as a contingency figure to cover unforeseen repairs, breakages and equipment maintenance
- Developments – A provision of €5000 has been made to facilitate the costs incurred with staff training, advertising, marketing promotional material regarding services provided by new service at Woodhaven.
- Other Contingencies – covered above under working capital
- Restricted funds – there are no restricted funds in our reserves

Summary

The reserves are in place to provide matching funds for projects that require funding such as and any other such projects should they arise. They are also required for working capital purposes on a day to day basis and to provide bridging finance for programmes where grant aid is paid in arrears, as per banking requirements and good practice.

The Board proposes to maintain the charity's reserves at a level which is at least equivalent to three months operational expenditure.



The monies contained in the reserves account is unrestricted, therefore the Board have the right to allocate funding to where it may be required to fund service delivery.

For 2019, the Board agreed that the most appropriate level of reserves should be kept at the level of 3 months operational costs.





RISK MANAGEMENT



In Community and Voluntary Organisations, risk is inevitable and therefore, a process must be implemented to anticipate and develop a plan to mitigate risk.

The MS North West Therapy Centre (MS Centre) like many other charities operate in high risk environments, from coping with changeable funding streams every year to their heavy reliance on voluntary input to bridge funding gaps. Therefore, the MS Centre Board of Directors must be very aware of these risks and must deal with them in the best way they can on an annual basis. The MS Centre takes a very proactive approach to risk management aiming to avoid bad risks but also identify areas for potential development.

The Board of Directors have a remit in reviewing the following categories of risks facing our organisation:

- Compliance
- External
- Financial
- Governance
- Operational
- Reputational
- Strategic



Governance





DIRECTORS ELECTED 6TH JUNE 2019

Board of Directors Elected 6th June 2019:

OFFICERS

Chairperson: Geraldine Gordon

Vice Chairperson: Mary Henry

Treasurer: Columb McBride

Company Secretary: Paula Lahiff

DIRECTORS

Rosaleen O'Grady

Denis Joyce

Mairin Rooney

MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

Geraldine Gordon

Mary Henry

Tamara Mulhern, Mairead Martin (during Services Manager's Leave of Absence) and
Gina Garlan (Front Office Manager)

MANAGERS

Mairead Martin: Woodhaven and Acting Services Manager during Tamara's Leave of absence.

Vincent Hunt: Shops Manager



SECRETARY'S REPORT

The following legal obligations have been carried out for the year 2019:

- The Annual Report and Financial Statement of the MS North West Therapy Centre Ltd., have been signed and will be lodged with the Company Registration Office (CRO) by the date due.
- The Annual General Meeting was held on 14th June 2019. Notice of the AGM was given 3 weeks beforehand as is required.
- Five full Board Meetings and one Single Agenda Meetings were held in 2019, notice and agenda for these meetings were given seven days in advance.
- The Register of Directors has been kept updated during the year 2019.
- Minutes of all Board Meetings were proposed and seconded as true accounts and signed by the Chairman. They are filed in a locked cabinet in secretary's office with an online copy on the internet server.
- Updated B10 forms relating to director changes have been lodged with the CRO.

Board Members resigned during the year:

- Pat Dolan – 14/06/2019
- Máirín Rooney – 30/09/2019



ATTENDANCE AT BOARD MEETINGS 2019

Dates	PD	CMcB	PL	GG	MH	ROG	DJ	MR
29/01/2019	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	N	✓	✓
04/04/2019	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	A	✓	✓
12/04/2019	✓	✓	A	✓	A	A	✓	✓
14/06/2019	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	A	A	✓
29/08/2019	N	A	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	✓
31/10/2019	N	A	✓	✓	✓	A	A	✓

Key:

✓ - Present

A - Apology

R - Resigned

N - Non Attendance

ND - New Director

Five Board Meetings were held during the year:

29/01/2019

04/04/2019

12/04/2019

14/06/2019 (AGM followed by Board Meeting)

29/08/2019

31/10/2019



MEET THE DIRECTORS



Geraldine Gordon (Chairperson, June - December)

Geraldine has a background in banking and was elected as a Director 4 years ago. She acts as director with special responsibility for fundraising and has provided assistance to the fundraising committee in setting up and monitoring the MS Club Draw.



Pat Dolan (Chairperson, January - June)

Pat has been Chairman of the MS Centre Board of Directors for the past 3 years. Prior to his retirement, he was Deputy CEO of the North Western Health Board and Area Manager in the HSE. He is currently Chair of Family Carers Ireland, Board Member of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland and North West Hospice.



Paula Lahiff (Company Secretary)

Paula has served as Company Secretary to the Board for the past 4 years. She comes from an occupational therapy/advocacy background from her work in mental health services, and more recently has been self-employed in the business sector, providing computer training and secretarial services. Her role includes making sure that all legal obligations of the Board have been carried out according to best practice. She also assists the Services Manager from a governance perspective on the management sub-committee.



Columb Mc Bride (Treasurer Jan-Oct RIP)

Columb has a background in branch banking and has been associated with the MS Centre for over twenty years, first with the Fundraising Committee and then as a Director and Treasurer with responsibility for overseeing the bookkeeping and finances of the Company.



Mary Henry (Director)

Mary comes from a background in Occupational Therapy and was Physical and Sensory Disabilities Manager in HSE before her retirement. She was an integral part of the group that set up the MS Centre and was involved both in the original building and fundraising effort. More recently she coordinated the building of our supported holiday facility Woodhaven.



Rosaleen O'Grady (Director)

Rosaleen comes from a background in health. She is a former senior clinical nurse manager with HSE West. She has been a public representative since 1999. She was elected to the Board of the MS Centre in 2014 with special responsibility to assist Woodhaven Manager when needed.



Máirín Rooney (Director)

Máirín comes from a Health Sector background and was Physiotherapist in Charge at the HSE WEST Sligo University Hospital before her retirement. One of her special interests has been in Neurology Treatments and she was involved with Physiotherapy Services between the Acute Hospital and the MS Centre locally. She has always nurtured an interest in Education and Personnel Development and has attained a National Diploma in Business Studies in Healthcare Management and an MA in Training and Management from NUI Galway.



Denis Joyce (Director)

Denis has spent thirty-six years working within An Garda Síochána in a variety of roles. Denis has a diploma in Industrial Relations, Degree in Leadership and a Post Grad in Governance. He is currently Chair of North Connaught/Ulster Citizens Information service and Child Safety Officer for Collera Community games and Collera GAA club.



DIRECTOR'S CODE OF CONDUCT

It is the responsibility of Board Members to:

1. Act within the governing document and the law – being aware of the contents of the organisation's governing document and the law as it applies to MS North West Therapy Centre Ltd. This is set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association.
2. Act in the best interests of the MS North West Therapy Centre as a whole – considering what is best for the organisation and its beneficiaries.
3. Manage conflicts of interest effectively by abiding with the MS North West Therapy Centre's declaration of interests policy.
4. Respect confidentiality – understanding what confidentiality means in practice for MS North West Therapy Centre, its Board and the individuals involved with it.
5. Attend meetings and other appointments on time or give apologies. If three consecutive meetings are missed without apology, you may be asked to step down from the Board.
6. Prepare fully for board meetings – reading papers, querying anything you don't understand and thinking through issues in good time before meetings.
7. Actively engage in discussion, debate and voting in meetings – contributing positively, listening carefully, challenging sensitively and avoiding conflict.
8. Act jointly and accept a majority decision – making decisions collectively, standing by them and not acting individually unless specifically authorised to do so.
9. Work considerately and respectfully with all – respecting diversity, different roles and boundaries, and avoiding giving offence.
10. Work to protect the good name of the MS North West Therapy Centre at all times – avoiding bringing the organisation into disrepute.
11. Directors should not accept gifts and hospitality from stakeholders as set out in the Policy Folder.

Board members are expected to honour the content and spirit of this code.



MEET THE MANAGERS

Tamara Mulhern (Services Manager)

Tamara joined the MS Centre as Services Manager in 2011. Her background includes working in the private sector but primarily in the Voluntary and Disability Sector for the past 10 years. Tamara has recently completed a Masters in Leadership and Management for the Community and Public Sector. Currently her main role encompasses the management and co-ordination of services provided by the MS Centre and monitoring of its services at Woodhaven and Essential Seconds.



Mairead Martin (Woodhaven Manager)

Mairead Martin joined the MS North West Therapy Centre as Woodhaven Manager in 2014. Mairead has over ten years' experience of working in the community and voluntary sector. Mairead has a BA in Applied Social Studies and recently completed an MA in Leadership and Management for the Community and Public Sector. Central to Mairead's role is the provision of an individual holiday based experience for each and every guest that visits Woodhaven.





SAFEGUARDING REPORT

The MS Therapy Centre/Woodhaven has adopted the Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse National Policy & Procedures.

The MS Centre has three Safeguarding Designated Officers as follows:

Claire Smyth (Physiotherapist)

Mairead Martin (Woodhaven Manager)

Tamara Mulhern (Services Manager)

The MS Centre and Woodhaven continue to have a Zero Tolerance approach to any form of abuse and this is publicly declared by a post at the entrance at both the MS Centre and Woodhaven.

No Safeguarding matters have been reported in 2019.

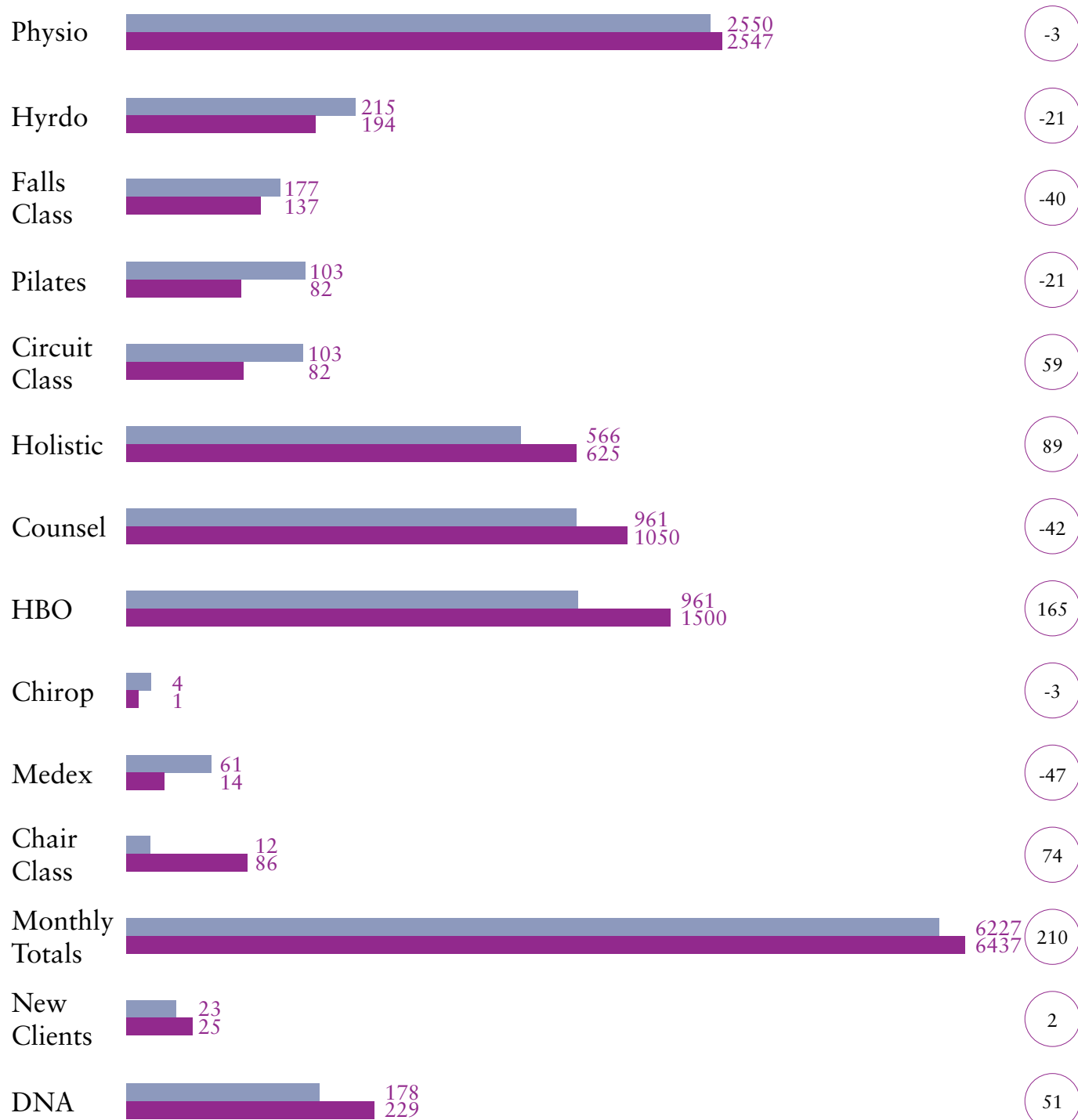


Services





MS CENTRE SERVICES STATS 2019



2018 Total 2019 Total



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Purpose and Vision

The Physiotherapy Department in the MS Northwest Therapy Centre continue in their commitment to offer support to people with MS and their families. We endeavour to continually improve our services through evidence-based practice, through monitoring treatment outcomes, and by responding to feedback from service-users. We aim to promote health and well-being through appropriate management, and by offering a wide range of ways service-users can introduce exercise into everyday life. We endeavour to support people with MS in self-managing their condition, and we hope that through a holistic approach to care we can help them improve their quality of life.

Service Trends in 2019

- The Physiotherapy Department comprises of 2.5 WTE Physiotherapists (PTs), made up of 1 Senior Grade and 3 Staff-Grade Physiotherapists. We also have 3 Physiotherapy Assistants, all of whom have FETAC Level 5 qualifications.
- A total of 2575 out-patient physiotherapy treatment sessions were delivered on a one-to-one basis in 2019. A further 948 exercise class attendances were recorded. Classes included Hydrotherapy, Pilates, Chair-based exercise, Circuit-training, and our newly introduced Otago-based strength and balance class.
- 273 cancelled appointments were recorded during 2019, and a further 234 were recorded as 'did not attend'. When totalled, this is similar to 2018 non-attendance figures.
- Records show 40 new referrals were received in 2019, 2 of which were inappropriate referrals, and 2 of whom declined services due to the distance they would have to travel to the MS Centre for services. Of those who did attend, 32 had a diagnosis of MS, and 4 had neurological conditions related to MS. 18 Clients lived in Sligo, 10 from Donegal, and the remaining 8 from Longford, Leitrim, Roscommon and Mayo. 3 persons were aged over 65, the rest were aged 18-65.

Annual Projects

- 2019 saw continued success with 'MS World Day', which was held on 30th in the Sligo Park Hotel. PT Hannah Gordon took the lead on organising the event this year, and along with a dedicated team made it a thoroughly enjoyable & highly informative experience.
- The Annual Glencar Sponsored Swim was held on the 14th September in 2019, again organised by PT Shane Sweeney. 140 swimmers participated on the day, with a total of €2,500 raised for the MS Northwest Therapy Centre.



New Developments / Quality Initiatives in 2019

- PT Shane Sweeney, in conjunction with 'No Barriers Foundation' a Donegal-based not-for-profit organisation, set up an 'Ekso' Exoskeleton Service in Sligo. This service currently runs every 2 weeks, but as the service expands there are plans to start running it once per week.
- PT Hannah Gordon developed and introduced a 'Lunchtime Talk' series, which has proven very popular with service-users. This will hopefully run every 4 months for the foreseeable future. The first presentation was on 'Exercise and MS' and the second on 'Bladder dysfunction in MS'.
- PTs Claire Smyth and Shelby Brooks (who has since finished her temporary post in the MS Centre) developed and introduced a new Otago-based strength and balance class as a fall prevention initiative, in line with a similar programme currently being rolled out throughout CHO1.
- The PT department formalised its Standard Operating Procedures for all classes currently running in the MS Centre, and subsequently completed a service review of same. Minor changes were made to existing class formats, and feedback from service-users was overall positive.
- A new stationary exercise bike was purchased for the Physiotherapy Department, kindly funded by the Roscommon Branch of MS Ireland. A new height-adjustable stairs was also purchased, funded by the Hospital Saturday Fund.

Education/Continuous Professional Development in 2019

- PT Hannah Gordon attended an accredited course on 'Dry Needling' which she has since introduced into practice in the MS Centre for the treatment of myofascial pain and dysfunction.
- PT Claire Smyth commenced a Masters programme in Sligo IT on 'Neuroplasticity in Stroke (and other neurological conditions)', and regularly feeds back new research to the Physiotherapy Team.

Plans for Future Development in 2020

- The PT Dept will continue its involvement in the MS Centre's Quality Assurance process, through participation in the newly introduced 'Improving Quality' programme, which has replaced PQASSO. It is hoped that the MS Centre will go forward for accreditation towards the end of 2020.
- The PT Dept plans to investigate various ways of facilitating self-management of chronic illness through the use of technology. Examples include the use of online education resources, symptom-trackers and exercise apps. It would be hoped that this would then be introduced



into clinical practice, where it could benefit appropriate service-users.

- The PT Dept will assist in recruitment of service-users for an upcoming research project looking at benefits of cognitive rehabilitation in persons with MS. This project 'COB-MS' is being rolled out by NUIG, and will be run locally by Case Coordinator Mellissa Walsh.
- The PT Dept plans to introduce pre-Neurology Review Clinic outcome measure assessment for all clients attending Neurology Services in Sligo University Hospital.
- The PT Dept plans to purchase a new Functional Electrical Trainer in 2020, with funding kindly donated by the Roscommon branch of MS Ireland.



Aileen Melanaphy
Senior Physiotherapist



Claire Smyth
Physiotherapist



Shane Sweeney
Physiotherapist



Hannah Gordon



Dry Needling - *Hannah Gordon*



In 2019, Hannah, one of our physiotherapists completed a course to become qualified in dry needling.

The aim of Dry Needling is to reduce muscle pain and dysfunction by releasing tight areas in the muscle known as myofascial trigger points. Trigger points are tender nodules within taut bands of muscle. Normal muscle does not contain these taut bands. Trigger points may cause disturbed muscle function, muscle weakness and restricted range of motion, as well as local or referred pain.

There are several reasons why trigger points develop in muscles. The most common are overuse, over stretch, over loading and trauma to muscles. Dry needling is one way that these trigger points can be treated.

Dry needling is a form of therapeutic approach in which fine solid filament needles are inserted into specific points on the body to relieve pain and improve function. These needles are the same as acupuncture needles but it is not the same as acupuncture. Some of the physiological effects of needling are common in both, but the principles of assessment and treatment techniques are quite different.

If you are interested in dry needling or feel that it is something that may benefit you, then speak to your physiotherapist who can discuss it with you and refer you to Hannah if appropriate.

EKSO Skeleton Service

This year, Shane one of our Physiotherapists has trained and been certified to use the EKSO Skeleton.

The EKSO Skeleton is a robotic suit that enables individuals who can no longer walk or have difficulty walking for long periods, to stand and walk with the assistance of various motors and sensors as well as the therapist's guidance.

Initially designed for people with spinal cord injuries and paralysis, the EKSO Skeleton is now commonly used with all forms of neurological conditions including Multiple Sclerosis.

Although designed for walking the suit has many positive secondary benefits for people who find themselves in wheelchairs most of the time or those who are less mobile. These benefits include **emotional and mental health improvements, increased bone density, decrease in body fat percentage, improved cardiovascular system and exercise tolerance, improved bowel and bladder function, improved sitting posture and joint mobility.**

Over the past couple of years Shane has been working with the No Barriers Foundation based in Letterkenny and recently has set up EKSO sessions in Sligo with the very kind support of Stephen, David and Johnny from No Barriers Foundation. Currently they are running sessions

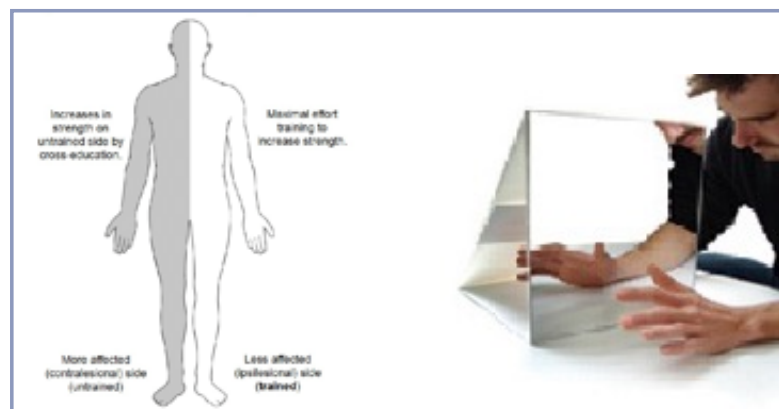


every second Friday for clients of the MS centre. There are a number of clients already using the suit on a regular basis at the centre and all feedback has been very positive.

For More information or if you have an interest in being assessed to use the suit you can contact :

Shane at the MS Centre 071 9144748 / physioshane@mstherapycentre.ie or

Stephen at No Barriers 083 8855056 / hello@nobarriers.ie



Post Graduate Masters Research Programme - *Claire Smyth*

Our physiotherapist Claire Smyth has started a part-time Post Graduate Masters Research Programme with the Neuroplasticity Research Group in the Institute of Technology, Sligo. The proposed title of her research project is “To investigate the potential effectiveness of **mirror-aided cross-education** using the innovative ‘Mirror

Strengthening Device’ compared to mirror therapy alone in post-stroke upper limb recovery”.

Although the population targeted in the study are people post-stroke, the rehabilitation techniques of **Cross Education** and **Mirror therapy** are also applicable to people with Multiple Sclerosis.

Cross education describes the strength gain in the opposite, untrained limb following unilateral resistance training. Individuals with a hemiparesis are often unable to train their affected side due to muscle weakness and limited range of motion.

Mirror therapy is a rehabilitation technique in which, a mirror is placed along a person’s midline plane, reflecting the training limb as if it were the resting limb behind the mirror. The movement patterns of the healthy limb can create a visual illusion of normal movement patterns in the compromised limb.

This research is looking at the combined benefit of cross-education and mirror therapy as part of a home education program compared to mirror therapy alone.

Otago-based Strength and Balance Class - *Claire Smyth*

The Otago Exercise Programme was developed in New Zealand and is an evidenced-based strength and balance retraining programme. The Otago-based Strength & Balance Class was designed specifically to prevent falls. Falls are a common health concern in the MS community with one out of two individuals with MS reporting a fall in the previous 6 months.

The physiotherapy department introduced their new Otago-based Strength and Balance class on Thursday mornings in April 2019. The exercise class component consists of a set of leg



muscle strengthening and balance retraining exercises progressing in difficulty as well as a walking plan. The exercises take about 45 min to complete. Participants are expected to exercise three times a week and perform walking practice at least twice a week.

A recent evaluation of this service showed that the clients found it enjoyable as well as beneficial. Outcome measures also showed positive results with an average improvement of 15% in the Timed Up and Go Test and 8% improvement in the BERG balance scores.





HYDROTHERAPY

In people with MS, research has shown that hydrotherapy (exercising in warm water) helps to improve muscle strength, fitness, gait and mobility, as well as quality of life and wellbeing and reduces spasticity, pain and swelling of the limbs.

The MS Centre utilises the hydrotherapy Pool in Cregg House for its hydrotherapy service. For health and safety reasons and in accordance with the hydrotherapy policy, the maximum number of people attending a session is 10 (8 clients, one physiotherapist and one physiotherapy assistant.) The decision to break the pool sessions in two, thereby enabling more clients to avail of this service continues to work very well.

There is a risk of the pool being no longer available to our clients if Cregg House were to close.





OXYGEN TREATMENT (O2T)



The Oxygen Treatment (O2T) has been provided to people with MS and other related neurological conditions for the past 24 years. The treatment involves breathing in pure oxygen at higher than atmospheric pressure in an enclosed chamber. The increase flow of oxygen stimulates and assists repair of damaged cells throughout the body. It can be very beneficial for people with MS in overcoming fatigue, improving balance and eyesight as well as improving bladder control and general well-being. It is found to be useful in healing soft tissue injuries, sprains and bruising, leg ulcers and circulatory problems.

Clients who use the Oxygen Treatment at the MS Centre generally present with MS and other related neurological conditions. However we do offer the service to non-MS clients who pay privately for the treatment. While people with MS are always a priority, our private clients provide much needed funding in order for us to continue delivering the service to MS Clients.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the MS North West Therapy Centre, we would like to thank the Board of Directors of the North West Neurological Institute most sincerely for their very generous gift of €24,000. This has enabled us to upgrade our Hyperbaric Oxygen Chamber which our clients find so beneficial to their wellbeing.





HOLISTIC THERAPY



Holistic Therapies including Reflexology, Massage, Shiatsu and Sotaii were available from the dedicated therapy space in the MS Therapy Centre and at Woodhaven during 2019. The team of holistic therapists including Deirdre Murray, Jacqueline Hanly and Catherine Rutledge provided these services five mornings a week and undertook to update their skill set in 2019 by taking specialised reflexology training during the year in the form of Continuous Professional Development Courses. Both Jacqueline Hanly and Catherine Rutledge undertook a course in Reflexology & Multiple Sclerosis, and a Refresher Reflexology Course while Deirdre Murray attended a three day course in Dublin, presented by Dr. Jesus Manzanares on neuro-physiology & reflexology entitled ‘The Manzanares Method & Science of Reflexology’. Dr. Manzanares is a Spanish MD who graduated in Medicine and Surgery from the University of Barcelona in 1982. He is also a published author of two books. Today as a practicing GP, he specialises in integrating homeopathy and reflexology with conventional medicine.

The course was based on Dr. Manzanares’ research in neuro-physiology at the University Hospital Vall D’Hebron and Hospital Sagrado Corazon Barcelona spanning over three decades and the documentation of 70,000 clinical cases. His research focused on the neuro-physiological basis or nervous system pathways for reflexology, specific anatomical location of the reflex areas of the feet, and reflexology protocols for pathologies. In his books, *Reflexology Research Handbook (2017)* and *Reflexology Maps and Deposits (2018)*. Dr. Manzanares diagrams his investigations in elaborate detail. He illustrates the reticular core of the brain stem as the common pathway from the feet to internal organs of the autonomic nervous system and charts his reflexology protocols with establishing pressure, duration and frequency.

The Holistic Therapy Team conducted a total of **980** holistic treatments to service users aged between 18-65, with a range of neurological conditions, but mainly multiple sclerosis. At the MS Therapy Centre there were in excess of 20 new reflexology referrals in 2019. Most attended for a number of sessions and continued to attend for treatments with all experiencing a beneficial result including better quality of sleep, feeling less stressed and more relaxed, better bladder control, feeling more energised, improved mood, and feeling better able to cope with their new diagnosis. Such is the demand for holistic therapy that spaces are at a premium and a strict cancellation policy is in place.

Stress and anxiety are very prevalent in society today, but particularly with a diagnosis of a medical condition such as Multiple Sclerosis. Quite often the diagnosis itself will have a negative impact on any plans and aspirations the individual may have had and so the gentle nature of holistic therapies helps in many ways to balance the emotional trauma that



the body so often experiences. These holistic treatments continue to be personalised to each individual depending on their presenting symptoms. Quite often the holistic team will endeavour to accommodate the service user by scheduling appointments to enable them to partake in other therapies available at the centre on the same day.



Reflexology The ancient healing art of Reflexology has been known to man and practiced by many diverse cultures for many thousands of years. Although its origins are unclear it is thought to have been first practiced by the early Chinese and Egyptian peoples so its roots probably lie in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) therapies such as acupuncture, acupressure or shiatsu. In more recent times Dr. William H. Fitzgerald (1872 – 1942) an ENT consultant in the US developed a concept of Zone Therapy, and introduced it to the medical world. He discovered that gentle pressure applied

to specific parts of the hand or foot either by using bands or clips, had an anaesthetic effect on certain parts of the body. He performed minor surgery without using an anaesthetic.

Another colleague, Dr. Edwin Bowers and himself published a joint paper in 1917 identifying the 10 zones running down the length of the body starting and finishing in the hands and feet, and outlined the various organs within these zones. They believed that by applying pressure with the fingers or thumbs on the ends of these “zones” an anaesthetic effect was created in the organs throughout that zone. These were charted on a map. They called this Zonal Therapy and this was further developed into what we know today as Reflexology. Using precise techniques on specific points reflexology releases tension, helps the body seek its equilibrium, activates the body’s inner healing systems, and restores innate energy promoting sustainable wellbeing.



Aromatherapy Massage Aromatherapy massage is a gentle holistic therapy incorporating 100% natural carrier and essential oils, and massage techniques when combined create a relaxing treatment. As relaxation is the antidote to stress it works very well on reducing the symptoms of stress in the body. Stress is a natural reaction to a medical diagnosis, and a common symptom with all types of MS. Stress effects the body in many different ways. Essential Oils have many properties which help reduce the symptoms of stress. These essential oils are clinically proven to have valuable chemical compounds which are scientifically evaluated for their benefits to the

human body in restoration of balance.



At the MS Centre we use a number of essential oils with specific properties which are effective with the nervous system, and blend them into a personalised treatment. This combined with therapeutic touch facilitates the service user to reach a deeper level of relaxation. In addition the aroma of these oils evokes the bodys inner healing powers getting directly into the blood stream through the respiratory system. Benefits include stimulating the blood and lymph flow, relaxing the muscular system, improving overall health and wellbeing and releasing endorphins, the bodys natural pain killers and mood elevators



Shiatsu and Sotaii are based on a traditional Japanese body therapy incorporating the many meridian pathways of the body. It aims to stimulate the bodys natural healing powers to overcome symptoms of disease and regain its natural vitality by rebalancing the vital energy force Qi. A particular form called 'Zen Shiatsu' uses TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) influences to determine imbalances and works directly to calm the autonomic nervous system, increase resistance to stress, improve muscle tone blood and lymph circulation, and strengthens the immune system, while promoting healthy

internal organ function. All of this is considered extremely beneficial for people with an MS diagnosis.

Shiatsu is considered an important aspect of preventative health care and is consistent with the basic concepts of TCM being grounded in the theory that health problems are attributed to imbalances of the yin and yang, disharmonies between the internal organs, and restriction of the circulation of Qi through the meridian pathways.





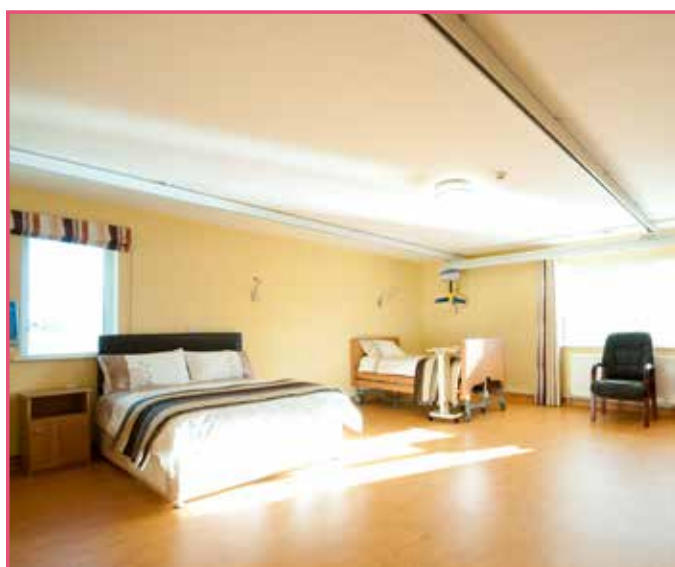
Woodhaven





Woodhaven Staff

WOODHAVEN FACILITY





WOODHAVEN REPORT

We are delighted to say that Woodhaven our accessible and supported holiday facility is now in its fourth year of operations. Woodhaven has had the pleasure of providing over five hundred bed nights to Guests who came from all over Ireland throughout 2019. Below is the monthly breakdown of the Guest nights that were provided throughout the year.

Jan 2019	Feb 2019	Mar 2019	Apr 2019	May 2019	June 2019	July 2019	Aug 2019	Sept 2019	Oct 2019	Nov 2019	Dec 2019	Total 2019
47	53	52	54	72.5	56.5	62.5	68	48	19	38	16	586.5

Woodhaven has a choice of five beautifully appointed private bedrooms all ensuite with a choice of profiling beds and overhead hoists if required. We provide 24 hour personal assistant supports from our highly skilled and qualified staff. Another option Guests can avail of includes having a friend or carer to accompany them on their stay. In addition our spacious family room allows Guests and their families to enjoy all that Sligo has to offer. Our on site treatment room ensures that Guests can enjoy some luxurious, well deserved, pampering in the form of reflexology and massage.

Woodhaven also has a conference room on site for hire which is ideal for groups meetings and training courses. The room accommodates up to twenty people and comes with white boards, projector and kitchenette. Our conference room also has equipment such as a profiling bed and hoist which makes it ideal for training groups that require equipment for demonstration purposes. We also have parking available and the building is also wheelchair accessible.

Woodhaven has been very fortunate to secure continued funding from the Department of Rural and Community Development through the Pobal, Community Services Programme since 2015. This goes towards contributing towards funding for our Manager and four full time frontline staff which allows us to grow Woodhaven as a social enterprise. The absence of this funding would leave Woodhaven in a very precarious position as staffing for delivery of service would not be possible. In addition, Woodhaven thankfully continues to engage with the Sligo Social Services, Community Employment Project, training programme.

Woodhaven, as we further establish as a social enterprise, continues to heavily rely on our traded income generated from the Multiple Sclerosis North West Therapy Charity Shops that are located in Sligo and Ballymote.

The continued support of the Sligo community and surrounding counties is fundamental to Woodhaven's success going forward and for your support we sincerely thank you. Woodhaven would like to thank all our Guests who stayed with us throughout the year and



we look forward to providing more unique holiday experiences in 2020.

If you are interested in booking a stay in Woodhaven or booking our conference room please call Mairéad Martin, Manager on 071 91 54991 or you can visit our website www.woodhaven.ie for further information.





TESTIMONIALS FROM WOODHAVEN GUESTS

"It wasn't really any place, it was somewhere else instead. It was between the sea, the oyster beds and the grassy beach over which you looked. But it was beautiful none the less and it was just the place where Countess Markievicz spent her days and as far as any of us know, enjoyed it very well"

-W. B. Yeats

All of this is about my experience of Woodhaven, not so far from that described above, but by the same token, a place instinctively of its own. Lovely lay out in order to accommodate five deserving guests and treat them to the best fare, joy and comfort befitting any Lord or Lady and not ever looked down upon.

The house would be nothing if it were not for the staff, who care for and keep dearly in their hearts, so that it can in turn give a fully open welcome to the people who come and spend their time in Woodhaven. It is a wonderful place of calm, quiet to enable them to return again and again.

- Bob Potter-Cogan

I have been availing of respite breaks at Woodhaven for the past three years. It is a state of the art facility but more importantly the staff make me feel so welcome - it's like "home away from home". I enjoy having the craic with both residents and staff playing cards, listening to music and chatting of course. Another plus is having a reflexology treatment which is arranged prior to arrival.

- Elena



Essential Seconds Charity Shop





ESSENTIAL SECONDS CHARITY SHOP

The MS Therapy Centre has two charity shops which are located in Wine Street Car Park, Sligo and Teeling Street, Ballymote. The funds raised by our shops goes directly into providing services at The MS Centre and Woodhaven for people living with MS and other neurological conditions.



In 2019 both shops raised in total approximately €30,000 in total. This is a great help in meeting the annual deficit of €100,000 which the MS Centre must secure through income from fundraising and our charity shops in order to continue providing essential services to people with MS.

We would like to thank all our customers who have supported our shops throughout the year, and helped in raising these much needed funds. We would also like to thank members of the public and local businesses who contribute by donating goods.

Most importantly we would like to thank our dedicated Volunteers, without whom the shops would not be in operation. We would like to thank them for their time, commitment and support of the shops and the MS Centre.

We would also like to thank Sligo Leader, Abbeyquater, and Sligo Social Services who sponsor Volunteers who participate in the TUS and CE schemes and who work in Essential Seconds Charity Shops.

Please call and have a browse, you are guaranteed to pick up a bargain.





Fundraising





FUNDRAISING

In order to ensure the ongoing operation of providing services at MS North West Therapy Centre Sligo there is a huge reliance on fundraising events and we are extremely grateful to each and every one for the wonderful support and generosity of our supporters throughout the year.

MS North West Therapy Centre Sligo is extremely grateful to the ongoing work and commitment of the Fundraising Committee in organising the many fundraising events throughout the year and also co ordinating the Flay Days, Church Gate Collections, maintenance of the money boxes throughout Sligo town and of course the sale of our beautiful Christmas Cards in all locations in Sligo town and county.

The Fundraising Committee also supports those who organise events which are vitally important in raising much needed funds.

The following is a sample of some of events which took place.

The MS Centre is extremely grateful to everyone who has organised fundraising events for us. There is a gap of approx. €100,000 between the funding we receive and the cost of keeping the MS Centre up and running. If you would like to hold a fundraising event for the Centre we are only too willing to provide you with support.





FUNDRAISING EVENTS

A massive thank you is due to our Voluntary Fundraising Committee who works tirelessly organising fundraising events on our behalf and for assisting others who held events in aid of the MS Centre during the year. Our heartfelt thanks and gratitude goes to each and every one of you. Below is a flavour of some the many events which took place throughout 2019.

January 2019

Christmas Hamper Raffle

March 2019

Easter Hamper Raffle

April 2019

Tesco Community Fund

May 2019

Band Aid, The Dunes, Strandhill
Lough Arrow Fish Preservation
Association & District Anglers Fishing
Competition

June 2019

VHI Womens Mini Marathon
Summer Hamper Raffle

July 2019

North West Neurological Institute
Sligo Camino
Tubbercurry Golf Club – Captains Night

August 2019

Wedding Favours
Newtown Manor Fun Walk in Memory
of Sharon Loughlin

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE CODE OF CONDUCT

All members of the Fundraising Committee undertake to:

- Work with colleagues, Board of Directors and Management and others to achieve fundraising objectives.
- Conduct themselves at all times with complete integrity, honesty and trustfulness.
- Respect the dignity of their position and ensure that their actions enhance the reputation of themselves and the MS Centre
- Adhere to all applicable laws and regulations.
- Report any criminal offence of professional misconduct.

THEY SHALL:

- Not misuse their authority for personal gain.
- Not exploit any relationship with a donor, prospect, volunteer or employee for personal benefit.
- Not knowingly or recklessly disseminate false or misleading information in the course of their duties, nor permit their fellow fundraisers to do so.
- Not represent conflicting or competing interests without consent of the parties concerned after full disclosure of the facts.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Members shall:

- Not disclose (except as may be required by statute of law) or make use of information given or obtained in confidence from their employers or clients the donating public or any other source without prior express consent.
- Adhere to the principle that all information created by or on behalf of, the MS Centre is the property of the MS Centre and shall not be transferred or utilised except on behalf of that organisation.



September 2019

St Johns GAA Bag Pack
Glencar Swin

October 2019

Cooking up a Storm with Neven
McGuire – St Angela's College
Leitrim Glens Cycle
Golf Classic
Dublin City Marathon

November 2019

Movember – BRAUN Ltd
Sprint Triathlon

December 2019

Give Back Friday – Call of the Wild
Proceeds from sale of Handmade
Christmas Decorations
Christmas Hamper Raffles



Dublin City Marathon



Movember B Braun



St Angelas



Leitrim Glens Cycling Club Event



Tubbercurry Golf Club



MS CLUB DRAW 2019

In 2019 the MS Club Draw enjoyed another year of a sustainable fundraising event reporting a successful 4th year since the draw started in 2015. Following on from the recruitment drive for new club draw members which was launched at World MS Day in May 2019, there was a welcome increase in participation and interest from the service users of the centre. This support was very encouraging for the Club Draw organisers, and a welcome development as it highlighted the importance and value the service users place on maintaining services at the centre. It was also encouraging to see family members supporting the draw too.

As standing order payments are the preferred method of payment, there was a sizable transfer from cash paying club draw members to standing order payments. Most service users report a great peace of mind with this payment facility as they know they are included in each and every draw without having to remember to put in the payment. There are now approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the membership enjoying standing order payments which they can set up and keep track of with on-line banking from the comfort of their own home. This method is also less time consuming on the volunteers who administer the payments.

Due to a variety of reasons, the membership of the Club Draw fluctuated each month, but it was supported by between 190 and 213 members for every draw throughout the year. This was mainly made up of past and present service users, past and present directors and staff, extended family members, and friends of the MS Therapy Centre.

The total intake in club draw payments for 2019 was €23,950, which was one of the highest recorded in the past four years. Prize money of €3,600 was paid out to the lucky winners for the year, leaving a net balance of €20,350. This brings the total intake to €93,900 over the past four years. Of this, €14,400 was paid out in prize money, leaving a net total of €79,500.

The draw took place on the last Friday of every month in the MS Therapy Centre. Each draw was overseen by a member of the fundraising committee and a company director. The results of each draw are printed in the Weekender Newspaper, the MS Centre FB page, and the company web site.

A special thanks goes to Liam Hunt who without fail, has since the beginning of the draw 4 years ago, collected payments each month from a number of his family and friends, and they continue to support the work of the MS Therapy Centre each and every month. Our thanks also go to Deirdre Murray for all her work in organising the Draw and promoting it at every opportunity to service users.

If you would like to support the MS Club Draw, please check with reception for a standing order form.



January

1st Prize €200 Kathleen Scanlon
2nd Prize €50 Rolandos SaHnskas
3rd Prize €25 Teresa Foley
4th Prize €25 Laura Pathe

February

1st Prize €200 Pat Keaney
2nd Prize €50 Mary Walshe
3rd Prize €25 Claudette Murphy
4th Prize €25 Lucy O'Hara (SU)

March

1st Prize €200 Irene Reddington
2nd Prize €50 Leon & Niall Murray
3rd Prize €25 Pat Broderick
4th Prize €25 Joe Bradley

April

1st Prize €200 Siobhan Tighe
2nd Prize €50 Eddie Flannery
3rd Prize €25 Paula Lahiff
4th Prize €25 Shane Sweeney

May

1st Prize €200 Pat Keaney
2nd Prize €50 Gerry White
3rd Prize €25 Tracy Ward
4th Prize €25 Catherine McHugh

June

1st Prize €200 Karan McKenna
2nd Prize €50 Patrina Horan
3rd Prize €25 Mary Smith
4th Prize €25 Justin Henry

July

1st Prize €200 Deirdre McCarthy
2nd Prize €50 Bryan Byrne
3rd Prize €25 Laura Pathe
4th Prize €25 Patricia Scanlon

August

1st Prize €200 Lucy O'Hara (SU)
2nd Prize €50 Kathleen O'Slateragh
3rd Prize €25 Phil Cooney
4th Prize €25 Gerry Nicholson

September

1st Prize €200 Gerry & Ann Flanagan
2nd Prize €50 Gerry Nicholson
3rd Prize €25 Christina McKenna
4th Prize €25 Sinead Rooney

October

1st Prize €200 Deirdre McCarthy
2nd Prize €50 Michael & Bgt Devins
3rd Prize €25 Evelyn Marren
4th Prize €25 Bryan Byrne

November

1st Prize €200 Brendan Shannon
2nd Prize €50 Mick Lucey
3rd Prize €25 Eugene Rooney
4th Prize €25 Mary Walshe

December

1st Prize €200 Thomas Dyer
2nd Prize €50 Rioch Cogan
3rd Prize €25 Maria O'Halloran
4th Prize €25 Rita & Denis Kenny





GLENCAR LOUGH SWIM 2019

We are delighted to report that Annual Glencar Lough Swim took place again on Saturday 14th of September 2019.

This was the 4th year this Open Water Event was held in aid of MS Northwest Therapy Centre.

With over 100 swimmers taking to the water for a 1Km, 2Km or 5Km swim.

Thank you to all who took part and all those who volunteered and supported the event which raised over € 2500.





BAND AID 2019

Band Aid took place in the Dunes Bar, Strandhill on Saturday 25th May 2019.

A great Family Fun Day, with Kids Magic Show, Kids Puppet Show, Face Painting and lots of fantastic music from local bands and Singers.

All musicians, singers & kids entertainment gave their time & services for free so that all proceeds would go directly to MS North West Therapy Centre.

Thank you to the Dunes Bar in Strandhill and all involved in helping to raise over € 5000.





NORTH WEST NEUROLOGICAL INSTITUTE DONATION TO THE MS NORTH WEST THERAPY CENTRE

The O2T Treatment service (previously known as Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy) has been provided to people with MS and other related neurological conditions for the last 23 years.

The treatment involves breathing pure oxygen at higher than atmospheric pressure in an enclosed chamber. The increased flow of oxygen stimulates and assists repair of damaged cells throughout the body. It can be very beneficial for people with MS in overcoming fatigue, improving balance and eyesight as well as improving bladder control and general well-being. It is found to be useful in healing soft tissue injuries, sprains and bruising, leg ulcers and circulatory problems. Clients who use the O2T service at the MS Centre generally present with MS and other related neurological conditions. However, it also offers the service to non-MS Clients who pay privately for the treatment.

The Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Chamber is now 23 years old and needed to be refurbished with a new compressor being essential. The cost of this refurbishment was in the region of €24,000 and the MS Centre is most grateful to the North West Neurological Institute for their extremely generous donation towards the cost.

Declan Walsh, Dr Kevin Murphy along with other Directors from the North West Neurological Institute (NWNi), came to present this donation on Friday 28th June to our Directors and Clients in the MS Centre. The amount of €24,000 was used towards the upgrade costs of the Oxygen Treatment chamber (O2T) .





World MS Day 2019 Celebration





WORLD MS DAY CELEBRATION - 30TH MAY 2019

Clients at the MS Therapy Centre came together on 30th May for World MS Day, in the Sligo Park Hotel, for a day of information, awareness and social gathering. It was attended by approximately 60 people including clients and their family members. The day opened with a welcome by current vice-chairperson and soon to be Chairperson Geraldine Gordon.

The first speaker of the day was Dr Stephen McNally, service co-ordinator for the 'No Barriers Foundation'. He gave a thought-provoking presentation about the ekso-skeleton and its current role in rehabilitation; including a live demonstration of the ekso-skeleton being used by a client of the MS Centre. This was followed by an interesting talk from Blánaid Ni Chuinneagáin from Genomics Ireland on Genomics Research in Ireland in Multiple Sclerosis.

A leisurely lunch with plenty of chat was brought to a close by a short speech from Martina Blake who is a Quality of Life Co-ordinator and spoke about the free course that she conducts on managing a life-long condition. This was followed by a presentation by our reflexologist Deirdre on behalf of our amazing Fundraising Team. She highlighted the importance of fundraising to make up the annual shortfall of €100,000 which is needed every year to keep the MS Centre running and urged everyone to join the MS 300 Club Draw which is a vital part of our fundraising drive.

The first afternoon session was Stephen Garland and 'The Post-Disposed', which is a one man comedy storytelling of Stephen's diagnosis of Primary Progressive MS and his life changing stem cell treatment in Russia. The day was brought to a close by an enlightening presentation by Dr Siobhan Kelly on the 'Changing Landscape of MS'.

There was also a number of groups which attended on the day with stands in the room for clients to interact with during the break. MS Ireland attended with numerous leaflets and information regarding their services. There was also a table with information about the services available at the MS Centre and Woodhaven.





Future Plans and Activities





FUTURE PLANS AND ACTIVITIES



Going forward into 2020, The MS Centre is committed to continually develop and improve the quality of its services. Please see below a sample of our future plans going into 2020.

It is planned that World MS Day 2020 will follow on from the previous three years with a mix of fantastic speakers and demonstrations on the day. It is also a great chance for Clients to meet and socialise with others on the day.

Services at Woodhaven will continue to provide accessible, supported holiday-type accommodation and short-term breaks for people with disabilities, their families and carers. Our charity shops continue to supplement the services of the MS Centre and Woodhaven. The income from the shops continues to decrease year after year due to increased competition and consumer spending in regular retail shops. However, we are certain our Clients, friends and supporters will continue to support our shops into the future to help sustain the services we provide.



The Board of Directors are continuing on expanding the scope of its Audit, Finance and Risk committee in its commitment to good governance on behalf of the organisation.

For 2020, in line with our Strategic Plan, Woodhaven will endeavour to broaden the scope of its services by connecting with other groups and statutory bodies to potentially sub-let the building when not in use by our Woodhaven guests.

The MS Centre is committed to providing optimum services to people with MS and other disabilities, their families and carers and have engaged in Improving Quality (IQ) – a highly recognised and reputable quality assurance system. IQ has been greatly welcomed with involvement and input from all key stakeholders including –Management, Board directors, staff from all departments, clients and volunteers who form the core IQ working team.

In addition, the MS Centre is adopting the new The Charities Governance Code. 2019 was the year of learning and preparation for charities and 2020 is the first year that registered charities are expected to comply with the Code. 2021 will be the first year that registered charities are expected to report on their compliance with the Code.

Finally the MS Centre is happy to report that we are fully compliant with the Charities Regulatory Authority and have submitted all required returns for 2019.





MS North West Therapy Centre Sligo

Providing essential services to people with Multiple Sclerosis,
related conditions and their families.

Multiple Sclerosis North West Therpay Centre Ltd

A company limited by guarantee

Ballytivnan, Sligo

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