



20
22 | 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



On behalf of the Board of Directors of the MS North West Therapy Centre I am delighted to present the Annual Report for 2022. The report gives a brief overview of the Multiple Sclerosis North West Therapy Centre (MS Centre) and its services delivered through the Operational Plan 2022. The report also sets out the activities and plans for 2022 as per the Strategic Plan for the organisation.

The Financial Statements for 2022 will be presented to the Board of Directors for sign-off at the AGM scheduled for May 2023.

The report includes an overview from our dedicated staff and health care professionals on the services and activities delivered throughout the year.

2022 saw a welcome move to working towards our pre COVID-19 levels of service delivery. While there were some necessary closures at the start of the year I am delighted to say that our excellent management and staff have continued to work tirelessly to increase our service delivery throughout the year.

While the ramifications of the past number of years continues to hinder our ability to reinstate our fundraising to pre 2020 levels we are extremely thankful to our Clients who have continued to support our monthly Club Draw. We are always looking to increase our subscribers to the draw which comes at a nominal cost of just €10 per month.

We are deeply grateful to all our donors for their generosity in making donations and running fundraising events online 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.

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 remains ambitious while the majority of our fundraising activities planned to be executed virtually, we also hope to see a return to the more organic events.



The Board and Management look for the support of the HSE, Pobal 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.

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.

The main governance programmes; Improving Quality (IQ), Charities Governance Code, Health and Safety and Safeguarding continue to maintain our standards at the highest possible level. We look forward to the year ahead where we will continue to work toward increased service delivery to all our clients.



SERVICE MANAGER'S REPORT



2022 was another challenging year for the MS Centre as the global pandemic that started in 2020 continued to impact the level of services delivered to people with MS and other related neurological conditions. The ability to achieve service stats delivered in previous years was not possible during 2022 as certain services have not resumed or increased due to financial constraints and government-related health guidelines. In addition, we experienced reduced service capacity due to serious challenges relating to staff recruitment and retention.

The Financial Statements for 2022 will be presented to the Board of Directors for sign-off at the AGM scheduled for May 2023. Our HBO service has remained closed since March 2020 including the suspension of respite service in Woodhaven in line with public health guidelines and our own capacity regarding staff numbers to run the services. After much deliberation, the MS Centre Board of Directors made the difficult but prudent decision to lease the Woodhaven building for a specified period. The Board are hopeful the future will bring a more prosperous landscape in healthcare where respite funding will be on a legislative footing to provide support to enable Woodhaven to operate once again as a short-term holiday facility. Income from leasing the building will support and assist the services in the MS Centre as we work towards a more sustainable model for the operation of Woodhaven.

The MS Centre seeks feedback and input from all our clients therefore a Review of Services Questionnaire was completed in 2022. This process gave the client an opportunity to provide feedback on all services across all departments, which enabled the MS Centre to review the organisation's services, and to identify potential service delivery improvements. The findings concluded that for the most part respondents are satisfied with the services on offer, the professionalism of staff and the support offered by the MS Centre. A small number of suggestions for service delivery improvements were made including increasing the availability of appointments for existing services, suggestions were offered under themes of social (group gatherings), services (for example hydrotherapy and massage), communications (increase availability of information related to supports available) and education (for example a dietician). A further point to note with respect to services is that HBO Oxygen Therapy was identified as a service that is important to respondents, one that is demanded by respondents, and one which was inaccessible due to the impact of the pandemic. Physical facilities: an increase in parking availability was suggested. Regarding fundraising it was suggested to hold events such as flag days that facilitate cash donations, and communicate where monies raised are spent which we ensure is reflected using our social media platforms.



The MS Centre Board of Directors understands that significant investment in resources and people will be necessary for services at the MS Centre to return to pre-covid levels and for which they have firm plans to increase service capacity to meet the ever-growing demands of the service. Coupled with costs associated with retaining staff, there is a significant rise in the costs of living such as light, heat and a general increase in servicing and building maintenance costs which going forward will be very challenging for the MS Centre.

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, Woodhaven and Essential Seconds Charity Shops.

Finally, we are so thankful to all our client for their patience throughout the year as it is taking time for us to reinstate our pre-Covid activities, but we are slowly getting back on our feet. We are looking forward to celebrating 30 years of services in the MS Centre in 2023 and will mark this amazing achievement during 2023 with all our Clients, Board, staff, volunteers and great friends.

Tamara Mulhern



Financial





AUDITED ACCOUNTS



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 2022:

- 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.
- Repairs and Maintenance - In line with Health and Safety concerns, a provision of €40,000 has been made to facilitate necessary repairs and maintenance to the interior and exterior of the MS Centre building in Ballytivnan
- 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 2022 and going forward, the Board agreed that the most appropriate level of reserves should be kept at the level of 6 months operational costs.

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 2020, 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

Board of Directors Elected 26th May 2022:

OFFICERS

Chairperson: Geraldine Gordon

Vice Chairperson: Denis Joyce

Treasurer: Lorraine Dempsey

Company Secretary: Mary Henry

DIRECTORS

Rosaleen O'Grady

Leo McNally

MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

Geraldine Gordon

Mary Henry

Tamara Mulhern, Mairead Martin

Gina Gartlan (Front Office Manager)

MANAGERS

Tamara Mulhern, General Manager

Mairead Martin, Woodhaven Manager



SECRETARY'S REPORT

The following legal obligations have been carried out for the year 2022:

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 26th May 2022. Notice of the AGM was given 3 weeks beforehand as is required.

Five full Board Meetings and an AGM were held in 2022, notice and agenda for these meetings were given seven days in advance.

The Register of Directors has been kept updated during the year 2022.

Minutes of all Board Meetings were proposed and seconded as true accounts and signed by the Chairperson. They are saved as an online copy on the organisation's server.

Updated B10 forms relating to director changes have been lodged with the CRO and the CRA

Board Members resigned during the year:

Leo McNally resigned 12th October 2022

New Board Members nominated and elected:

Gordon Barrett 31st August 2022

Caradh O'Donovan 12th October 2022



ATTENDANCE AT BOARDS MEETINGS 2022

Five full Board Meetings, two Extraordinary Board Meetings and an AGM held in 2022.

Board Meeting 23rd February 2022:

Attendance:

Geraldine Gordon
Sr. Mary Henry
Lorraine Dempsey
Denis Joyce

Apologies: All in attendance

DNA: Leo Mc Nally

Extraordinary Board Meeting 6th April 2022

Attendance:

Geraldine Gordon
Sr. Mary Henry
Denis Joyce

Apologies: Lorraine Dempsey & Leo Mc Nally

DNA: Rosaleen O'Grady

Board Meeting 26th May 2022

Attendance:

Geraldine Gordon
Sr. Mary Henry
Denis Joyce
Lorraine Dempsey

Apologies: Rosaleen O'Grady & Leo Mc Nally

Board Meeting 31st August 2022

Attendance:

Geraldine Gordon
Lorraine Dempsey
Denis Joyce
Sr. Mary Henry
Gordon Barrett

Apologies: Leo Mc Nally

DNA: Rosaleen O'Grady

Extraordinary Board Meeting 15th September 2022:

Attendance:

Geraldine Gordon
Lorraine Dempsey
Mary Henry
Rosaleen O'Grady

Apologies: Denis Joyce

Board Meeting 12th October 2022:

Attendance:

Geraldine Gordon
Lorraine Dempsey
Denis Joyce
Rosaleen O'Grady
Sr. Mary Henry

Apologies: Denis Joyce & Rosaleen O'Grady

Board Meeting 7th December 2022:

Attendance:

Gordon Barrett
Sr. Mary Henry
Denis Jopyce
Rosaleen O'Grady
Caradh O'Donovan
Lorraine Dempsey (via Telephone)

Apologies: Geraldine Gordon

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

26th May 2022: Attendance:

Gordon Gordon
Lorraine Dempsey
Sr. Mary Henry
Denis Joyce

Gilroy Ganon Accountants

Apologies: Geraldine Gordon & Leo McNally



MEET THE DIRECTORS



Geraldine Gordon (Chairperson)

Geraldine has a background in banking and was elected as a Director 6 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.



Lorraine Dempsey (Director - Treasurer)

Lorraine comes from an accounting background and more recently qualified as a Quality Financial Adviser. From 2017-2019 she worked as Front Office Manager for the MS Centre. During that time she gained an excellent understanding of how the organisation operates as a charity and the importance of its presence in the community. Lorraine subsequently went on to become treasurer with us in 2020.



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.



Denis Joyce (Director)

Denis has spent thirty-six years working within An Garda Siochana 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.



Leo McNally (Director)

Leo is a local businessman specialising in the area of medical laboratories equipment largely the manufacture of medical and dental instruments and supplies.



Gordon Barrett (Director)

Gordon worked as a Social Worker for the NWHB and then the HSE for nearly 40 years mainly with Older People and also as a Medical Social Worker. The increasingly complex issues arising in Health and Social care prompted Gordon to complete a Masters degree in Health Care Ethics and Law in the RCSI in 2007 which proved to be invaluable in his and his Team's work.



Caradh O'Donovan (Director)

Caradh works as Head of Governance for Coimisiún na Meán, the regulator of broadcasting and online media in Ireland. Prior to this Caradh held senior management roles with Boardmatch Ireland, the Irish Athletic Boxing Association and Triathlon Ireland.

Caradh completed her BSc in Sports Management UCD before continuing to a MA Sport & Exercise Psychology at WIT. She holds a Professional Diploma in Corporate Governance from Smurfit Graduate Business School. She joined the Board of the MS Centre in October 2022..



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 Gormley (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 15 years. Tamara has a great interest in the voluntary sector and completed a Masters in Leadership and Management for the Community and Public Sector. Currently her main role encompasses the overall management and co-ordination of services provided by the MS Centre, Woodhaven and retail base Essential Seconds, Charity Shops in Sligo town and Ballymote.



Mairéad Martin (CSP Manager)

Mairead Martin joined the MS North West Therapy Centre as Woodhaven Manager in 2014. Mairead has over 15 years' experience of working in the community and voluntary sector. Mairead has a BA in Applied Social Studies and has also completed an MA in Leadership and Management for the Community and Public Sector. Mairead's primary role focuses on the delivery of the CSP programme and supporting the charity shops.





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:

Mairéad Martin (CSP 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 2022.

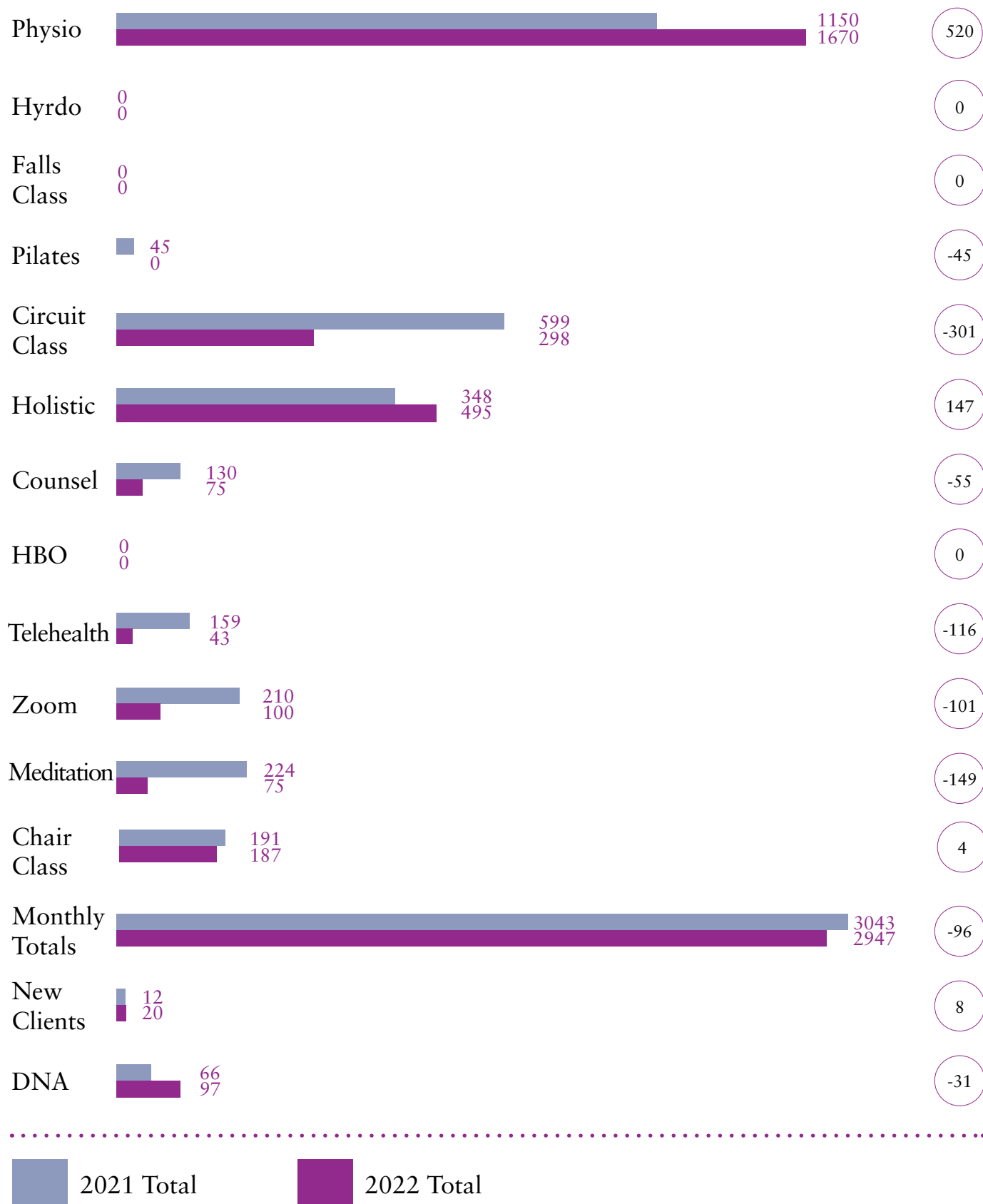


Services





MS CENTRE SERVICES STATS 2022





PHYSIOTHERAPY DEPARTMENT MS NORTHWEST THERAPY CENTRE ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Purpose and Vision

The Physiotherapists working in the MS North West Therapy Centre continue in their endeavour to support their clients as they live with a life-long chronic progressive neurological condition. We aim to promote health and well-being by offering appropriate and timely advice on symptom management, by delivering evidence-based treatment, and by offering a range of on-line classes to help service-users introduce regular exercise into their daily routine. Our goal is to help clients self-manage their condition, and we hope that through a holistic approach to care we can help them improve their quality of life.

COVID-19 Pandemic in 2022

In line with government guidelines, the MS Centre remained open throughout the year in 2022. The policies, procedures, protocols, and guidance documentation that were developed in 2021 to cope with the pandemic continued to be utilised throughout 2022.

Tele-health consultations continued to a lesser degree and on-line classes continued to be well supported by clients.

COVID-19 Pandemic in 2022

The Physiotherapy Department is made up of 2.3 whole time equivalent PTs; 1 Senior Grade and 3 Staff-Grade PT.

The MS Centre had a high turnover of PT staff due to the huge surge in recruitment in the HSE which has caused exceptional pressure in the co-ordination and delivery of services. Claire Smyth departed in February to pursue new career opportunities and was replaced by Marion Hickey. Marion Hickey then departed in August. This post was not re-filled before the end of 2022; however, interviews have taken place and the post is due to be filled by Megan O'Dowd in May 2023.

Shaunagh Brady departed in February also and was replaced by Grainne Pearse. Grainne Pearse then departed in October and was replaced by Zach McGirr.

There are 3 Physiotherapist Assistants (PTAs), trained to QQI (Fetac) Level 5.

Service Trends in 2022

- 37 new referrals were made to the MS Centre in 2022. Of these, 2 clients did not meet referral criteria, 4 were inappropriate as they were awaiting other medical intervention and 1 was non-contactable. Of the 30 who did attend, 28 had a diagnosis of MS, 1 had



a diagnosis of Hereditary Spastic Paraplegia and 1 had a diagnosis of Post Polio Syndrome. 13 clients lived in Sligo, 5 were from Mayo, 5 were from Donegal, 3 were from Leitrim and 4 were from Roscommon. 25 clients were aged 18-65, whilst 5 were aged over 65.

- The number of face-to-face physiotherapy treatment sessions delivered in 2022 was 1625, which had increased from 2021 and 2020, but which was lower than data collected pre-COVID, e.g., 2534 attendances in 2018 and 2575 in 2019.
- 225 cancelled appointments were recorded during 2022, with a further 83 recorded as 'did not attend'.
- There were 601 attendances at exercise classes during 2022, which was a decrease from 2021. All classes were delivered on-line, due to continued social distancing guidelines.

New Developments / Quality Initiatives in 2022

- One of our goals for 2022 was to up-skill in Foot-drop symptom management, by completing further training in the use of Functional Electrical Stimulation. PT Hannah Gordon completed the Odstock Pace FES Online Accreditation Course in August 2022. The MS Centre bought 2 FES from Odstock. One FES will stay in the centre to be used for assessment. The second FES will be loaned to clients in the community for trial purposes. The 2 FES arrived in the MS Centre in early 2023 and have been in regular use since.
- The PT Department developed its links with the community PT team by attending in service training in St John's Hospital every 6 weeks. This has proved hugely beneficial in facilitating relevant Continuing Professional Development, as well as providing a valuable information-sharing forum.
- The PT Department purchased a new Active-Passive Trainer for community use which has been loaned out to clients of the MS Centre on a rotational basis.

Education/Continuous Professional Development in 2022

- PT Grainne Pearse and PT Marion Hickey attended an on-line course in 'Understanding MS,' which was delivered by the Menzies Institute for Medical Research in New Zealand. This had previously been completed by PT Hannah Gordon and PTA Lorraine McDermott who highly recommended all staff to complete it.
- PT Hannah Gordon completed the Odstock Pace FES Online Accreditation Course in August 2022.
- PT Hannah Gordon also completed training titled 'Shoulder Masterclass' delivered in person by Eoin O'Conaire in November 2022.
- PT Hannah Gordon attended a 'Dry Needling Refresher Course' in order to stay up to date



with dry needling guidelines and new developments.

- PT Hannah Gordon attended a one-day course on 'Pelvic Floor Physiotherapy for Neuro Physiotherapists' which was organised by MS Ireland in June 2022.
- The PTs continued to attend the fortnightly online in-service training with MS Ireland with other practicing neuro physiotherapists.
- As previously mentioned, the PTs attended in service training in St John's Hospital.

Plans for Future Development in 2022

- Two new PTs, Lisa Melly, and Megan O'Dowd, will start working in the MS Centre in May 2023. Between them they bring many new skills and interests, including in-person exercises classes and Pilates. We would hope to re-introduce our face-to-face exercise classes, this rota will include Pilates classes and we also hope to introduce a new, strength-based exercise class during 2023.
- PT Hannah Gordon has applied for ethical approval to take part in a research study trialling the efficacy of the 'Exoband' as an aid for people with MS. This is a multi-centre study to include the MS Centre, MS Ireland, Axon Rehab and St James Hospital. If ethical approval is granted, this research study will take place in 2023.
- We hope to recommence our Lunch-time Talks.
- The PT Dept are working to further develop their clinical governance framework. Clinical governance is the system through which organisations are accountable for continuously improving the quality of their services. It also safeguards high standards of care by creating an environment in which clinical excellence will flourish. The framework will ensure that all PTs keep their CORU registration up to date, that all PTs complete regular CPD, that regular audits take place – to include a 'Peer Notes Audit,' 'PA Competency Review' and 'Online Class Review.'
- Finally, the PT Department continues its involvement in the MS Centre's quality assurance process through participation in the 'Improving Quality' programme. It is hoped that the MS Centre will go forward for accreditation in 2023.



Dry Needling - *Hannah Gordon*



We have one physiotherapist qualified in dry needling – Hannah. This is a physiotherapy adjunct that has become more popular with our clients over the last couple of years.

The aim of Dry Needling is to reduce muscle pain and dysfunction by releasing tight areas in the muscle known as myofascial trigger points. Normal muscle does not contain these trigger points. 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.

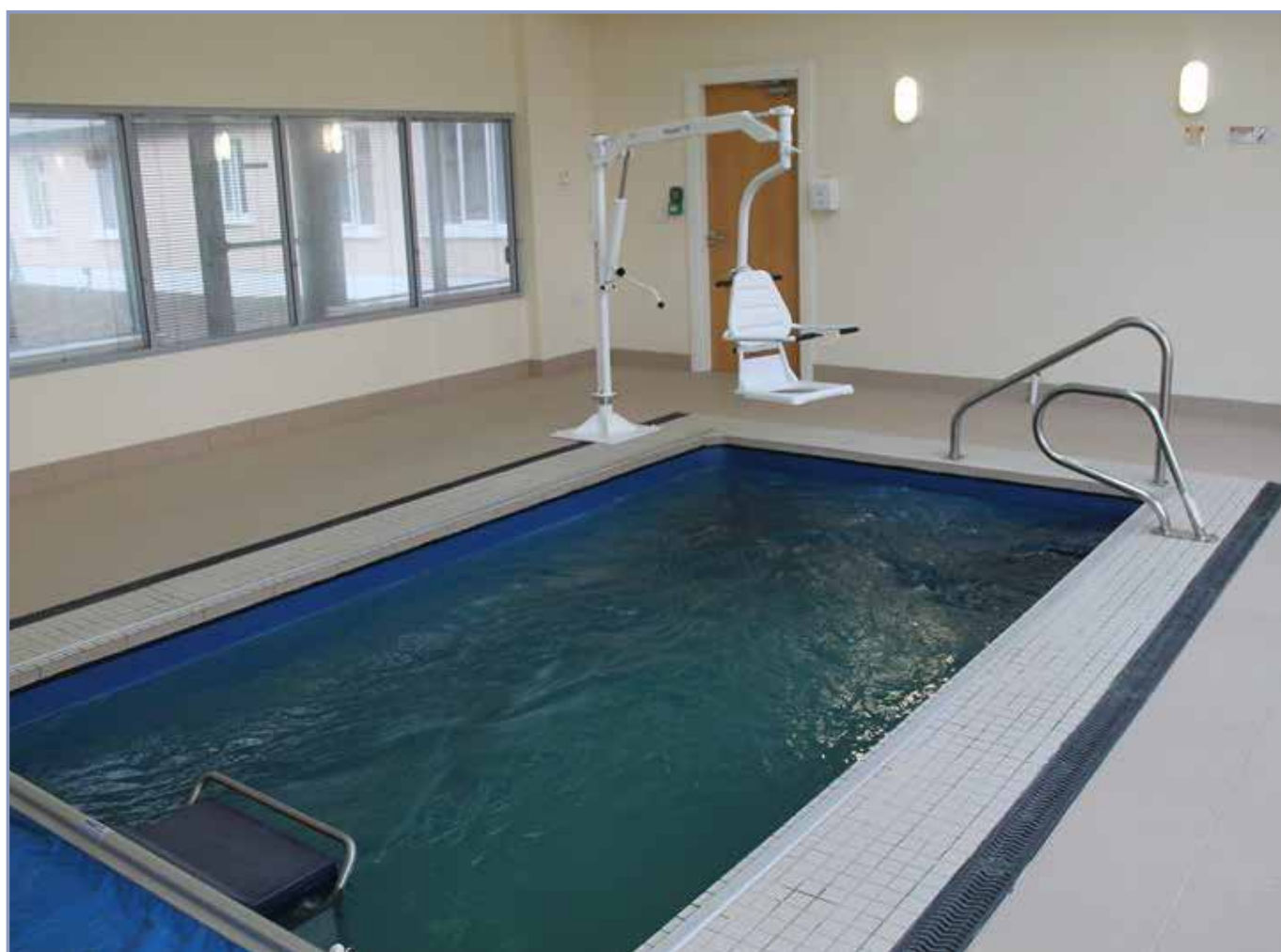


HYDROTHERAPY

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. Due to the impact of COVID-19 and the related risks outlined in HSE Infection, Prevention and Control guidelines, Cregg House had to make the unfortunate but necessary decision to suspend access to their hydrotherapy pool which included MS Centre Clients.

It is unknown when and if this fantastic service is to resume.





OXYGEN TREATMENT (O2T)



The Oxygen Treatment (O2T) has been provided to people with MS and other related neurological conditions for the past 27 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 for us to continue delivering the service to MS Clients.

From March of 2020, our oxygen treatment service was suspended in line with public health guidelines and unfortunately has not resumed since for both financial and staffing constraints. The Board of Directors have worked tirelessly throughout 2022 researching alternative sources of funding and subject to a successful outcome of funding applications submitted in 2022, we are hopeful to see a return of this service which will incur a nominal fee payable by Clients using the service which is a stipulation of the potential funder. The Board are keen to resume this service which has been identified as a service highly valued by MS Centre Clients via our Review of services questionnaire completed in 2022.



HOLISTIC THERAPY



The provision of Holistic Treatments continued to be provided at the MS Therapy Centre in Ballytivnan throughout 2022 despite reduced numbers of service users attending the centre due to the continuing Covid-19 pandemic. Please see service statistics relating to the holistic therapy service on page 24.

As a consequence of the pandemic, treatment hours were reduced from 20 to 10 hours per week and the therapist base was reduced to one.

The health and safety protocol of providing touch therapy to the service users continued to be a high priority. The Covid standard operational procedures and risk assessments which were established in 2020 were periodically reviewed, updated and all necessary changes implemented throughout the year. The highest health and safety precautions were taken to protect all those attending holistic treatments. This included adherence to all public health requirements and social distancing measures, the introduction of disposable materials for use in the treatment room, holistic therapists wearing full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), increased cleaning procedures, daily contact log, the continued use of hand sanitising, in addition to sanitising all touch surfaces and ventilating the treatment room for 15 minutes before and after each treatment.

The increase in numbers attending for treatments grew in confidence with the gradual decrease in infection rates resulting in the holistic service becoming more stabilised. Throughout the year there was a noticeable increase of newly diagnosed service users requesting holistic appointments.

There were a high volume of cancellations and no shows throughout the year and bearing in mind that non-attendance for a scheduled appointment results in another service user being unable to take up that appointment, a system of reminding the service users was introduced towards the end of the year and this was very successful in identifying possible no shows before they arose resulting in higher productivity and take up of the service.

If you are interested in booking a holistic treatment at the MS North West Therapy Centre, please contact us by phone or email and we will be happy to assist you.





Woodhaven



Woodhaven Staff

WOODHAVEN FACILITY





WOODHAVEN REPORT

Woodhaven our beautiful and accessible holiday facility is located on the First Sea, Road, Sligo. Woodhaven continued to rent our conference room for training in 2022. Regrettably the MS Centre was unable to reengage the delivery of the Woodhaven service in 2022 due to implications resulting from the Covid pandemic. Funding is a major component as Woodhaven was significantly supported from our fundraising efforts which have been severely impacted since 2020.

It is important to note that fundraising also supported the delivery of core services in the MS Centre therefore the cessation of the Woodhaven service was necessary to ensure continuation of services in the MS Centre.

The Board of Directors of the MS North West Therapy Centre made the difficult yet prudent decision to engage with a lease agreement with the Integrated Care of the Older Person Department of the HSE for a period of 18- 24 months which commenced in December 2022. The building will be used as an administrative and assessment facility for the older person services.

Woodhaven has been very fortunate to have been in receipt of funding from the Department of Rural and Community Development through the Pobal, Community Services Programme since 2015. This funding is a contribution toward a manager and four full time staff. We would like to thank Pobal for their invaluable support over the past year and we look forward to engaging the with Pobal for the reinstatement of the Woodhaven service once it is possible to do so.







Essential Seconds Charity Shop





ESSENTIAL SECONDS CHARITY SHOP



Essential Seconds Charity Shops Sligo and Ballymote

The MS NW Therapy Centre has two charity shops which are located in Wine Street Car Park, Sligo and Teeling Street, Ballymote.

The income generated by our shops is utilised to support the delivery of essential services for people living with MS which are delivered from the MS Centre.

We are delighted to report that 2022 was a successful year for our charity shops despite us having to close at the beginning of the year due to imposed covid restrictions. .

We are delighted to have extended our opening hours by a half hour each day in our sligo shop due to demand.

We would like to thank all our customers who have supported our shops in Sligo and Ballymote be it either through your donations or shopping with us. Your continued support is integral to the ongoing success of our charity shops. We would also like to thank the landlords of both shops for their continued support.

Most importantly we would like to thank all of our dedicated Volunteers and Staff, without whom the shops would not be operating so successfully. We are incredibly grateful of their time, commitment and support of the shops and the MS Centre.

We would like to thank Sligo Leader and Sligo Social Services who support the participants on TUS and Community Employment Projects to work in Essential Seconds Charity Shop

We look forward to welcoming you all to Essential Seconds Charity Shops in Sligo and Ballymote where you are guaranteed to find lots of great deals at magnificent prices.





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. There is a gap of approx. €100,000 between the funding we receive and the cost of keeping the MS Centre up and running.

Covid-19 had a massive impact on our fundraising drives in 2022. To adapt to the rapidly changing landscape of fundraising brought about by covid-19, the MS Centre worked tirelessly to move our activities of fundraising online.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

We would like to extend our thanks to our Voluntary Fundraising Committee, staff and supporters of the Centre who worked tirelessly to assist in our new virtual fundraising platform and organised virtual events on our behalf. Below is a flavour of some the many events which took place throughout 2022.

January 2022

Facebook Birthday campaigns

Donations

Christmas Card Sales

Catherine Hoare Christmas Hamper Raffle

Irish Courts Services

March 2022

Donations

Facebook Birthday campaigns

April 2022

Claire Scott's Camino

Lions Club Sligo

June 2022

Facebook Birthday campaigns

August 2022

Flag Day 2022

Facebook Birthday Campaigns

October 2022

Facebook Birthday campaigns

December 2022

Leitrim Cycling Club

Homebase Sligo – Donation of Christmas tree and decorations

Margarets Homemade decorations

Christmas Card sales

Donations









MS CLUB DRAW 2022

MS Club Draw 2022

In 2022 the MS Club Draw enjoyed another year of a sustainable fundraising event reporting a successful 7th year since the draw started in 2015. Despite the closures of the Centre due to Covid, the draw continued to take place each month.

Standing order payments continue to be the preferred method of payment. Members that availed of standing order had the security of knowing they were included in each draw even with the closure of the Centre due to Covid. Cash members continued to be included until they requested otherwise. There are now approximately 90% of our members enjoying standing order payments. 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 185 and 198 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 2022 was €17,335, down €1,076 on 2021, this was due to some cash members payments for 2022 being received in 2023 and the loss of 13 members due to various reasons. Prize money of €4,500 was paid out to the lucky winners for the year, leaving a net balance of €12,835. This brings the total intake to €152,381 over the past seven years. Of this, €26,100 was paid out in prize money, leaving a net total of €126,281.

The draw took place on the last week of every month in the MS Therapy Centre. Each draw is overseen by a member of management and a company director. The results of each draw are notified to the lucky winners, along with their winnings, the day after the draw takes place and is also published on our Facebook page to ensure full transparency and accountability.

We are hoping to grow our monthly club draw and aim to have up to 40 new members in the next 12 months. We are extremely grateful to those who continue to support us, however we are now on a drive to ensure that everyone availing of our service is a member of the Club Draw. Since January 2022 the prizes have increased as follows – 1st prize €200, 2nd prize €100, 3rd prize €50 and 4th prize €50. This support is invaluable to us and would go a long way in bridging the gap which is a task set for the fundraising team each year. If you would like to support the MS Club Draw, please check with reception for a standing order form.



January

1st Prize €200 Geraldine Regan
2nd Prize €100 Gerry & Ann Flanagan
3rd Prize €50 Ann Lenehan
4th prize €50 Philomena Gilmartin

February

1st Prize €200 Christine Johns
2nd Prize €100 Sinea Downes
3rd Prize €50 Frances Healy
4th prize €50 Darren Deering

March

1st Prize €200 Petrina Horan
2nd Prize €100 Mary McWeeney
3rd Prize €50 Malcom McDwyer
4th prize €50 Gerry Nicholson

April

1st Prize €200 Mary McWeeney
2nd Prize €100 Evelyn Marren
3rd Prize €50 Kathleen Scanlon
4th prize €50 Claudette Murphy

May

1st Prize €200 Annette Kilcullen
2nd Prize €100 Edith Bradley
3rd Prize €50 Colm McGovern
4th prize €50 Glenn Regan

June

1st Prize €200 Sinead Rooney Wims
2nd Prize €100 Glenn Regan
3rd Prize €50 Gerard & Annmarie McPhelim
4th prize €50 Padraig and Claire Regan

July

1st Prize €200 Tracy Ward
2nd Prize €100 Seamus Gillen
3rd Prize €50 Thomas Dwyer
4th prize €50 Geraldine Regan

August

1st Prize €200 Pat & Rosaleen Brooderick
2nd Prize €100 John Mulhern
3rd Prize €50 Hugh Bennett
4th prize €50 Seamus Gillen

September

1st Prize €200 Helen Phillips
2nd Prize €100 Catherine McHugh
3rd Prize €50 Aideen Mulanaphy
4th prize €50 Eamonn Considine

October

1st Prize €200 Michelle Kelly
2nd Prize €100 Ann Marie McPhelm
3rd Prize €50 Brendan & Annie Cullen
4th prize €50 Pat & Rose Broderick

November

1st Prize €200 Phil Cooney
2nd Prize €100 Claire Clerkin
3rd Prize €50 Rioch Cogan
4th prize €50 Edith Bradley

December

1st Prize €200 Thomas Dyer
2nd Prize €100 Lucy O Hara
3rd Prize €50 Padraig & Claire Regan
4th prize €50 Evelyn Marren







Improving Quality (IQ)





IMPROVING QUALITY (IQ)

Improving Quality (IQ) is the quality scheme used both as a self-assessment tool as well as an external assessment tool. Its focus is on elements that all not for profit organisations need.

There are two levels in IQ, foundation and progression. The MS Centre has embarked on the foundation level with a view to ensuring that we continue to uphold all regulatory, mandatory and best practice requirements throughout the organisation.

Core Principles

Improving Quality is built around 4 core principles as outlined below.

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.

The IQ team are continuing to implement the four principles throughout the MS Centre, Woodhaven and Essential Seconds Charity Shops are working towards securing accreditation in 2023.



The National Ability Supports System (NASS)





NATIONAL ABILITY SUPPORTS SYSTEM

The National Ability Supports System (NASS) collects and stores information about the disability-funded services that people use and need, such as:

- residential services
- respite care
- day services
- personal assistants
- specialist supports like occupational therapy or physiotherapy

The NASS is used to help plan, develop and organise disability services and supports, to tell other health professionals about the number and types of services that people with disabilities need and prove why funding is needed for disability services and supports. The MS Centre has fully engaged with the NASS in 2022 and is committed to ensuring that information on the NASS is accurate and complete to inform disability policy and service planning of disability services in Ireland.



Charities Governance Code





Under the Charities Act 2009, every charity registered in the Republic of Ireland is required to submit an Annual Report to the Charities Regulator. When submitting this report Charities must declare their status regarding compliance with the Charities Governance Code.

This Charities Governance Code explains the minimum standards you should meet to effectively manage and control your charity. Good governance involves putting in place systems and processes to ensure that your charity achieves its charitable objectives with integrity and is managed in an effective, efficient, accountable and transparent way.

The six principles of the Charities Governance Code are:

- Advancing Charitable Purpose.
- Behaving with Integrity.
- Leading People.
- Exercising Control.
- Working Effectively.
- Being Accountable & Transparent.

The Board of Directors of the MS Centre holds compliance with the code high on the agenda in relation to governance and has completed the required Compliance Record Form for 2022.



Future Plans and Activities





FUTURE PLANS AND ACTIVITIES



Going forward into 2023, The MS Centre is committed to continually develop and improve the quality of its services.

Throughout 2022, the organisation provided services within the parameters of what our core funding and generated funds from the Charity shops permit on an annual basis. For 2023, the Board of Directors are very eager to increase performance service delivery statistics ensuring to stay within tight budgetary guidelines and allocated core funding. In addition will carefully review the findings of the 'Review of services questionnaire' and endeavour to implement changes from the suggestions made by our clients subject to available resources.

Within the Centre, The MS Centre will continue to offer Telehealth services which include one to one physio consults and online exercises which we plan to deliver up to 6 times per week. There is also a plan to return to in-person group classes, continued growth of our online fundraising activities and events. Subject to funding, we would like to see the return



of some of our services that discontinued in 2020 due to the pandemic, however, certain services may incur a nominal fee payable by the Client receiving the service.

The Board have also reviewed the overall risks facing the organisation and have highlighted the area of HR as a high and critical going forward pertaining to the challenges in recruiting and retaining staff, particularly professional staff such as physiotherapists who can secure better pay and conditions with the Health Service Executive. The Board and have agreed to continually review this operational risk for the company.

We remain positive that our charity shops, fundraising and Club Draw will continue the vital role of income generation to support the service delivery in the MS Centre. We are hopeful that 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 committed to ensuring the organisation meets all its obligations pertaining to Audit, Finance and Risk in its commitment to good governance on behalf of the organisation. In line with our Strategic Plan, we will be reviewing plans for the use of Woodhaven which is currently leased to the HSE keeping abreast of legislation relating to statutory respite funding which would permit the organisation to plan a return of respite services in Woodhaven.

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. While work on the system took a necessary break throughout due to covid-19, the system 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 has adopted 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 was the first year that registered charities are expected to report on their compliance with the Code. The MS Centre has complied with the Code and has completed the required compliance record form for 2022. The MS Centre is happy to report that we are fully compliant with the Charities Regulatory Authority and have submitted all required returns for 2022.

Finally, the MS Centre will celebrate 30 years of service and will plan a celebration event during 2023.



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

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