



20  
24 | 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

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### 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

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**As we conclude another successful year in the Multiple Sclerosis North West Therapy Centre (MS Centre) I am delighted to present the Annual Report for 2024. The report gives a brief overview of the MS Centre and its services delivered through the Operational Plan 2024.**

The Financial Statements for 2024 will be presented to the Board of Directors for sign-off at the AGM scheduled for May 2025. This has been a year marked by resilience, growth, and deepened connections within our community for the purpose of fundraising and continuity of service delivery.

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

Throughout the past year, the MS Centre has continued to deliver vital services and support. Despite ongoing challenges in the wider social and economic environment, our dedicated team of staff, volunteers, and supporters have worked tirelessly to ensure we remain consistent in our service delivery. 2024 saw an increase in our service delivery and an expansion in the range of services provided to our clients with the introduction of additional physiotherapy programmes and increased holistic services.

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.

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 remains 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 however we are committed to continuing to realise the goal each year.

The Board and Management are grateful for the support of the Physical and Sensory Department 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 University Hospital for the continued shared staffing arrangement in situ, Sligo Social Services and Sligo Leader Project for the provision of shared staffing and administration personnel via their Community Employment projects. Without the collaboration of these groups, service delivery could not be maintained.

I would also like to acknowledge the incredible commitment of our Board of Directors, who continue to provide strong leadership and guidance, ensuring that our charity operates with integrity, transparency, and a clear focus on our mission.

I would like to express our gratitude to the board members that retired in 2024, your commitment throughout your tenure is very much appreciated.



I thank our managers, staff and volunteers for their excellent work during the year. We are very fortunate to have such a dedicated and professional team of 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.

Thanks again to all those who have supported us in 2024. Our generous donors and supporters and our committed volunteers who have helped the organisation grow as we continue to expand and improve the scope of our service delivery throughout the year.

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 advise all stake-holders of our commitment to employing financial transparency and cost-effective measures throughout the organisation. Every euro donated goes towards the running of the services. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate to all stake-holders of our commitment to employing financial transparency and cost-effective measures throughout the organisation.

As you read through our 2024 Annual Report, I invite you to reflect on the journey we have taken together, and to look ahead with confidence as we continue to build on our successes in the delivery of our essential services to people with MS into the future.

Yours Sincerely,  
Geraldine Gordon  
Chairperson



## SERVICE MANAGER'S REPORT

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I am delighted to present an overview of the activities, achievements, and challenges experienced by the MS Centre in 2024. This report reflects the dedication, persistence and growth of our organisation in our mission to empower and support those affected by Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and other related neurological conditions throughout seven counties in the Northwest of Ireland. Our achievements would not have been possible without the unwavering commitment of our wonderful staff, volunteers, sub-contractors and the Board of Directors, who are all collectively, with our clients and families, the backbone of everything that encompasses the ethos of the MS Centre. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported our work, whether through donations, fundraising activities, or raising awareness about our mission and services.

The MS Centre remains loyal in our commitment to deliver quality services to people with MS, and their families. Our endeavours are always guided by the strategic priorities outlined in our 2020-2024 Strategic Plan, which focuses on service delivery, service evaluation, forging networks, and striving for sustainability. We collaborate with individuals with MS, their families, and carers, as well as a range of key stakeholders including health professionals, statutory and voluntary organisations, and research partners to further enhance our service growth. We hope you enjoy reading the report and we look forward to working with all our stakeholders to continually improve the quality and scope of services delivered.

**A summary of our strategic plan and objectives is outlined below, offering a snapshot of our direction and priorities throughout 2024.**

**Objective 1:** Providing Essential Services and Supports, thus improving quality of life for people with MS. The MS Centre increased the scope of our services with increased holistic services and the recommencement of the HBO service in summer 2024 resulting in almost 900 additional treatments in comparison to 2023. Other factors that added to the increase in services was the successful recruitment in the Physiotherapy department. The MS Centre also focused on increasing its online classes which improves accessibility and convenience for all. The Counselling service continues to be offered in an outreach and onsite capacity of which has been greatly appreciated by our clients and their family members.

**Objective 2:** The MS Centre aims that through continuous service evaluation that all clients can become involved in the future planning and developments of its services. A cornerstone of our approach has been continuous service evaluation. Through our periodic client review of services questionnaire, suggestion boxes, and one-on-one conversations, we've gathered valuable insights directly from the people we support. Their voices have helped guide improvements in service delivery, accessibility, communication to support planning for the MS Centre.



**Objective 3:** The MS Centre is committed to forging networks with relevant local and national organisations with a view to collaboration and sharing of resources as well as participating in research. Throughout 2024, the MS Centre continued to engage with umbrella bodies, The Wheel, the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) and have lobbied political representatives with a view to highlighting the ongoing challenges we are facing pertaining to staff recruitment and retention and pay disparity with the HSE. Links with ATU Sligo for clinical research purposes is ongoing and strong links continue with SUH for the sharing of resources and Neurology Department referrals remains central to service delivery.

**Objective 4:** The MS Centre will research and involve itself in alternative methods of funding to ensure the sustainability of service provision into the future including all its services.

In line with our commitment to working toward long-term sustainability, the MS Centre has continued to actively explore alternative funding models to support and expand our services. This year, we conducted a comprehensive review of potential income streams including grant applications, corporate sponsorships, community fundraising initiatives, online fundraising, Woodhaven rental income and increasing our traded income for our two charity shops.

As we move forward, diversifying our funding base remains a strategic priority to safeguard the continuity and growth of our vital services for people living with MS.

The MS Centre has hosted Information Sessions for clients of the MS Centre and staff with persons from outside the organisation attending and giving presentations on their area of expertise. In 2024, talks were delivered by Family Carers Ireland, Beehealthcare, Hollister Continence care and more.

As we look to the year ahead, we remain focused on strengthening our services to ensure that every individual we support can access the essential services provided by the MS Centre to create meaningful impact in the lives of people with MS and other related neurological conditions.

Thank you for your continued trust and support.

Tamara Gormley  
Manager





# Financial





## AUDITED ACCOUNTS

### Multiple Sclerosis North West Therapy Centre Company Limited by Guarantee

#### Balance Sheet As at 31st December 2024

	Note	2024 €	€	2023 €	€
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	7	519,618		561,939	
			519,618		561,939
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	8	15,566		22,881	
Cash at bank		704,450		623,312	
		720,016		646,193	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	9	(38,654)		(34,603)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			681,362		611,590
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			1,200,980		1,173,529
<b>Deferred income</b>	10		(117,225)		(121,916)
<b>Net assets</b>			1,083,755		1,051,613
<b>Reserves</b>					
Capital contribution	11		42,900		40,900
Contingency reserve	12		271,881		271,881
Income and expenditure account	14		768,974		738,832
			1,083,755		1,051,613

These Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the Small Companies' Regime.

These Financial Statements were approved by the board of director and signed on behalf of the board by:

  
Director

  
Director

Date: 28-05-2025



## RESERVES POLICY

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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 2024:*

- Working capital – Reserves up to 12 weeks to cover all operational costs for all MS North West Therapy services
- Capital Costs – €15,000 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
- Repairs and Maintenance – In line with Health and Safety concerns, a provision of €15,000 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 four 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 2025 and going forward, the Board agreed that the most appropriate level of reserves should be kept at the level of 4 months operational costs.*





## RISK MANAGEMENT

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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.

A Risk Register is maintained and reviewed by the Board of Directors at all bi-monthly Board meetings. A full record has been retained for 2024.

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**

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**Board of Directors elected at the AGM 15th May 2024:**

### **OFFICERS**

**Chairperson:** Geraldine Gordon

**Vice Chairperson:** Caradh O'Donovan

**Treasurer:** Edel Hyland

**Company Secretary:** Mary Henry

### **DIRECTORS**

Gordon Baret

Orla Ward

### **MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE**

Geraldine Gordon

Edel Hyland,

Mary Henry

Tamara Gormley

Mairead Martin

Accounts Administrator

### **MANAGERS**

Tamara Gormley, General Manager

Mairéad Martin, Quality and Development Manager



## SECRETARY'S REPORT

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**The following legal obligations have been carried out for the year 2024:**

- 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 the 15th May 2024. Notice of the AGM was given 3 weeks beforehand as is required.
- Six full Board Meetings and an AGM were held in 2024, notice and agenda for these meetings were given seven days in advance.
- The Register of Directors has been kept updated during the year 2024.
- 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.
- The CRA and RBO were maintained and updated throughout the year.

**Board Members resigned during the year:**

Denis Joyce resigned on the 24th April 2024.



## ATTENDANCE AT BOARDS MEETINGS 2024

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### Six full Board Meetings and an AGM were held in 2024

#### Board Meeting 28th February 2024

**Attendance:**

Geraldine Gordon

Gordon Barrett

Sr. Mary Henry

Denis Joyce

Orla Ward

Edel Hyland

**Apologies:** Caradh O'Donovan

#### Board Meeting 24th April 2024

**Attendance:**

Geraldine Gordon

Orla Ward

Edel Hyland

Caradh O'Donovan

Denis Joyce

Sr. Mary Henry

**Apologies:** Gordon Barrett,

**Resignation:** Denis Joyce

#### Board Meeting 15th May 2024

**Attendance:**

Geraldine Gordon

Orla Ward

Edel Hyland

Caradh O'Donovan

Gordon Barrett

**Apologies:** Sr. Mary Henry

#### Board Meeting 25th September 2024

**Attendance:**

Gordon Barrett

Sr. Mary Henry

Orla Ward

**Apologies:**

Caradh O'Donovan

Geraldine Gordon

Edel Hyland

#### Board Meeting 9th October 2024

**Attendance:**

Orla Ward

Caradh O'Donovan

Geraldine Gordon

Edel Hyland

**Apologies:**

Gordon Barrett

Sr. Mary Henry

#### Board Meeting 11th December 2024

**Attendance:**

Orla Ward

Caradh O'Donovan

Edel Hyland

Gordon Barrett

Sr. Mary Henry

**Apologies:**

Geraldine Gordon

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) 2024

#### AGM 15th May 2024

**Attendance:**

Geraldine Gordon

Gordon Barrett

Orla Ward

Edel Hyland

Caradh O'Donovan

**Gilroy Gannon Accountants**

**Apologies:** Sr. Mary Henry



## MEET THE DIRECTORS

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### **Geraldine Gordon (Chairperson)**

Geraldine has a background in banking and was elected as a Director 11 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.



### **Edel Hyland (Director - Treasurer)**

Edel completed a Bachelor's Degree in Commerce in the National University of Ireland, Galway. Edel furthered her studies and trained as a Chartered Accountant in Gilroy Gannon, Sligo qualifying in 2007. Afterwards she spent 4 years in KPMG in Dublin working as audit manager on a wide range of Irish indigenous companies and PLCs both Irish and International. Edel has been working in Kerry Group plc since 2013. Edel is an avid supporter of the Mayo football team and likes to travel in her spare time..



### **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.



### **Orla Ward (Director)**

Orla has worked in the social enterprise sector for 25 years and her experience includes project management, communications and fundraising. She is currently working in the education and training sector as a Commercial Director. Orla has also worked in the private sector and is a qualified bid manager with experience working on multi-million-pound tenders to government. She has a special interest in organisational strategy and sustainability. Orla joined the board at the end of 2023.





**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.



**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**

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### **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

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### **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 18+ years. Tamara has a great passion for 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, and retail base Essential Seconds, Charity Shops in Sligo town and Ballymote.



### **Mairéad Martin (Quality and Development Manager)**

Mairead Martin joined the MS North West Therapy Centre as Woodhaven Manager in 2014. Mairead has over 20 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 quality, compliance for the organisation and management of both charity shops..





## SAFEGUARDING REPORT

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The MS Therapy Centre 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 (Quality and Development Manager)**

**Tamara Gormley (Services Manager)**

**Gina Gartlan (Front Office)**

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 the MS Centre.

No Safeguarding matters have been reported in 2024.



# Services





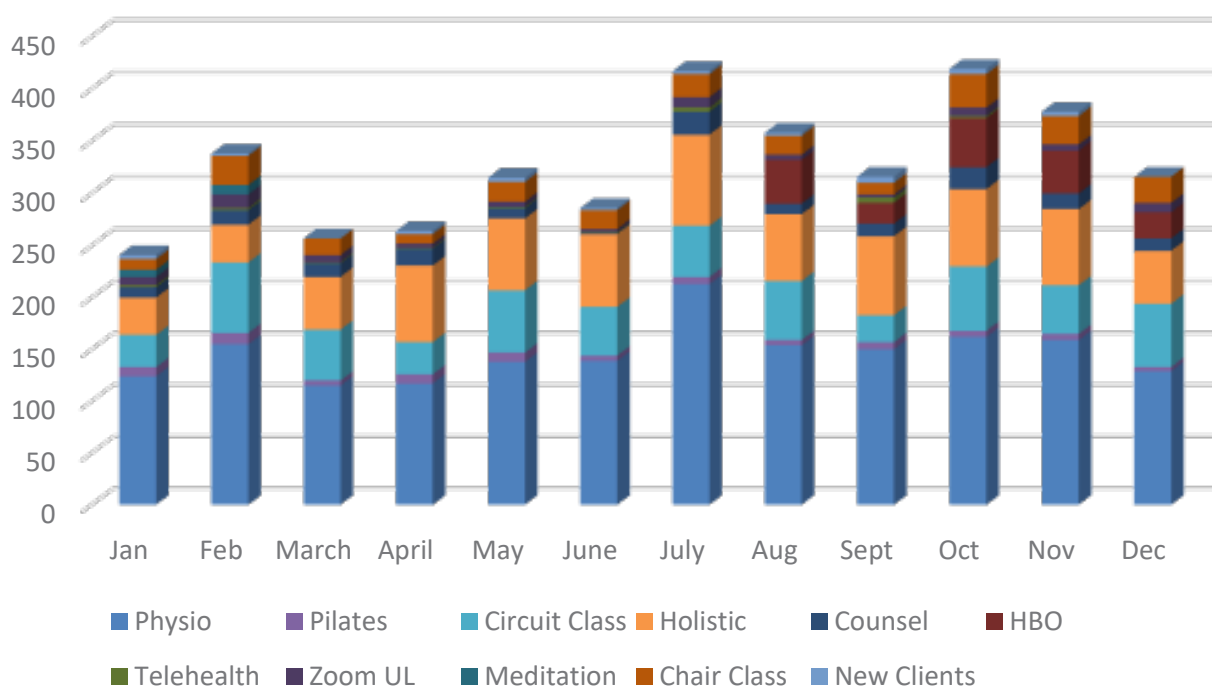


## MS CENTRE SERVICES STATS 2024

### SERVICES DELIVERED 2024

	Physio	Hydro	Educa- tional	Pi- lates	Circuit Class	Holistic	Counsel	HBO	Telehealth	Zoom UL	Medita- tion	Chair Class	Monthly Totals	New Clients	DNA
2024 Total	1755	0	8	83	588	761	156	175	19	81	16	235	3874	36	148
2023 Total	1662	0	29	71	444	548	125	0	25	0	31	219	3154	18	146
+/-	93	0	-21	12	144	213	31	175	-6	81	-15	16	720	18	2

### SERVICES DELIVERED 2024 DETAILED MONTHLY TOTALS





### PHYSIOTHERAPY DEPARTMENT MS NORTHWEST THERAPY CENTRE ANNUAL REPORT 2024

#### **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 and in-person 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..

#### **The Physiotherapy Department in 2024**

- The Physiotherapy Department is made up of 2.3 whole time equivalent PTs; 2 Senior Grade and 2 Staff-Grade PT.
- The MS Centre had more consistent staffing in 2024 compared to previous years. The Senior position, which was previously staffed by Aideen Melanaphy, was finally filled in February 2024 by Ciara Scanlon. Ciara left on maternity leave in August, and we would like to congratulate her on the birth of her beautiful boy. She is due to return to the MS Centre in May 2025. After many rounds of interviews for the Basic Grade shared post, the position was filled in October 2024 by Conor Cregan. Megan O'Dowd left the 30-hour post in February when offered the opportunity to expand her neurological experience with a position in the National rehab Hospital in Dun Laoighre. This position was filled in May 2024 by Grainne Halligan. Both basic grade physiotherapists are still in position heading into 2025.
- There are 3 Physiotherapist Assistants (PTAs), trained to QQI (Fetac) Level 5 – Paula Moran, Margaret Fallon and Lorraine McDermott. Olive Mullaney is now working as MS Centre employed HealthCare Assistant (HCA) and completing her PTA course at present. We also had the welcomed addition of a HCA through the CE Scheme – Margaret Mary Harte.

#### **Service Trends in 2024**

- 43 new referrals were made to the MS Centre in 2024. Of these, 1 client was inappropriate as they were in the process of moving to a residential facility and had no transport, 1 said they would contact us when ready to attend and never did, and 1 we were unable to contact. Of the 40 who did attend, all 40 had a diagnosis of MS. 18 clients lived in Sligo, 0 were from Mayo, 11 were from Donegal, 6 were from Leitrim, 4 was from Roscommon and 1 was from Cavan. 32 clients were aged 18-65, whilst 8 were aged over 65. Of these 40, 6 were previously known to the MS Centre.
- The number of face-to-face physiotherapy treatment sessions delivered in 2024 was 1766, which had increased from the previous 4 years but was lower than data collected



pre-COVID. This can be accounted for by staffing issues early in the year plus the change in appointment times from 45mins to 1 hour.

- 176 cancelled appointments were recorded during 2024, with a further 153 recorded as 'did not attend'.
- There were 989 attendances at 363 exercise classes during 2024, which was a big increase from 793 in 2023. Classes were delivered both in-person and on-line, with the introduction of some new in-person classes.

### **New Developments / Quality Initiatives in 2024**

- The PT Department introduced an in-person Chair Class in the MS Centre. This initiative was led out by PT Megan O'Dowd. This takes place every Wednesday at 11.30am and usually has 3 attendees. Megan trained the PTAs in leading out this class with PTA Olive Mullaney taking ownership of it on a weekly basis.
- The in-person Pilates class had no disruption to service as both Ciara Scanlon and Grainne Halligan are trained in Pilates. Initially, Ciara took over the class on her arrival from Megan O'Dowd and then handed it over to Grainne when she went on maternity leave. This runs every Monday afternoon at 3.30pm and generally has 5-6 attendees per class.
- The PT Dept continued with the theme of providing educational talks which was first implemented in 2023. We organised guest speakers to attend the MS Centre and present on different topics. These sessions had a good attendance from clients and received excellent feedback. Talks included: 'Carers Rights & Entitlements' by Tricia Blee, Support Manager Community, Sligo, Leitrim & Donegal from Family Carers Ireland; 'Do you know your rights and entitlements? How will the recent budget 2024 affect your pocket?' by Orla Barry, Development Manager, Sligo/North Connacht & Ulster Citizens Information Services; and also, two Demo Days for staff and clients from Bee Healthcare
- A 'Documentation Audit,' 'Annual Re-assessment Audit' and 'Class Review' were completed in 2024. The 'Documentation Audit' showed improvements from previous ones completed. This was the first time for the 'Annual re-assessment audit' and many areas where improvements could be made were identified. Feedback and Outcome Measures from the 'Class Review' were all positive.
- With the improved staffing situation, the PT Dept was in a position to host students and have linked with UCD Clinical Tutor Eimear Cronin. Hannah attended online 'UCD Practice Educator Training' with Eimear. Hannah and Grainne supervised one student each in 2024. The PT Dept has agreed to continue to provide same in 2025. All PT staff would be willing and have sufficient experience to take on a student. The first student is scheduled for March 2025 and Grainne will be responsible for same.
- The PT Staff met a number of times with researchers from ATU Sligo Neuroplasticity Research Group – Fiona Doherty PHD Student, Dr Kenneth Monaghan and Paul Powell around an online Forum for people with MS. The PT Dept agreed to be a part of the development of this project going forward. Fiona Doherty was in the process of applying for Ethics and would revert to the PT Staff when ready to proceed.



## **Education/Continuous Professional Development in 2024**

- Senior PT Hannah Gordon attended a 'Vestibular Assessment and Management' Course on January 12th and 13th with PT Grainne Halligan attending same on May 25th and 26th.
- Senior PT Hannah Gordon attended an online 'Clinical Governance and Audit' Training on 14th of November 2024.
- PT Grainne Halligan attended a 'First Aid and Sports Traumatology' Course on 30th of November 2024.
- The PTs continued to attend online fortnightly in-service training with MS Ireland. This has further developed links between the PT Staff in the MS centre and MS Ireland. The in-service training includes journal discussion, case studies and presentations on specific topics.
- PT Hannah Gordon attended online 'UCD Practice Educator Training' with UCD Clinical Tutor Eimear Cronin.
- PT Hannah Gordon attended online 'IPC Link Practitioner Forums' in order to stay up to date with developments in Infection Prevention and Control. Hannah also receives emails from the Mags Moran, Community Infection Prevention & Control Nurse Manager; and disseminates this information with MS Centre Staff as appropriate.
- Two PTs and two PTAs from the MS Centre – Hannah, Grainne, Paula and Lorraine – attended the MS Ireland Conference in Monaghan in 2024.

## **Plans for Future Development in 2025**

- We aim to increase the number of physiotherapy treatments at the MS Centre in 2025. Taking pre-COVID statistics, accounting for slots having changed from 45 mins to 1 hour, and based on a full complement of staff, the projected statistics for the physiotherapy department for 2025 are 2500.
- We plan to introduce a new strength-based exercise class during 2025. This will have 6-8 participants and will run for 12 weeks. Outcome measures will be assessed before and after. PT Conor Cregan will be taking the lead on this.
- PT Conor Cregan is attending the introduction to vestibular rehabilitation course in January 2025.
- Senior PT Hannah Gordon and PT Grainne Halligan plan to attend a 'Spasticity Study Day' in January 2025.
- PT Grainne Halligan plans to attend a 'Spinal Seminar' in March 2025.
- PT Conor Cregan is also due to attend a FACETS facilitator course in May which will enable the centre to run a 6-week fatigue management course for clients later in the year
- We plan to continue to provide Lunch-time Talks/guest speakers with plans in the pipeline for a week of educational talks and speakers in honor of World MS Day at the



end of May. A Continence Care Talk from Hollister is scheduled for early 2025 and Bee Healthcare hope to attend for another Client Demo Day early 2025 also.

- We plan to re-introduce online Midday Meditation. This service received fantastic feedback previously.
- The PT Dept continue to work 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. A sub-committee has been set up for this with the physiotherapists and Tamara Gormley meeting every 6 weeks.
- The PT Dept plans to introduce a system of keeping track of onward referrals.
- The PT Dept will carry out a 'Hand Hygiene Audit' to assess if we are following 'Infection Prevention and Control' Guidelines appropriately.
- 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 2025/2026.

### Dry Needling – Annual Report 2023



We have two physiotherapists qualified in dry needling – Hannah and Megan. Megan completed her training in 2023. This is a physiotherapy adjunct that has become more popular with our clients since we first introduced it in 2019. We currently have 10 clients actively attending for dry needling. This number fluctuates constantly as people are discharged when their issue resolves and when new people are referred.

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.





## OXYGEN TREATMENT (O2T)



The Oxygen Treatment (O2T) has been provided to people with MS and other related neurological conditions for over 30 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.

From March of 2020, our oxygen treatment service was suspended in line with public health guidelines and unfortunately did not resume for the last few years for both financial and staffing constraints. The Board of Directors were very 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. They have worked tirelessly throughout 2023 researching alternative sources of funding and subject to a successful outcome of funding applications submitted in 2023 via the Hospital Saturday Fund, they were delighted to resume the service in August 2024 which now operates three dives per day over 1 day per week. Each session will incur a nominal fee which is payable by Clients using the service. MS Clients will always be prioritised by the MS Centre, however, we do offer the service to non-MS clients who pay privately for the treatment.

If anyone is interested in trying out a session, please contact reception at the MS Centre on 071 9144748. Please see some wonderful testimonials below which may spark your interest in giving it a go!

*I have been living with MS for many years I got my diagnosis in 2017 but looking back I had it for many years before that. I have been using the services provided by the MS Centre Centre. Both Physio and the hyperbaric oxygen. I find both a great help with my condition. If the oxygen was available on more occasions, I believe it would be of great help to me. Any money provided by the government would be of great assistance to me and other people who use the service.*





*I have MS for the last 6 years. I had my first run in the chamber in September 2024. I find it very helpful. I feel much better after it and my sleep is much better. I feel much better after each session. I would highly recommend it to anyone.*

*I have attended the MS Therapy Centre for HBO treatment since the summer. This is my second block of treatment, and I am so grateful to have this wonderful service available to me. This treatment offers people with MS a wonderful opportunity to experience the benefits of oxygen treatment. When I use the chamber, I feel less fatigued, less pain and I feel I have more energy. Not only are those amazing benefits but I also feel the social side of taking part is a huge plus. To share this experience with others who feel the same go through the same struggles is wholesome. The staff here are fantastic and these services they provide wouldn't be possible without their dedication. HBO treatment is amazing and as a person with MS, I feel it is a necessity to our wellness.*

*Oxygen has given me a new lease on life, more energy, not exhausted all the time, don't sleep every time I sit down. It helps my urinary issues as don't have the frequency trips which disturbs my sleep at night. For a non-invasive treatment, it is very important to stay well and mobile. Can't recommend enough.*

*I find the oxygen gives me more energy and leaves me more interested in doing my house jobs after getting the treatment. I used to get the oxygen before COVID and it meant I could keep down a responsible job which I had to retire from when the treatment had to stop due to COVID. A very worthwhile service and I am delighted it is being provided for the patients here again.*

*Since I have been using the therapy, I have found that I have slept better than I have in years, I can feel more strength in my legs, I have more energy too and it has helped my mood. I am also breathing better and pain has eased. I am finding it very beneficial and giving some relief from my MS.*

*Since I started the oxygen, it helps me with my sleep, I have a lot more energy and more alert. I can go for longer walks and feel more relaxed.*

*I have just started on my oxygen therapy journey. After my first session last week, I slept so much better, that alone for me was a godsend as I am just weeks after a relapse and had not been sleeping. I am looking forward to seeing what the other benefits it will offer.*

*The Oxygen Chamber give me more energy and vitality, subsequently I feel happier.*

*I have MS for the past two years and it is the progressive kind. This means there is only one treatment which I can have (ocrevus). The Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment, whilst not necessarily modifying my illness is very effective at combatting fatigue – a common and debilitating feature of the illness for me and many others with MS.*



## HOLISTIC THERAPY



The MS Centre was delighted to welcome back our wonderful holistic therapists Jacqueline Hanly and Catherine Ruttledge who together with Deirdre Murray makes up our fantastic holistic therapist team. The additional holistic support enabled the provision of Holistic therapy sessions continued to be provided at the MS Therapy Centre totalling almost 763 treatments throughout 2024 which is an increase of 200 treatments in comparison to 2023.

The main theory of reflexology is that there are reflex points all over the feet that correspond with different areas of the body. By working these points, reflexology can help to bring balance to the body, reduce tensions and improve your quality of sleep and overall wellbeing. Reflexology therapy for patients with multiple sclerosis can improve pain, fatigue, and quality of life. It can be used as an intervention to effectively treat the pain and fatigue of MS patients and improve the quality of life of MS patients.

### **The Benefits of Reflexology**

- Reduces tension and helps with combating stress
- Improves circulation of blood and lymph throughout the body
- Promotes wellbeing and relaxation
- Helps to reduce toxins and impurities from the body
- Creates a space for the body to balance itself
- Strengthens the immune system and energises the body

Throughout the year there was a noticeable increase of newly diagnosed service users requesting holistic appointments. 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.





# Essential Seconds Charity Shop





## ESSENTIAL SECONDS CHARITY SHOP



### Essential Seconds Charity Shops Sligo and Ballymote

The MS NW Therapy Centers two charity shops which are located in Wine Street Car Park, Sligo and Teeling Street, Ballymote continue to play a vital role in supporting our mission and generating essential funds for the delivery of our services in the MS Centre.

The income generated by our shops is utilised to support the delivery of essential services for people living with MS. This income goes towards breaching our €100k annual deficit towards delivering our holistic services including reflexology and counselling in addition to contributing to the overall running of the MS Centre.

We can report that 2024 was a successful year for our charity shops which saw strong sales growth in donated clothing, books, and household items. The shops introduced many seasonal promotions and themed sale events and expanded our online platforms such as Instagram and Facebook to broaden our customer reach with a view to increasing our income. Some of these promotions included “Magic Mondays” and “Terrific Thursdays”. We also introduced card terminals in both our shops for the convenience of our customers.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has donated to our charity shops throughout the year. Thanks to you, we’re not only raising funds to support our mission and our service delivery but also promoting sustainability by reducing waste and encouraging reuse.

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 over the years.

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

We would also like to thank Sligo Leader who supports the participants on TUS and Community Employment Projects to work in Essential Seconds Charity Shops.

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

The MS Centre continues to rely heavily on the tireless dedication and enthusiasm of our fundraisers to enable us to continue to fund and support people with MS.

To ensure the ongoing operation of providing services at MS North West Therapy Centre Sligo there is a huge reliance on income generated from fundraising events. We continue to experience a gap of approx. €100,000 between the core statutory funding we receive from the HSE and the cost of keeping the MS Centre up and running. The income generated through fundraising events goes towards delivering our holistic services including reflexology and counselling and the overall running of the MS Centre.

Due to ongoing financial pressures and the need to ensure sustainability across all services, the MS Centre decided to continue to lease the Woodhaven building. By doing so we were able to generate a stable source of income that could be reinvested into the wider range of services provided in the MS Centre.

It is important to note that the MS Centre has not received an increase in its core funding from the HSE in over fifteen years, this coupled with the ever increasing cost of living forced the Board of Directors to make the strategic move to rent Woodhaven to help maintain essential services, protect jobs, and continue delivering high-quality essential services to the greatest number of beneficiaries. Ultimately this revenue has allowed the MS Centre to strengthen our overall mission and to strengthen long-term viability.

The Integrated Care of the Older Person Department of the HSE continues to utilise the building as an administrative and assessment facility for the older person services. The MS Centre was very fortunate to have significant interest from external parties to lease the building however it was very important to us to ensure that the building was utilised to support a health-related service within the community.

We remain hopeful the future will bring a more prosperous landscape where respite funding will be placed on a legislative footing enabling Woodhaven to operate once again as a short-term holiday facility. Until then, leasing the building will support and assist in the delivery of services in the MS Centre.

There are many ways in which you can get involved with fundraising and help to raise funds for the MS Centre such as:

- Join our Club Draw 10 euro a month-great cash prizes
- Support our Flag Day in September
- Join our fundraising Committee
- Run an event – coffee morning/sponsored walk or cycle



- Sell MS Centre Christmas Cards
- Make a donation
- Church gate collections
- Support our charity shops Essential Seconds Sligo and Ballymote
- Volunteer in our shops
- Get family and friends to run an event
- Facebook donations
- Link with company's under their Corporate Social Responsibility programme

If you want to talk about any fundraising ideas or get further information, please call the MS Centre and speak to Mairéad 085-8856148/ 071 91 44748.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our Voluntary Fundraising Committee, clients, staff and all our supporters of the MS Centre who worked tirelessly to assist in both our virtual fundraising platforms and organised virtual events in addition to the in-person events that were held throughout the year. Below is just a flavour of some the many events which took place throughout 2024.

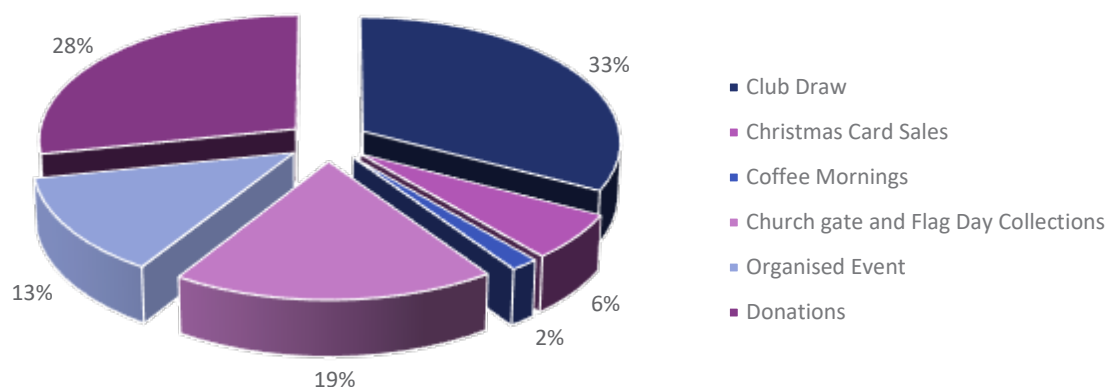


## FUNDRAISING EVENTS

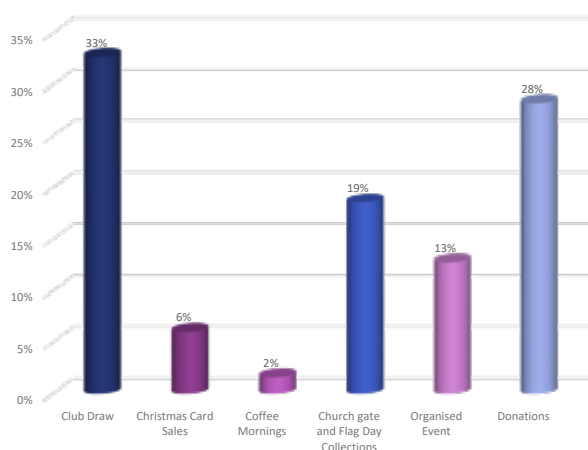
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Event Name	Event	Total	Percentage
333 Club Draw	Club Draw	€ 16,460.12	33%
Christmas Cards	Christmas Card Sales	€ 3,036.30	6%
Coffee Mornings	Coffee Mornings	€ 821.41	2%
Collections	Church gate and Flag Day Collections	€ 9,349.71	19%
Organised Events	Organised Event	€ 6,431.45	13%
Donations	Donations	€ 14,192.14	28%
<b>Total for General Fund Raising Income</b>		<b>€ 50,291.13</b>	

Fundraising  
January - December 2024



Fundraising  
January - December 2024





## FUNDRAISING EVENTS

A massive thank you to The McLoughlin Family on their very generous donation to the MS Centre which was used towards the installation of a canopy at the front door



Pictured here under the canopy from the McLoughlin family is Paul, Maria, Noah, and Pat with Tommy Horan and Sr Mary Henry







## MS CLUB DRAW 2024

### MS Club Draw 2024

We're pleased to share a brief update on the success of our MS Club Draw throughout 2024, which has once again proven to be a valuable source of fundraising to support the MS Centre in its delivery of services.

Standing order payments continue to be the preferred method of payment. Cash members are also facilitated where requested. We now have approximately 95% of our members enjoying standing order payments on a monthly basis. Over the past twelve months participation in the club draw has remained strong, with enthusiastic engagement from members and supporters alike with approximately 150 members each month. Membership has steadily contributed to our fundraising goals, helping us raise a total of €16,620 in 2024 which was marginally down by €78 on 2023.

Membership predominately consists of past and present service users, directors and staff, extended family members and friends of the M Centre. Prize money of €3,700 was paid out to the lucky winners for the year, leaving a net balance of €12,920. The total intake over the past 8 years is €185,699 of this €34,650 was paid out, leaving a net total of €151,049.

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/or a company director. The results of each draw are notified to the lucky winners, along with their winnings, and is also published on our Facebook page to ensure full transparency and accountability. The monthly prizes are as follows – 1st prize €200, 2nd prize €100, 3rd prize €50 and 4th prize €50.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who took part in the draw. Your continued support makes a real difference. Looking ahead, we are exploring ways to grow the draw further by potentially expanding participation to continue to boost our fundraising potential. Our goal remains to ensure that all clients availing of our services have an opportunity to support the MS Centre through the participation in our Club Draw. If you would like to support the MS Club Draw, please ask reception for a standing order form.

Prize money for the year is			
1st	200	12	2400
2nd	100	12	1200
3rd	50	12	600
4th	50	12	600
			4800



## January

1st Prize Rita & Denis Kenny
2nd Prize Gerard & Maria O'Halloran
3rd Prize Una & Michael Hough
4th Prize Claudette Murphy

## February

1st Prize Breege Guihan
2nd Prize Lorraine Dempsey
3rd Prize Declan Judge
4th Prize Elaine Scanlon

## March

1st Prize Francis & Frances O'Brien
2nd Prize Catherine Clerkin
3rd Prize Mary McWeeney
4th Prize Violet McDermott

## April

1st Prize Tracey Ward
2nd Prize Colm Deering
3rd Prize George & Angela Butler
4th Prize Gerry & Patrick Keaney

## May

1st Prize Kevin Nealon
2nd Prize Jacqueline Hanley
3rd Prize Claudette Murphy
4th Prize Patrick Dolan

## June

1st Prize Catherine Ruttledge
2nd Prize Kathleen Gillen
3rd Prize Martin Marren
4th Prize Betty Kilfeather

## July

1st Prize Baby Emily O'Hara
2nd Prize Eamonn Considine
3rd Prize Siobhan Tighe
4th Prize Michael & Eileen Murtagh

## August

1st Prize Pat Keaney
2nd Prize Eugene Rooney
3rd Prize Kevin Nealon
4th Prize Robert & Jill Potter-Cogan

## September

1st Prize Noel Hennessy
2nd Prize Darren Deering
3rd Prize Bernie Shannon
4th Prize Gloria McDonagh

## October

1st Prize Paula Moran
2nd Prize Noel Hunt
3rd Prize Deirdre Eation
4th Prize Una & Michael Hough

## November

1st Prize Geraldine Regan
2nd Prize Liam Hunt
3rd Prize Kathleen Scanlon
4th Prize Barry & Mary Heavey

## December

1st Prize Patrick Ryder
2nd Prize Claire Smyth
3rd Prize Stephanie Conlon
4th Prize Gerry Keaney





# Improving Quality (IQ)





## IMPROVING QUALITY (IQ)

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**Improving Quality (IQ) is the quality scheme supported by DFI/Sola and is used both as a self-assessment tool as well as an external assessment tool. Its focus is on 4 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 all departments in 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 and Essential Seconds Charity Shops. The process of implementing IQ throughout the organisation has helped us to improve our service delivery, focus on our accountability and transparency and encourages regular review and learning to improve our services and decision-making.





# The National Ability Supports System (NASS)





## NATIONAL ABILITY SUPPORTS SYSTEM

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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 thereby prove why funding is needed for disability services and supports. NASS collects a range of data including demographic, socioeconomic and diagnostic data on service users in addition to details about the assistive technology and services they receive and/or require. The MS Centre has fully engaged with the NASS in 2024 and is committed to ensuring that information on the NASS is accurate and complete to inform disability policy and service planning for 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 Charities Governance Code high on the agenda in relation to governance and review the code at every Board meeting. The Compliance Record Form for 2024 has been completed and compliance reported to the Charities Regulatory Authority.



# Future Plans and Activities





## FUTURE PLANS AND ACTIVITIES

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**Going forward into 2025, The MS Centre is committed and excited to continually develop and improve the quality of its services as per the organisations newly developed Strategic Plan for 2024 – 2027.**

Throughout 2024, the organisation managed to increase its services delivered in all departments in particular, our holistic therapies and the recommencement of our Hyperbaric Oxygen therapy service which was been greatly appreciated by our Clients. Going forward into 2025, the MS Centre will be once again provide services within the parameters of what our core funding and generated funds from the Charity shops permit on an annual basis. However, the Board of Directors are very eager to increase the scope of services provided and are working on the possibility of offering Physio lead strength classes in the evening for those who may not be able to attend during working hours. The MS Centre, as always works closely with other groups where it provides benefit to our clients and will continue this spirit in partnership and seek opportunities where possible to strengthen our service.



We will embark on improving our communication with our clients so their voice and views are heard and taken into consideration in the planning of our services. In 2025, we plan to introduce a text appointment reminder service to our Clients. To nurture our client relations, we will carry out a 'Review of Services' questionnaire and endeavour to implement changes from the suggestions made by our clients where possible. We look forward to developing an MS Peer Support group, as well providing even more educational talks and demonstrations for our clients and their families. The MS Centre Clinical Governance sub-committee will continue to work 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 MS Centre continues to ensure connectivity with the wider disability community and national umbrella disability organisations. In 2022, The Neurological Alliance of Ireland launched a nationwide advocacy campaign, urging for funding to establish nine community neurorehabilitation teams—one in each of the 9 HSE CHO (Community Health Organisation) areas, in accordance with the National Neurorehabilitation Strategy and a key commitment within the current Programme for Government. This was a very successful project lead by the NAI jointly with HSE and DFI of which the MS Centre supported with the mapping of neuro services in the North West. This campaign will be highlighted to Government throughout 2025 with the hope that a fully staffed Community Neuro Rehab team will be funded in the North West. The MS Centre will continue to form part of the many disability dialogue forums, day services and quality standards groups as facilitated by DFI. The MS Centre continues its interest in supporting external research of which our connection with ATU Sligo is ongoing.

The MS Centre will also ensure to nurture the relationship with our main funder, the HSE Physical and Sensory Disabilities Department especially as there are so many changes ahead as the HSE restructure into Health Regions nationally. Additionally, we look forward to working with other non-profit organisations for shared in-service training to shared staffing arrangements. We also look forward to presenting strengthening our relationship with the Neurology Department of Sligo University Hospital of which we receive almost 70% of our referrals.

The Board have also reviewed the overall risks facing the organisation and have highlighted the area of HR as high and critical due 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, during 2024 agreed to paid maternity leave for their employees and will continually review this operational risk for the company by considering better terms and conditions for their employees. In addition, the MS Centre will continue to support the campaign for pay parity which saw some success in 2024 with backpay given to staff. Going into 2025, the MS Centre, with other Section 39 organisations will support this campaign that is currently under review with the WRC and union bodies.



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 happy to report that we are fully compliant with the Charities Governance code with all trustees/directors registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority. All trustees/directors have been listed as Registered Business Owners (RBO). 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.







# MS North West Therapy Centre Sligo

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

Multiple Sclerosis North West Therapy Centre Ltd

A company limited by guarantee

Ballytivnan, Sligo

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