



Multiple Sclerosis Society

## Using inclusive language in your trust application

Our main objective and guiding principle is to use inclusive, positive, empowering language. The list below shows some examples which may be particularly relevant for trust applications, but is not exhaustive.

If you are unsure about the acceptability of language, ask the following:

- Are you using language that implies the condition or impairment is the problem of the person? For example, “I can see how your MS means you can’t come”. It is preferable to focus on removing barriers, e.g. “is there anything I can do that will make it easier for you to attend?”
- Are you using language that assumes you know how the person or group is feeling? For example, “brave MS sufferers fight for treatment”. It is preferable to use non-assumptive language, such as “the group of Mums, who all have MS, campaign for access to treatment”
- Are you mentioning the impairment or condition unnecessarily? For example, “it was the lady in the wheelchair who said she enjoyed the meeting” is less inclusive than “it was the blonde lady in the pink dress who said she enjoyed the meeting”.

Inappropriate language	Inclusive language
MS sufferer(s)	Person or people with MS
Carer – in most cases this does not adequately define the relationship	Family carer i.e. unpaid Paid carer
People/person with disabilities	Disabled people or person
The disabled	Disabled people
Victim of	Person who has/ person with /person who has experienced
Crippled by/ suffering from/ afflicted by	Person who has/ person with
Wheelchair bound	Wheelchair user
Invalid (also means not valid)	Disabled person
Handicap	Impairment
Able-bodied	Non-disabled person
Handicapped person	Disabled person
Special needs/ additional needs	Access needs/ adjustments