

Letters of support required

Individual Support Grants

All applications need to be supported by a letter from a relevant professional. This should:

- confirm the diagnosis of MS
- outline the need for the item requested
- confirm that the item is safe and suitable for the applicant
- give details of any relevant statutory funding

Sometimes applicants will have a copy of an assessment from a relevant professional that can be accepted as the letter of support, for example for home adaptations, wheelchairs, specialist chairs or beds, and exercise equipment.

Please contact the **Grants Team** if you are unsure about who should provide a letter of support. The following gives some guidance.

Home adaptations

- Occupational therapist - if the request is for an assessed contribution to a Disabled Facilities Grant or Home Adaptations Grant, we also need confirmation of the contribution. If the applicant is not eligible for this funding, we need this confirmed in writing.

Wheelchairs

- Occupational therapist, or an assessment from the wheelchair service - we need to know whether the applicant is eligible for a wheelchair or wheelchair vouchers through the wheelchair service.

Riser-recliner chairs

- Occupational therapist

Double profiling beds

- Occupational therapist or district nurse - some local authorities will provide the cost of a single bed towards a double, so we need to know whether this applies.

Mobility scooters

- Occupational therapist or MS nurse - the letter must confirm the scooter requested is safe and suitable for the applicant.

Car adaptations, such as hoists or hand controls

- Occupational therapist, MS nurse, or the applicant may have a copy of a driving assessment outlining the adaptations recommended - we also need to know whether they have applied to Motability for a grant.

Motability advance payments

- Occupational therapist or MS nurse - we also need confirmation from Motability or the car dealership that there are no vehicles with nil advance payments that will meet their essential needs. We also need to know whether they have applied to Motability for a grant.

Driving lessons for the person with MS or their carer

- Occupational therapist, MS nurse, GP or social worker

Decorating work needed following adaptations

- Occupational therapist, MS nurse or social worker

Clinical and communication aids

- Specialist in that area (e.g. speech and language therapist, sometimes an occupational therapist, MS nurse or social worker) - we also need confirmation that the item cannot be funded by the NHS or social services.

Bankruptcy and debt relief order fees

- Social worker, Citizens Advice Bureau worker, other debt advice worker (from not-for-profit debt advice agency). The applicant must be able to show that they have taken advice about their debts.

Removal costs, for moving to more accessible accommodation

- Occupational therapist, MS nurse, GP or social worker

Furnishings, flooring and domestic appliances/ essential home repairs

- MS nurse or social worker

Laptops, as a way of communicating or to reduce social isolation

- Occupational therapist, social worker or MS nurse

Exercise equipment

- Physiotherapist

Short Breaks and Activities Fund

All applications need to be supported by a health or social care professional. They need to confirm the diagnosis of MS (or that the applicant is a carer for someone with MS). They also need to outline the need for the break requested and how the applicant will benefit from it, any care or support needs that the applicant has, and give any other general background information.

For requests for respite care, we also need confirmation of whether any funding is available towards this from the local authority (usually from a social worker or care manager).

For requests for complementary therapies, the letter of support should:

- confirm that no harm will come to the applicant as a result of the treatments
- confirm how the treatments will benefit the applicant, either physically, emotionally or socially
- highlight any care needs that will need to be met to allow the applicant to undertake the treatments
- confirm that the treatments provide the applicant with a short break

Carers Grant Fund

All applications need a letter of support from someone who is able to confirm that the applicant is a carer of someone with MS and who can describe what their caring role involves on a daily or regular basis. This could be a teacher, carer's support worker, social worker, health professional or an MS Society support volunteer. The list is not exhaustive and we try to be flexible about who can provide the letter, as we know that not all carers have someone supporting them.