Group Handbook 2019 updates

Your guide to what's included in each section, and what's changed in 2019. Page numbers are listed as (individual section/full version).

Part A: Group basics

This part includes everything you need to meet our requirements for all groups.

A1: Introduction and overview

In this section

1. About us
2. Our volunteer-led groups
3. Group Handbook

Updates

- No updates

A2: Requirements, support, tools and resources

In this section

1. MS Society group requirements
2. Optional additional services
3. Sources of support
4. Online tools and written resources

Updates

- Support and Wellbeing Team (5/14) - now supports Group Coordinators as well as Lead/Support Volunteers
- MS Society email (5/14) - upgrade information added
- Portal (7-16) - reference to Portal role in awarding Quality Standards removed

A3: Our values and how we deal with problems

In this section

1. Our organisational values
2. Our Code of Conduct
3. Equality, diversity and inclusion
4. Dealing with problems

Updates

- Dealing with problems (5/22) - updated Resolving Volunteer Issues Policy and new guidance added

A4: Our legal identity, policies and rules

In this section

1. Our identity in the eyes of the law
2. Our charitable objects
3. Representing us
4. Following our policies and rules

Updates

- No updates

A5: Health, safety and wellbeing

In this section

1. Staying safe when volunteering
2. Reporting accidents
3. Risk management
4. Safeguarding
5. Equipment purchases and donations
6. Insurance
7. Minibus administration

Updates

- Who to contact to report an accident (2/29) - changed to Health and Safety Team
- Fitness risk management (3/30) - we no longer lend out fitness equipment for use in people's homes
- Events risk management and your role (4/31) - new Fundraising Events Volunteer and Information Events Volunteer roles added
- Safeguarding risk guidance documents (6/33) – link to new resources added
- Equipment purchases and donations (7/34) - we no longer accept donations of fitness equipment
- Insurance for hired vehicles (8/35) - new guidance added

A6: Handling data

In this section

1. The General Data Protection Regulation
2. Your personal data responsibilities
3. The rules for sending, receiving, storing and sharing emails
4. Using membership data
5. What about images and stories?
6. How long should I keep personal data?
7. Sharing data with third parties

Updates

- Your access to personal data (4-5/40-41) – Lead/Support Volunteers added to roles with access to membership data, new Information Events Volunteer added to roles with access to service users' data, and new Fundraising Events Volunteer added to roles with access to supporters' data
- Reporting a lost or stolen mobile device containing MS Society data (8/44) - MS Society email upgrade
- Who can access membership data? (10/46) - now includes Lead/Support Volunteers
- Data protection for GDPR eLearning (10-11/46-47) - MS Society email added to list of online tools requiring eLearning

A7: Keeping in touch

In this section

1. Your Local Networks Officer
2. Maintaining a record of your services
3. Optional additional services

Updates

- Maintaining a record of your services (2/52) - reference to Portal role in awarding Quality Standards removed

Part B: If your group handles money and provides services and activities

This part covers our additional requirements for groups that do these things.

B1: Availability, contact and communication

In this section

1. Availability
2. Contact with your group
3. Communicating with our members
4. Press and publicity

Updates

- MS Society email (4/56) - upgrade information added
- Using social media (5-7/61-63) - updated rules and link to new guidance added

B2: Using our brand

In this section

1. The MS Society brand
2. Using our brand in print, online, and in email communication
3. Web to Print
4. MS Society branded materials

Updates

- MS Society email (4/71) - upgrade information added
- Web to Print charges (4/71) - new process added

B3: Giving information

In this section

1. Dealing with information enquiries
2. Promoting our publications
3. Our MS Helpline
4. Giving information about grants
5. Signposting to key local services
6. Using our disclaimer

Updates

- Information giving and your role (1/73) - Activities Organiser and new Information Events volunteer added
- Organising an event (2/74) - link to fully revised VolWeb section added
- MS Helpline (4/76) - reference to new benefits advice service added

B4: Managing your finances

In this section

1. Your financial responsibilities
2. Keeping accounting records
3. Control of group funds
4. Raising funds
5. Use of funds
6. Banking and cash
7. VAT
8. Gift Aid

Updates

- Charging for group services (11/90) - clarification of our position on asking for suggested donations rather than charging for services
- Legacies (11-12/90-91) - our legacy release process added
- Account signatories (14/93) - link to signatory declaration form added
- Using MS Society email (14/93) - we will use MS Society email to share important financial information with your Coordinating Team

- Petty cash (16/95) - new section added

B5: Fundraising

> ## In this section
>
> 1. Our fundraising standards
> 2. MS Society fundraising merchandise
> 3. Keeping fundraising legal and safe
> 4. Financial matters
> 5. Contributing to our wider work

Updates

- Fundraising and your role (1/102) - new Fundraising Events Volunteer role added

B6: Planning and delivering quality services and activities

> ## In this section
>
> 1. Understanding local need
> 2. What should we offer?
> 3. Clinical services and complementary therapies
> 4. Delivering quality services and activities
> 5. Services and activities on the Portal

Updates

- Throughout section (1-9/108-123) - change from Quality Standards to 'principles of quality service delivery'
- Safeguarding risk guidance (7-8/114-115) – link to new resources added
- Services and activities on the Portal (9/116) - reference to Portal role in awarding Quality Standards removed

Part C: Running your group

This part supports you to develop your team of volunteers, plan and organise activities, and work with membership data.

C1: Volunteering with us

In this section

1. Understanding your volunteer needs
2. Finding and recruiting volunteers
3. Agreeing the role
4. Welcome, induction and 'must do' training
5. Supporting you in your role
6. Recognising volunteer contributions
7. When a volunteer leaves

Updates

- Investing in Volunteers (IiV) (1-118) - information about our new accreditation
- Our group roles (3-120) - new Fundraising Events Volunteer and Information Events Volunteer roles added
- Our recruitment resources (4/121) - link to new 'Organising your team' VolWeb section added
- Online recruitment (4-5/121-122) - new section on our preferred recruitment method added
- Agreeing the role (6-7/123-124) - our shared commitments removed from role descriptions and added to Group Handbook and VolWeb
- 'Must do' training (9/126) - update to list of online tools that require GDPR eLearning
- Expenses (13-130) – link to updated Expenses policy and new guidance added
- Recognising your contributions (13-14/130-131) – link to new Shining Star online nomination form and guidance added, MS Awards removed whilst under review
- When a volunteer leaves (14-15/131-132) - simplified exit process

C2: Disclosure checks

In this section

1. What is a disclosure check?
2. Who needs to be checked?
3. The disclosure process
4. If an applicant has a criminal record
5. Disclosure on the Portal

Updates

- What is a disclosure check? (1/134) - clarification that disclosure check must be completed before a volunteer starts their role
- Who needs a disclosure check? (2/135) - link to new VolWeb section on group roles that need a check in each nation
- Who needs a disclosure check? (2/135) - clarification that Service providers must complete disclosure check before a service starts
- The disclosure process England and Wales (3/136) - we now accept existing disclosure certificates

C3: Your Coordinating Team

In this section

1. Organising your Coordinating Team
2. Making decisions
3. Keeping records
4. Dealing with concerns

Updates

- Discussion between meetings (2-3/141-142) – new rules for using MS Society email to discuss group matters and reach decisions between team meetings added
- Using MS Society email (3/142) - new section on roles and tasks that must use MS Society email to represent us

- Employing staff (5/144) - clarification of our position that we will only support groups to recruit existing paid roles

C4: Membership administration

In this section

1. New members
2. Membership renewals
3. Membership data

Updates

- Membership renewals (3/149) - now includes direct debit process
- If a member doesn't appear on a Portal list (4/150) - stronger statement about not contacting them

Part D: Optional additional services

Although they are not requirements, we know that certain services have a positive impact on people affected by MS, and we encourage our groups to provide them.

D1: Offering MS Support

In this section

1. What is MS Support?
2. Offering emotional support
3. Giving information
4. Signposting to specialist advice
5. Help to access financial support
6. Informing our work
7. Setting up an MS Support service
8. Induction, training and ongoing support

Updates

- Being easy to contact by email (3/154) - Lead/Support Volunteers must use MS Society email when they represent us
- Supporting people to attend activities and events (5/156) - link to fully revised 'Organising an event' VolWeb section added
- MS Helpline (6/157) - reference to new benefits advice service added
- Using the Portal (8/159) - Lead/Support Volunteers can now use the Portal to access contact information about members who have agreed to be contacted by us

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