



## B3: Giving information

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We want everyone affected by multiple sclerosis (MS) to have access to the latest evidence based information and specialist support.

If your group handles money and provides services and activities, one of your requirements is to ensure that information about MS and MS Society services and activities is available to everyone in your community.

To meet this requirement, we expect your group to:

- Have named volunteers to deal with information enquiries
- Promote our publications
- Share our [MS Helpline](#) contact details
- Give information about MS Society grants
- Signpost to key local services
- Use our [Disclaimer](#)

### Information giving and your role

Your group may decide to recruit one or more volunteers to coordinate and support your information giving activities:

- [Administration Volunteer](#)
- [Activities Organiser](#)
- [Communications Volunteer](#)
- [Information Events Volunteer](#)



See [C1: Volunteering with us](#) for guidance on recruiting, supporting and recognising your volunteers.

## Offering MS Support

We know that having access to **MS Support** delivered locally has a positive impact on people affected by MS, and we encourage our groups to provide this service.

If your group decides to offer **MS Support**, your information giving will be enhanced by [Lead Support Volunteers](#) and [Support Volunteers](#) who are experts at helping people affected by MS to make informed choices that meet their needs, in ways that suit them.



See [D1: Offering MS Support](#) for how providing a local **MS Support** service will enhance your information giving.

# 1. Dealing with information enquiries

You may receive requests for information about MS by phone or email, via social media, or in person.

To meet our information giving requirement, your group must have agreed contact details with a named volunteer responsible for monitoring each contact method.

We expect the volunteer responsible for each contact method to read this handbook section and use our information resources when dealing with enquiries.



See [B1: Availability, contact and communication](#) for support to use our contact methods.

## Organising an information event

Organising an event is a great way to bring people together to give information to your MS community.

For everything you need to plan, deliver and follow up your event, see [Organising an event](#) on our volunteer website.

## 2. Promoting our publications

We have a wide range of award winning information resources – publications and factsheets that support people affected by MS to live life to the fullest, and engage in shared decision making about their health and wellbeing.

We want you to promote our publications at group meetings and events, in newsletters and on social media.

### 2.2. Ordering publications

You can order our information resources from the [Online Shop](#). They are free of charge to your group, but please keep in mind our production costs and regular update schedule when placing orders.



To log in to your [Online Shop](#) account or get support, see [Using our Online Shop](#) on the volunteer website, or ask the [Supporter Care Team](#) for help.

You can also ask the [Supporter Care Team](#) to post individual copies of publications to people on your group's behalf.

### The Information Standard

We are a certified member of the Information Standard. This is a quality assurance standard established to improve the quality of health and social care information.

Our Information Standard certification shows that we value our reputation and credibility. When you share MS Society publications, you can be sure you are providing quality information.

## 3. MS Helpline

Our [MS Helpline](#) offers emotional support, information and benefits advice to anyone affected by MS in the UK. We want your group to share the [MS Helpline](#) contact details with anyone you think could benefit.

The [MS Helpline](#) team is also here to support our volunteers and staff to deal with enquiries from people affected by MS.

The [MS Helpline](#) is free to call from landlines and mobiles within the UK. We also have a confidential email service.

- Freephone helpline: 0808 800 8000
- Helpline email service: [helpline@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:helpline@mssociety.org.uk)

## 4. Giving information about grants

We provide financial grants to people affected by MS for things they feel will make a positive impact on their life. We're here for all people affected by MS, so our grant programme is equally available to people with MS and their carers; and to both members and non-members. Our national grants programme is administered by the [Grants Team](#).

**Grants Team**  
[grants@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:grants@mssociety.org.uk)  
Tel: 0300 500 8084

If your group handles money and delivers services and activities, you must ensure that information about our national grants programme is available to all people affected by MS within your community.

### 4.1. Grants eligibility criteria

Our national grants programme considers applications from anyone who meets our eligibility criteria:

- They must have MS or be a carer for someone with MS
- They must live in the UK
- They must have less than £16,000 in accessible savings (if they have over £8000 they will be expected to make a contribution)
- There is no statutory or other funding available to help them meet their need
- They have not received a grant from us in the last 12 months



Download a grant application form at [National Grant Funds](#) on our volunteer website, or ask the [Supporter Care Team](#) for help.

### 4.2. Health and Wellbeing Grants

Our [Health and Wellbeing Grant Fund](#) supports people with MS. It can help pay for mobility aids and home adaptations (where statutory funding is unavailable), holidays and respite, complementary therapies, and other things an applicant feels will make a positive and lasting impact on their life.

## 4.3. Carers Grants

Our **Carers Grant Fund** supports carers of all ages. We are flexible in what we can help with, within two categories – personal development and leisure. We encourage carers to apply for the things they think will benefit them.

### Awarding grants locally

Although not a requirement for MS Society groups, we know that having access to a locally administered grants programme can have a positive impact on people affected by MS.

Where you have the capacity to deliver a local grants programme, we will offer support and guidance to help your group to do so.



See [A2: Requirements, support, tools and resources](#) for more on our optional additional services.

## 5. Signposting to key local services

### 5.1. Information and advice

We offer 'information' to support and enable people to take control and make choices for themselves. This means that it is up to the person to decide what works best for them, based on the information available, or knowing where to go to find out more.

'Giving advice' involves a person or organisation regarded as knowledgeable or authoritative making recommendations concerning future action.

We don't expect your group to give advice and you must not do so on our behalf. If a person needs specialist help, we want you to signpost them to a suitable service provider, or contact our **MS Helpline** for support.

### 5.2. Local contacts template

We expect all groups that handle money and deliver services and activities to maintain a list of local MS services to signpost to when dealing with information enquiries. We have developed a **Local contacts template** to help you do this.



Download our [Local Contacts Template](#) on the volunteer website, or ask your [Local Networks Officer](#) (LNO) for help.

It includes space to record contact details of key services, such as your local MS nurse (if there is one), Adult Social Care Team, and Citizens Advice Bureau.

We want your group to update this list regularly and share it with all volunteers who deal with information enquiries.

## Signposting and MS Support

If your group offers [MS Support](#), your [Lead/Support Volunteers](#) are trained to use our signposting criteria to identify suitable specialist advice providers.

[Lead/Support Volunteers](#) also have access to the list of UK-wide and nation-specific organisations that our [MS Helpline](#) signposts to.



See [Signposting To Specialist Advice](#) on our volunteer website, or ask your LNO about offering [MS Support](#).

## 6. Using our Disclaimer

Whenever your group signposts people to products, information or services provided by other organisations, such as in a newsletter or email, you must include our [Disclaimer](#):

"Information contained in this publication is for information purposes only, and does not constitute advice or a recommendation. Where we provide information about external organisations or service providers, we are not able to offer any guarantee on the quality or safety of their services or products, or whether they are suitable for an individual's needs. We take no responsibility for any errors or omissions in this information."

Our [Disclaimer](#) is already included on the appropriate [Web to Print](#) templates.



To set up your [Web to Print](#) account, log in or get support, see [Using Web to Print](#) on the volunteer website, or ask the [Supporter Care Team](#) for help.

Group Handbook B3: Giving information v3.3	
Content Owner:	Assistant Director of Information and Support
Editor:	Volunteer Resources Editor
Sign off:	Head of Local Networks
Sign off date:	October 2019
Review date:	October 2020