

Research Reporter



Your essential guide to what's new in the world of MS science

Welcome to the September 2022 edition of the Research Reporter!

Research Round up

May: Tackling autoimmune conditions together

[We announced ten new projects](#) we've committed to fund together with other charities and the Lorna & Yuti Chernajovsky Biomedical Research Foundation. We're part of Connect Immune Research, a partnership of charities, investigating the links between autoimmune diseases including MS, diabetes, lupus. You can read an interview with researchers leading one of these projects - they're [focusing on the gut to develop new MS treatments](#).

June: StopMS Annual lecture

Professor Anna Williams gave [this year's lecture](#), all about the science of MS and her lab's current research. Our CEO Nick Moberley called it "a masterclass in science communication." You can still watch via this link.

July: The UK's biggest MS research conference

Our biannual conference for scientists, clinicians and healthcare professionals was in Swansea this year. A lot happened in two days so you can look at what interests you most:

- ▶ **Want the hot topics?** You can [read four short stories](#) about our ongoing MS research showcased at the conference. New approaches with MRI scans, virtual care options, future myelin repair treatments. And, why it's so important to include everyone in MS research.
- ▶ **Want a personal approach?** You can read the conference experiences from [Irene, who researches MS](#) and [Roxy, who lives with MS](#).
- ▶ **Want to feel like you're there?** Watch [this year's livestreamed debate](#). It asks what role MS labels, like relapsing MS and progressive MS, play. Researchers and people living with MS shared what it means for them.

August: Quick-fire projects funded

We've committed to fund three new twelve-month projects aiming to ignite research in their fields.

- ▶ [The hiding places of Epstein-Barr Virus](#)
- ▶ [Checking for multiple risk factors for MS](#)
- ▶ [Crossing the Blood-Brain-Barrier and MS](#)

Meet the Researcher

This issue's researcher to highlight is [Hannah Morris-Banokle](#), who is a PhD student studying psychological support for people with MS. She also lives with relapsing remitting MS. She told us what it's like to be part of the MS research world as well as the MS community.

Following the trial trail

Myelin repair trial begins

An antihistamine ([clemastine](#)) and a diabetes drug ([metformin](#)) showed promise for their effects on repairing myelin. Now, we are trialling them in combination for the first time in people. [Annabelle is our first recruit](#). Only 50 people will take part and they'll need to live within 2 hours of Cambridge.

ChariotMS recruits a Chariot driver

Tim's a carriage driver living with MS. He [told us his story](#) about joining the ChariotMS trial. ChariotMS is testing whether existing DMT [cladribine \(Mavenclad\)](#) can slow upper limb disability worsening in people with advanced MS. People who think they might be eligible should get in touch with their doctor about a referral to their local centre.

Octopus waiting for the green light from regulators

The trial team at UCL has recently submitted their application to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and to a Research Ethics Committee. Gaining approval from both these bodies is mandatory for the trial to open to recruitment. These organisations will review the application, raise any questions or request changes that they think are needed, and in due course give the green light for the trial to proceed.

A response is expected within 60 days of submission. While waiting, the team is continuing to set up the trial's database, sites, and processes that will be used to gather data from participants and manage the Octopus trial. For now, if you speak to anyone who's interested in the trial, people with progressive MS can still [register their interest online](#). The trials team will get in touch with people as soon as they're ready to begin recruitment.

And finally...

Which brain cell are you? The busy microglia, the excitable neuron...? Find out with our quiz that's just for fun: <https://take.quiz-maker.com/QC52TQXBQ>

If you'd like to know more about our research, or find out how you could involve research in your work – get in touch! You can reach the team at:

research.communications@mssociety.org.uk