



Welcome to the December 2022 edition of the Research Reporter!

## Research Round up

### October: StarMS trial opening at hospitals around the UK

StarMS is an NIHR-funded trial of [HSCT \(haematopoietic stem cell transplantation\)](#). StarMS is comparing HSCT with other, highly effective, treatments for relapsing MS.

The team [announced they're opening sites around the UK](#). And we went [#BehindTheTrial to speak to some of the people involved](#).

### ECTRIMS conference

Over 7000 people gathered at ECTRIMS – the world's largest MS research conference. Researchers share early results at conferences to get feedback from other scientists. It's not the final data we'll see published in a peer-reviewed journal. But it's great to get a sneak-peek of their findings.

- ▶ [Read about the latest discoveries the UK MS Register shared at ECTRIMS](#)
- ▶ [Read some highlights from the session on exercise and MS](#)

### November: Spotlight on the UK MS Register

2022 was the ten year anniversary of the UK MS Register becoming the first ever registry to collect data directly from people with MS, and link it with their clinical records. As part of our Stop MS appeal, we've been talking about all things MS Register.

- ▶ Want to hear what it's like to be a part of the MS Register?  
[Read about Linetta's experience as one of the longest running participants of the MS Register](#)
- ▶ Want to know what impact the MS Register is making?  
[Read how the MS Register is helping to Stop MS from Assistant Director of Research Dr Emma Gray](#)

### December: New fatigue study gets started

A recent study found [less than a third of people with MS have been offered a treatment for fatigue as part of their routine care](#). A new project, REFUEL-MS, is going to help address this.

We've also committed to raise £2 million for new research in our annual grant round. This includes projects on EBV, and pregnancy and MS. Look out for details on our website in the New Year!

## Hot topic in 2022

This year, we've seen MS research take lots of steps forward. Here's one example of this year's hot topics!

### Epstein Barr Virus and MS

In January, [a new study from Harvard University](#) provided the strongest evidence to date there may be a causal link between the Epstein Barr Virus and MS. A possible link between [EBV and MS](#) raises the possibility of MS prevention. If EBV is a trigger, then can preventing EBV prevent MS?

While a lot more research is needed, it's exciting to see this crucial topic gaining momentum.

## Meet the Researcher

- ▶ This issue's researcher to highlight is Raghda Shaban Tawfeeq Al-Najjar. She's a PhD student at the University of Cambridge researching the genetics of MS. [Read about Raghda's research](#)

## Following the trial trail

We support clinical trials testing treatments to slow progression. Here's what they've been up to...

### ChariotMS

[ChariotMS](#) is testing whether a drug called cladribine can slow down the worsening of hand and arm function for people with more advanced MS. It's the first clinical trial specifically for this group.

The team are now around a third of the way to their recruitment goal. And they're keen to hear from anyone interested in taking part.

### MS-STAT2

[MS-STAT2](#) is testing whether a cholesterol lowering drug can help slow disability progression in secondary progressive MS. [Last year they completed recruitment, with 964 people joining the trial.](#)

Everyone stays in the trial for at least three years. And [we've been hearing from participants like Alison about why they're taking part.](#)

### CCMR2

Our [myelin repair](#) trial has now enrolled 24 people with relapsing MS. So they're nearly halfway to their recruitment target of 50.

Everyone stays part of the trial for six months. So [Anabelle, who was first person to join,](#) has now finished.

### Octopus

[Octopus](#) is our multi-arm, multi-stage clinical trial for progressive MS. The team at UCL have been working hard to get Octopus ready to open. And lots of people have registered their interest via the UK MS Register. We hope the first participant will join in the New Year.

## And finally...

Happy Howlidays from the canine colleagues of the Research Comms team!



**Dexter**



**Leela**



**Manohar**

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:

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