



# Your responsibilities as a MS Society bank signatory

## **Don't allow your group to be a victim of fraud!**

As a bank signatory, you have a responsibility to help prevent fraud by following these 7 points:

### **1. Never sign a blank cheque**

Fraud has occurred at the MS Society in the past because volunteer team members have signed blank cheques. As well as posing a risk to the Society, you could open yourself up to litigation if you sign blank cheques.

There should always be enough signatories on the group bank account so that if someone is sick or on holiday someone else can sign cheques.

### **2. Only sign a cheque or approve a payment where you have documentary evidence to support the payment**

You need to ensure the expense is a genuine group expense by seeing the documentary evidence that supports the payment. If you are approving a payment on Barclays.net, if more convenient, ask for scanned copy of the invoice or expense claim to be emailed to you.

### **3. Ensure the cheque is completed with no blank spaces**

To stop someone from altering the cheque, there shouldn't be any gaps where the amounts appear on the cheque and no gaps where the payee is entered.

### **4. Ensure you have regular volunteer team meetings and also have a copy of latest bank statement available for inspection at the meetings**

This is an important financial control. A common way to commit fraud is to make double payments - e.g., cash is withdrawn from

the bank account twice or expenses are paid twice with different cheque signatories signing the cheques each time.

**5. Avoid signing cheques or approving payments for yourself or relatives**

It's not good practice and it protects you from allegations that these were not legitimate expenses.

**6. Ask yourself when signing a cheque or approving a payment – 'Is this a good use of MS Society funds?'**

You along with the volunteer team have a duty to ensure that funds under your control are used exclusively in pursuit of the MS Society's charitable objects. If your donors, members or the general public knew you were signing this cheque or approving this payment, would they consider it a good use of Society funds?

**7. If you are concerned about what you are being asked to sign or approve then speak to someone about it**

If you are being asked to sign something which you are not happy with, speak to someone about it. You can speak to someone else on your volunteer team or a member of staff.

**Sources of support**

**Group Finance Support team**

[financesupport@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:financesupport@mssociety.org.uk)

Tel : 0208 438 0876