

Key questions - Notes for Editors

What does Revive MS Support actually do?

- We provide therapies, information and support for people affected by Multiple Sclerosis at our MS Centre in Govan;
- We run a network of MS outreach clinics in locations around the West of Scotland;
- We're involved in symptom-specific research activities, primarily around physiotherapy;
- We develop and deliver training programmes for health and social care staff.

What's significant about Multiple sclerosis?

- Scotland has the highest prevalence of MS in the world with approximately 1 in 500 people affected (over 10,500 cases).
- MS is a degenerative neurological disease caused by damage to the protective sheath that surrounds the nerve fibres of the central nervous system. As the central nervous system controls the entire body, this means that almost anything can and does go wrong.
- MS affects people in a range of ways; symptoms often come and go and can last from days to months at a time.
- Over twice as many women are affected as men.
- MS can affect people of any age but is most commonly diagnosed between the ages of 20-45.
- Common symptoms include: double or blurred vision; numbness/tingling in any part of the body; fatigue and dizziness; distortion/loss of sense of touch; limb weakness; spasticity and pain; incontinence; constipation; cognitive impairment.
- The exact causes of MS are unknown but recent research points to a combination of environmental factors and exposure to certain types of virus, with genetic factors possibly playing a part also.

What's so special about Revive MS Support?

- We work only with people affected by MS. As a result, our staff team has substantial expertise and knowledge of this highly complex neurological condition
- Our services are open to everyone affected -i.e. family members and carers as well as the person with the condition
- We take a person-centred approach, encouraging self-management and acknowledging that everyone's experience of life with MS is unique to them and that they should be in control of the support they receive
- Our MS centre acts as a "one-stop shop", offering a wide range of services addressing the main symptoms and side-effects of MS, covering a wide range of health and complementary therapies, exercise classes, support groups and social activities

- We don't discharge service users - they are free to use services when they need them and for as long as they need them
- We work in partnership with NHS and Social Work teams - clients are frequently referred to and from specialists in these organisations
- Clients (service users) regularly tell us how much they appreciate the special atmosphere of our therapy centre and outreach clinics. Perhaps that's down to our commitment to a careful balance of professionalism and informality - in other words, we aim to do everything to the highest standards but don't take ourselves too seriously in the process!
- For many people, coming to our centre or one of the outreach clinics is a rare opportunity to feel normal, to feel understood and to relax and have fun.

Any common misunderstandings to be aware of?

- We are not part of the MS Society; they are a completely separate charity, but we do work to complement each other's activities. The MS Society do publications, campaigning, research, grants, helpline, respite care and local branches. We do hands-on service provision.
- We are not part of the NHS, although we do receive part-funding from local Health Boards
- There is no charge for our services - we invite donations in line with what people feel able to give but no-one is ever turned away because they cannot afford to make a contribution

What kind of track record do you have?

- We are a well-established Scottish Charity, celebrating our 30th anniversary in 2014
- Very low staff turnover
- Mission statement "To be Scotland's leading provider of support for people living with MS, including family and carers, enhancing their well-being and empowering them to live full and productive lives."

How can people be sure donations are put to good use?

- Only c.16p in the £1 is spent on administration costs - the rest goes to frontline services (significantly below average for the sector)
- We do not own major assets or hold substantial reserves, nor do we use commission-earning fundraising consultants
- We are full members of the Fundraising Standards Board, the regulatory body responsible for overseeing charity fundraising