

MS

MUTUAL SUPPORT

ARMED FORCES MULTIPLE
SCLEROSIS SUPPORT GROUP

Newsletter

June 2022



Multiple Sclerosis Society. Registered charity nos. 1139257/
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Wales no. 07451571

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Newsletter Deadline:

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Cover Photo:

One picture can tell many stories

FORWARD

Hello fellow Mutual Supporters

Welcome to the June edition of your newsletter. I've noticed a few of us have had falls, accidents or have been poorly in some way during the last couple of months including myself, I wasn't sure if I would be capable of completing the newsletter this time, but I managed just about with one finger on the wrong hand. So, I hope it is good enough for you and I wish you other casualties a speedy recovery.

We are now half way through this year, and what a half year it has been so far! I'm sure like me you share the hope that we are beginning to see the end of Coronavirus. It has just occurred to me that during the last couple of years hospitals have tightened up their hygiene protocols and I don't recall hearing anything more about MRSA, does that mean it has been defeated? Just a thought!

We've had our first group residential weekend (6-8 May) since 2019, although I wasn't able to go myself, I hear it was a great success.

We are pleased to welcome Anita Rose who has joined the coordinating team to help out with the organising and smooth running of our residential weekends.

We have provisionally booked the next residential meeting for the weekend of 4th to 6th November 2022 at the [Hayes Conference Centre](#), Derbyshire. We will be sending you full details nearer the time by email, on our [Facebook page](#) and in the September edition of the newsletter, so watch this space.

If you come across any interesting organisations, services or individuals that might be willing to provide a guest speaker or evening entertainment at any of our residential meetings please contact our events manager Jill Watson eventsvolunteer@mutual-support.org.uk or call her on **07506 272 916**.

The war in Ukraine continues to rage on which is appalling to say the least. As a result, along with the after effects of BREXIT, the price of oil and the post pandemic national debt to pay off, the UK economy has taken a dive, our politicians tell us this is a global phenomenon, but that will be of no consolation to British families who are now struggling to get by. In previous editions we have brought you money saving tips and ideas, I wonder if we can make that a regular feature? Can you put your thinking caps on and send in any tips and tricks you have found for future newsletters? Email me at: communicationsvolunteer@mutual-support.org.uk and let's hope that we see improvements to these situations asap.

All the best and stay safe.

Bill Land (Editor)



Did you know, we are also on twitter?
Follow us @ twitter.com/mss_msupport

DWP BENEFITS

Due to the members of the Benefits and Support teams standing down and with no volunteers coming forward, Mutual Support can now only signpost members to the appropriate organisations and charities (where applicable). This guide has been created to provide information and advice, giving you links to external websites where you can find information to help support you.

Brief guide to DWP Benefits - [MS Society](#)

The benefits system is complex, and the rules often change, so even if you've looked into it before, it might be worth checking again.

Across the UK, billions of pounds are unclaimed each year - make sure you get what you're entitled to.

Getting started

It's worth noting:

- Some benefits are affected by earnings, other types of income and the amount of savings or capital you (and sometimes your partner) have.
- As benefits can change, it's worthwhile checking regularly to see if you're claiming everything you're entitled to.
- Some benefits are affected by a claimant's age, so check your entitlement when you, your partner or your children turn 16, 18, 60, or 65.
- If your circumstances change, your local Citizens Advice can help check what you're entitled to.
- If the symptoms of your MS get worse it's worth arranging a benefits check, particularly if any progression in your MS looks like it will be long-term.
- Many benefits overlap, so if you receive one there may be others that you can't get.
- It's worth checking how the benefit cap might affect you. It's a limit on the total amount of benefit that most people can get between 16 and State Pension age. The benefits system across the UK can vary, and is currently in the process of being overhauled. Some of the information in this page may be dated by the time you read it, and the eligibility criteria will have changed. Do check the details with the [UK Government benefits website](#) before changing your circumstances or making plans.

Current UK Benefits

[Universal Credit](#)

Some areas of the UK are currently offering Universal Credit to all new applicants, whereas some areas are offering it only to new applicants who are single with no health issues. It is intended to be a single monthly payment to replace a number of other benefits, allowances and tax credits. There is controversy over whether Universal Credit offers an equivalent level of support to disabled people who claim it instead of other benefits, and you should take careful advice before claiming. Universal Credit is organised differently in Northern Ireland, where payments can be fortnightly.

[Personal Independence Payments \(PIP\)](#)

If you are aged under 65, you can apply for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) to help with some of the extra costs caused by living with a long-term condition. Entitlement to PIP is based on an assessment of how your condition affects you. It is not means tested, which means you can receive the payments even if you have a job. PIP replaced [Disability Living Allowance \(DLA\)](#) for new claimants from June 2013. People currently receiving DLA who were aged under 65 on 8 April 2013 will be moved to PIP over the next few years.

[Attendance Allowance](#)

If you are aged 65 or over you can apply for Attendance Allowance to help with some of the extra costs of your condition. Entitlement is based on an assessment of how your condition affects you. Attendance Allowance is not means tested. If you were already getting Disability Living Allowance (DLA) when you turned 65, you will continue to receive that benefit and not be transferred to Attendance Allowance.

[Employment and Support Allowance \(ESA\)](#)

If you are unable to work due to ill health or disability, you can apply for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). You will be asked to attend a Work Capability Assessment to assess the impact of your MS on your ability to work. Based on this you will be allocated to one of two groups:

Work-related activity group - if you are assessed as being capable of work at some time in the future you will need to have regular interviews with an advisor to help you build up your skills and help you find a job

Support group - if you are assessed as having no current prospect of being able to undertake work you will not need to go to interviews, though you can ask to see an advisor.

[Carer's Allowance](#)

If you care for someone for more than 35 hours a week, you may be able to claim Carer's Allowance.

MS Society benefits advice service

Do you have a question about benefits? We can help. Our MS benefits advice service offers free, confidential advice to people affected by MS, supporting people in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

You can get in touch with our MS Benefits Adviser by calling the Helpline on **0800 800 8000** or emailing msbenefitsadvice@dls.org.uk

Sources of further information

There are a number of organisations and resources that can help you find what benefits you can claim, or can assist with filling in forms and support you if need to appeal against decisions.

Turn to page 4:

Continued.....

[Advice Local](#)

Find tailored information for your area regarding benefits advice and support.

[Advice Now](#)

An independent, not-for-profit website that has information across a range of subjects, including claiming benefits.

[Benefits and Work](#)

Site offering information and guides to understanding and claiming benefits, including tips for filling in application forms effectively and a PIP–self test.

[Citizens Advice](#)

Offers free, confidential, impartial and independent advice, including a section on identifying and claiming benefits

[Disability Rights UK](#)

Information on claiming benefits and changes to the welfare system from a charity that campaigns for the rights of people with a disability.

[entitledto](#)

Free benefits calculator to find out what you are entitled to.

[Fightback4Justice](#)

A charity offering specialised expert help with welfare benefits claims. (*NB you pay for their services)

[MoneyHelper](#)

A free and impartial advice service that helps people navigate the benefit system and manage their money.

[NHS Health costs](#)

Although most NHS treatment is free, there are still some costs you might need to pay, for example, to get your prescriptions or to travel to your hospital appointment. Find out how you could get help to pay for these health costs.

[Turn2Us](#)

The Turn2Us website includes [a range of information about benefits](#) and how to claim. It also has an online [benefits calculator](#) and a [directory of providers of advice on benefits and other issues](#).

Disclaimer: The content in this article is provided for general information purposes only and while we may include links to other websites, we are not responsible for the content of any external sites, nor should selection be seen as an endorsement.

This guide was also emailed to all registered members in March 2022. If you didn't receive it and believe you should have, please check your spam or junk mail folder first, if you still can't find it then please email Graham Duncan at membershipvolunteer@mutual-support.org.uk and ask him to add you to the members email distribution list. You can also view or download the guide here, click this link:

[Mutual Support Benefits Advice Guide](#)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Guide has been compiled by Mutual Support using information from the MS Society and the MS Trust.



The MS Wellbeing Hub (Scotland) is a one-stop shop for information and support for you and your family in Scotland. Providing support to manage your physical and mental well-being, we're here to help you live well with MS. These sessions are all virtual and are available free of charge to anyone with MS and their families in Scotland (Some sessions are available elsewhere in the UK).

Browse all of our group activity sessions

Wellbeing Hub Events

Veterans Oyster Card

The Veterans Oyster photocard allows you to travel free on public transport in London. To be eligible for this photocard, you must be:



- Receiving ongoing payments – in your name - under the War Pensions Scheme: this includes widows, widowers and dependants
- Receiving Guaranteed Income Payment under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme – in your name: this includes widows, widowers and dependants

Ongoing payments are awarded to service personnel who have sustained a certain level of physical or psychological injury in the line of duty. If you received a one-off gratuity payment instead of ongoing payments, then you're not eligible for a Veterans Oyster photocard.

- Free travel at anytime on bus, Tube, tram, DLR, London Overground and TFL Rail
- Free travel on most National Rail services in London
- Discounted fares on the [Emirates Air Line](#)
- Discounted fares on [River Services](#)

How to apply?

To apply for The Veterans Oyster photocard, please call Transport For London (TFL) on **0343 222 1234** (call charges may apply) to get an application form.

Complete and return your form with:

- A photocopy of your Awards Notification or annual letter from Veterans UK or the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (dated in the last two years)
- A passport-sized full-face photo including your head and shoulders. Don't wear anything that covers your head unless worn for religious or medical reasons.

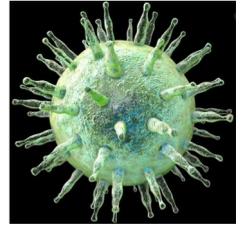
They will not issue a Veterans Oyster photocard if you live in London and are eligible for a 60+ London Oyster photocard or a Freedom Pass.

<https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/free-and-discounted-travel/veterans-oyster-photocard>

Is MS linked to Epstein Barr Virus?

Hi, I'm Derek

I have Primary Progressive MS and was diagnosed in 1996. However, I was able to show the army that I had previously had several occurrences where individual symptoms had caused different outcomes. 1975-1984 (1) Co-ordination, unable to halt on the drill square (as a Sergeant), (2) Balance and muscle weakness, falling down stairs, (3) Appearing drunk, but no drink taken etc. etc. I was awarded a War Pension,



So to the subject matter: I was stationed in Cyprus 1961-1964, when we returned and sorted ourselves out we were given leave which included Christmas. I took a bout for the worse, reason unknown and eventually Mum called our local GP. He called for an ambulance and cited appendicitis, which got me a bed in Mount Vernon Hospital in Northwood, Middx straight away. I was diagnosed with Glandular Fever (Epstein Barr Virus or EBV), but I didn't know that as I didn't wake up for five days. In the meantime, my Battalion had left for Borneo, again, unknown to me, however three months later they discharged me and said I should be fine now, so back to the army I go, they told me to report to the Royal Herbert Hospital in Woolwich, three months later I am told to report to the rear party of my Battalion and do light duties only. After six months, I arrive to be greeted with, "Oh hello, where have you been then"? They were neither expecting me, nor knew any details of my whereabouts, I had been posted to X Platoon, which I later learnt is where anyone posted away would be put (e.g. like those detached to the Army shooting team).

Whilst in Australia (1991) visiting the family, my sister's friend caught MS and was asked if she had ever had Glandular Fever, which she had, and they said that was probably the cause. At this time, I had not been to the GP. Whilst filling in the dreaded forms in 1996 (Civilian) initially, a doctor was sent to assess me and my wife asked him if Glandular Fever had anything to do with MS and he told her 99%, it just could not be proved.

It certainly is not a new theory.

Regards

Derek Hemsley

Ukrainians shout 'God save the Queen' as they fire UK weapons at Russians, minister says

Foreign Office minister James Cleverly said the priority is to help the Ukrainians defend themselves against Russian aggression.

March 2022

IForces | Net



ARMED FORCES DAY

Saturday 25 June 2022

Join the celebrations this summer! Visit our website to browse Armed Forces Day events near you to show your support for the Armed Forces community.

[Find an event](#)



Our Find an Adviser tool allows you to search for sources of information and advice on benefits, housing, jobs, legal issues and other practical help.

It contains details of local, regional and national organisations in all areas of the UK.

Covid-19 pandemic

Many advice organisations have had to adapt their services, sometimes at short notice, because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Face-to-face appointments and Drop-in sessions may not be available, even if mentioned on the profile.

Please check directly with the organisation you want to contact.

[Find an Adviser](#)

[Need help using Find an Adviser?](#)

To register your organisation on Find an Adviser or to update a profile, please contact Advice UK at: ukadvicefinder@adviceuk.org.uk



Supporting Army Families Worldwide

How can we help?



Housing



Employment



Foreign & Commonwealth



Health & Additional



Education & Childcare Needs



Family Life



Finances



Forces Families Jobs

RAF Disability and Carers' Network

We have a vision of a supportive organisation that is inclusive and welcoming to everyone, whatever their circumstance. Our mission is to spread awareness of the experience of those within the RAF and the MOD who live with disabilities, as well as those who care for people with disabilities. We want to change the way that the RAF and the MOD engage with staff regarding disability, as well as altering recruitment and retention practices and policy.

Who We Are

Formed in late 2020, the network has organised & supported many virtual events to date. Our committee includes both uniformed and civilian personnel from all ranks and grades, all of whom have a vested interest due to being affected by various disabilities either directly or indirectly. These vary from mental health to cancer to neuro-diversity and everything in between. Our Advocates are Head of Secretariat and Civilian Workforce Jacqui Toogood and Group Captain Chris Melville. They both play a central role in advocating and advancing the views and opinions of the group to the wider organisation.

What We Can Offer

We are holding further events over the next year in order to increase awareness of disabilities within the RAF community so that line managers and teams can ensure those with a disability or caring for family members with disabilities can be supported appropriately. Most of our events are on Microsoft Teams to encourage maximum attendance and ensure it's accessible for the majority, with no need to travel. We can act as a 'signposting' and peer support agency for those who want to find out more information about specific disabilities and we routinely push out monthly newsletters & useful links to articles on our MOD Teams page and via Facebook. If you would like to join us on Facebook please look for '[RAF Disability and Carers Network](#)' and send a follow up email to Air-DisabilityNetwork@mod.gov.uk if you do not have a current MOD email address or you have an MOD email account and would like to join us on Teams, please send a message to our email address and we will add you.

I also run my own blog, which I've been neglecting lately (I tend to use it to rant when having a flare up, but have been pretty good with the amantadine and amitriptyline I'm on lately!) Feel free to look on there and share any content if you think it may be of interest: <https://msandmeonline.wordpress.com/> My latest posts are centred around indoor rowing achievements in spite of MS so may be a bit boring and I won't be offended if you didn't think it was worth sharing.

I am looking at doing a 50km row later on in the year and it's probably about time I raised money for Mutual Support and the MS Society. I will be doing it either at Northwood Gym or RAF High Wycombe Gym (I live at one and work at another) at a date TBC between June and August.



Regards
Stacey Denyer (Denny)


**ROYAL
AIR FORCE**
Disability Network



Welcome To our new members

We've only had three new members joining Mutual Support since our March newsletter – a very warm welcome to them all, two from Wales, and one from the South West.

One couple have a Senior Service background whilst our singleton is a member of the Army and is still in service. Greetings to all three of you; our Team encourages you all to share the information that you have experienced in your military careers and also your new MS journey and hope that any questions you have can be answered by the other participants of the friendliest MS support group in the world. The new members are:

Tracey and Alex Lewis

Shana Priddle

Members with Facebook accounts might like to know that Mutual Support has its own Facebook page. If you have not yet joined us there and would like to, please search for Mutual-Support, or click on this link: [Mutual Support](#). Apply to join and I will grant you access right away. It's a good place to ask questions and support each other. Come and chat with Tracey and Shana and the rest of the group.

If your dependent children are over the age of 18 (unless still in full time education) could you give me a message to let me know, so I can remove them from our membership list. Our benefactors request information about who they are funding.

Also, if you've changed your telephone number, postal address or email address, do keep me updated so we can keep you apprised of upcoming events. The easiest and quickest way is to email me: membershipvolunteer@mutual-support.org.uk

Welcome once again to all of you and to all the **1149** members, which includes those with MS, their partners and dependent children. There would be another five but one family head decided to leave our group in May.

Graham Duncan

Membership Volunteer



Explore our publications

Our wide range of free publications and information sheets cover everything from diagnosis and symptoms to living with MS and treatments. Available to download or order printed copies.

[VIEW ALL PUBLICATIONS](#)

Jim Watson – London Marathon

Last year I ran the Yorkshire Marathon to raise funds for Mutual Support and raised the sum of £960. The Mutual Support committee do a fantastic job in organising the 2 respite weekends every year, which is just one way they use the funds I have raised over the years. The Yorkshire Marathon was my first race at that distance as I usually run half marathons. However, I love a challenge so despite being a year older, having bad ankles and having had some symptoms of long Covid, I have entered and been given a place in the London Marathon on 2nd Oct 2022.



I like to take the Tyson Fury approach to my training, which means I don't run a lot unless I am in training for an event. Therefore, I am now in the process of trying to increase the number of runs I complete per week and slowly increase the mileage. The serious training will start on 12 June, when I start a 16 week programme. I will once again be fundraising and have set the target at £2000. To achieve this I will be organising cake sales, raffles, car boot sales etc.

The first fundraising event that I want to publicise is a sweepstake for members. The way this will work is that you will be able to buy a square, which has a time that you think I will finish in (as below).

4hrs 1min

Joe Bloggs

4hrs 2min

John Smith

4hrs 3min

Mrs Smith

Each square will cost £5 and you can buy a maximum of 4 squares. The winner will be the person who guesses the closest time. The times squares will start at 3hrs and finish to 5hrs. Don't ask me what time I expect to finish in as I don't know. I am very excited to be running London Marathon for the first time and will undoubtedly get swept up in the emotion of the event and hit the wall. The Sweepstake will be publicised on the Mutual Support Facebook page and on my JustGiving page as soon as I have worked out how to do it. My JustGiving website is:

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/james-watson59



Cost of Living support



HM Treasury

Last week the Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak made an important [announcement](#) in the House of Commons outlining the financial support measures being made available to British households to help with the current cost of living crisis. Click on the policy paper link below to find out exactly what this will mean to you:

Policy paper

**Cost of living support factsheet:
26 May 2022**



Fran is running the London Marathon

I thought I should give you all a quick update on how I'm getting on with my London Marathon training and fundraising so far.

As a 59 year old my progress is not FAST but it is coming along, I am built for comfort not speed!!!! I have been out pounding the streets three times a week for the last two months, with one long and two shorter jogs/plods each week. Another record today with my long jog, 11.26 miles in 2 hours 8 minutes and 16 seconds so I feel on track to achieve my goal of completing it in five hours.

Fundraising is also going really well with a total of £821.86 raised so far so only £1178.14 to reach the target of £2000 set by the MS Society. I have done three lunch events at the Huntingdon MS Therapy Centre, two with soup and one with toasties, sarnies, cakes and refreshments gaining a total profit of £188.20 and I have another one planned adding Hot Cross Buns to the menu.

As I am using the local MS Therapy Centre and have their audience I have given half of the profits to them so that's £94.10 to my fundraising total.

I am currently compiling a letter to send to Stations that my husband Dean served at as an RAF police dog handler during his 24 and a half years service to see if any of them would donate.

Many of our family and friends have already offered donations which we are eternally grateful for. My training has already started and oh do I have muscles in places I never knew existed! But as they say practice makes perfect!!! That just leaves me to say 'Roll on 2nd October 2022' and the 3rd October when it will be all over.

So for now thank you all soooo very much in advance for your support. The details of my fundraising page is as follows:

www.justgiving.com/Fran-Hinton

Hope this finds you all well.

Thank you

Fran Hinton

Donating through JustGiving is simple, fast and totally secure. Your details are safe with JustGiving - they'll never sell them on or send unwanted emails. Once you donate, they'll send your money directly to the charity. So it's the most efficient way to donate - saving time and cutting costs for the charity.



Be sure to visit our Mutual-Support Facebook group for the latest news and views.

Last year, The Open University supported more than 27,000 disabled students. And, since the Disabled Veterans' Scholarships Fund was established, more than 200 additional disabled students have been able to access higher education with us.

If you've been injured in, or due to, military service, you could be funded to complete a full Open University qualification. The full eligibility criteria are listed in the [scholarship terms and conditions](#).

We offer 50 scholarships every year, and all undergraduate and postgraduate modules and qualifications are eligible. You'll have your fees waived for a maximum of 120 credits per seasonal academic year, up to a maximum of 360 credits, which is equivalent to a full honours degree.

Applicants will also be offered further specialist careers and disability support, alongside free study.

Our Careers and Employability services can offer:

- individual careers consultation and support
- group forums and webinars
links with employers and specialist organisations, including possible visits, internships (virtual and physical) and placements.

If your application is successful, you'll be able to request specialist equipment and disability support to help with your studies. This is in addition to any support provided via a Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA).

Additional support could include:

- support and guidance on the DSA application process
- information and signposting about the support available during your studies
- alternative format module materials, such as audio or comb-bound versions of module books
- loaned equipment, such as digital voice recorders and magnifiers, and specialist software (e.g. text-to-speech software).

Additional support will be looked at on a case-by-case basis, depending on your individual requirements.

We're now accepting applications for the 2022/23 academic year. To apply, you'll need to download the full [scholarship terms and conditions](#), as well as the [scholarship application form](#).

Once completed, email your application and supporting evidence to our Student Fees team. You'll find their contact details on the first page of the application form.

Applications close midnight 8th July 2022. If you're successful, we'll email you by 22nd July 2022 to confirm. We'll also contact you soon afterwards to make sure you're ready to study and to help you choose your course, so don't worry if you're not sure what you want to study.

Need more information, or need help completing your application? Our advisors are here to assist, don't hesitate to contact us on **0300 303 5303**.



VETERANS' GATEWAY
The first point of contact for veterans seeking support

Help from the Veterans' Gateway

It's hard to open up to those who don't understand. But we do, and we'll support you every step of the way.

Just ask us for help.

LIVE CHAT

[Fill in the form to connect with an advisor in our contact centre](#)



Call 0808 802 1212



Chat now



Text 81212



Email us



The Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2022

In 2022, Her Majesty The Queen will become the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee after 70 years of service.

Get involved in celebrating Her Majesty's historic reign in the run up to the Platinum Jubilee Central Weekend which takes place from **2nd to 5th June**.

The Spring Bank Holiday - usually held at the end of May - has been moved to Thursday 2nd June. It's followed by an extra bank holiday on Friday 3rd June.

[Home](#)

[Get Involved](#)

[Events](#)

Don't forget the Queen's birthday parade (Trooping The Colour) this year will be on **2nd June 2022** find out more: <https://qbp.army.mod.uk/queensbirthdayparade/>

Mutual Support would like to thank these charities and everybody else who supports us; your donations enable us to continue the good work we do, thank you!

 THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT FUND TRUST



The Hobson Charity



Disabled Facilities Grant

You could get a grant from your council if you're disabled and need to make changes to your home, for example to:

- widen doors and install ramps
- improve access to rooms and facilities - e.g. stairlifts or a downstairs bathroom
- provide a heating system suitable for your needs
- adapt heating or lighting controls to make them easier to use

****A Disabled Facilities Grant won't affect any benefits you get.****

What you'll get

How much you get depends on your:

- household income
- household savings over £6,000

In England you could get up to £30,000. In Wales you could get up to £36,000. In Scotland Disabled Facilities Grants are not available - find out about [support for equipment and adaptations](#).

****Disabled children under 18 can get a grant without their parents' income being taken into account. [Contact your local council](#) for more information.****

 **You might not get any grant if you start work on your property before the council approves your application.**

How you'll be paid

You'll be paid either:

- in instalments - as the work progresses
- in full - when the work is finished

The council may pay the contractor directly or give you a cheque to pass on to them. They'll agree this with you when they approve your application.

When you'll be paid

You'll be paid either:

- when the council is happy with the finished work
- when you give the council the invoice, demand or receipt for payment from the contractor

****Normally, if you (or a relative) does the work the council will only accept invoices for materials or services you've bought.****

Eligibility

You or someone living in your property must be disabled. Either you or the person you're applying for must:

- Own the property or be a tenant.
- Intend to live in the property during the grant period (which is currently 5 years)

You can also apply for a grant if you're a landlord and have a disabled tenant.

The council needs to be happy that the work is:

- Necessary and appropriate to meet the disabled person's needs.
- Reasonable and can be done - depending on the age and condition of the property.

Planning and building regulations approval.

You need to apply separately for any [planning permission](#) or building regulations approval.

- The council may ask you to employ a qualified architect or surveyor to plan and oversee the work. If you get a grant, you can use it towards the cost of their fees.

How to apply:

[Apply through your local council.](#)

The council may send an occupational therapist round to see you. They'll check your circumstances and see what changes you need.

Appeals:

You can appeal to your council if you're unhappy with their decision.

If you appeal and you're still not happy, you can complain to the [Local Government Ombudsman](#).

[View a printable version of the whole guide](#)

Find your local council:

[Find the website for your local council.](#)



Advice

[Benefits](#) [Work](#) [Debt and money](#) [Consumer](#) [Family](#)
[Housing](#) [Law and courts](#) [Immigration](#) [Health](#)

Popular advice: [Grants and benefits to help you pay your energy bills](#) [If you're struggling with living costs](#) [Check if you can pay less council tax](#) [Check if you can increase your income](#) [How to read your smart electricity meter](#) [Check what benefits you can get](#) [Claim compensation if your flight's delayed or cancelled](#)

[Adviser resources](#) [Education resources](#) [A to Z of advice](#)



Newly Diagnosed

Being newly or recently diagnosed with MS (Multiple Sclerosis) can feel overwhelming. The first thing to remember is there's a whole community of people here to help.

Whether you're looking for someone to talk to, information on what happens next or how to tell people about your MS, we're here for you.

I've just been diagnosed with MS - what happens next?

What happens after your diagnosis depends on a few things:

- How active your MS is at the moment. Are there any symptoms that are troublesome and could be treated?
- What support your MS team can offer and how soon.
- What you'd like to happen. There are choices you can make about how you manage MS and your environment.

MS is unpredictable, so it's often hard for people with MS to get the best from health care services. The NHS is the world's largest publicly funded health service. Knowing how it works can make a big difference to the care you get.

[Find out more about health care and MS](#)

Where can I go for more support?

Give us a ring [Find out more about the MS Helpline](#)

Chat online on our forum [Join the conversation](#)

Get Social [Find us on Facebook](#)

Who's who in the NHS? [Meet MS health professionals](#)

Appointments [Find out what to expect from your appointments](#)

Talking to friends and family [Read about telling your family you have MS](#)

Questions to ask your Neurologist [Download our Talking about Treatments booklet](#)

MS Active Together [Find a workout to suit you](#)

Diet and MS [Explore ways to eat well with MS](#)

MS bloggers share their diagnosis stories [Read blogs from people who know MS](#)

Browse our publications [Search all of our booklets and factsheets](#)



Questions about MS?

[0808 800 8000](tel:08088008000)

A bit more from



Raise your voice for people
with MS
#speakupforms

Make sure people with MS can access FES

We need your help to ensure that Functional Electrical Stimulation (FES) is consistently funded and prescribed for people with MS across the UK.

FES is a treatment used to stimulate movement in weakened or paralysed muscles. It has been proven to improve the lives of many people with MS, making walking easier and reducing the effects of foot drop.

This allows people to more easily take part in daily living and social activities as well as feeling more confident and independent.

Despite this, FES is not being funded consistently across the UK.

Will you help by writing to your local health body to ask if they are providing this potentially life-changing therapy?

[Write to your local health body →](#)

We need to ensure that local health bodies understand the benefits of FES. That's why we're holding a webinar for healthcare professionals later this month. When you send your email, we've included details of the webinar so your local health body can sign up to attend.

[Write to your local health body now →](#)

Thank you for your time and support.

Natasha
Campaigns team
MS Society



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FIGHTING WITH PRIDE

Fighting With Pride supports the health and wellbeing of **LGBT+Veterans**, service personnel and their families – in particular

those most impacted by the ban on LGBT+ personnel serving in the Armed Forces prior to January 2000.

The Journey Home | Making Connections | Building Bridges

We are proud of the achievements of our serving LGBT+ personnel. They serve in every part of the Armed Forces and are supported at every level of command.

In stark contrast, and despite the passing of over 20 years since the 'gay ban' was finally lifted, no attempt has been made to support the recovery of the thousands of LGBT+ service personnel dismissed or forced from service prior to 2000.

We want to connect service charities and organisations to those LGBT+ veterans who have been left behind.

About Us

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Get Ahead

To receive notifications about the Get Ahead Newsletter/magazine please sign up [here](#)

Email: getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

Get Ahead is a toolkit and resource co-produced with and for disabled young people. The newsletter and magazine will help you navigate the wide range of information and resources that are available in post-16 education, training, and work. It is a platform where young people can have their voice heard and share the many talents they have.



Falklands 40 at the Arboretum

Veterans of the Falklands campaign and their families, bereaved family members, and civilians who supported the task force are invited to attend the RBL event marking the anniversary of the conflict at the National Memorial Arboretum on Tuesday 14th June 2022. The commemorations at the Armed Forces Memorial will focus on military and civilian involvement in the campaign, veterans' stories, plus the act of Remembrance.

The Arboretum and the Falklands 40:

Sketches from the frontline exhibition will be open to the general public on 14th June. Advance booking is recommended to guarantee entry. Find out more at:

thenma.org.uk/falklands40

A Great Residential Weekend

Well, it's been a while but what a fabulous weekend we had at the Hayes, Swanwick. The Events Team, [Jill Watson](#) and [Silke Land](#) worked hard all weekend and should be commended for their efforts. Admin volunteer, [Julie Russell](#) ran around organising and shepherding the members, doing a sterling job.

The speakers were all well chosen and very welcome to listen to. As a Carer I attended the Carer's session, which was so popular that it over ran. The Derbyshire Carers representative, Emma, was pretty pleased with the interaction from the group.

The excellent quiz was run by (fairly) new members [Fiona Dangerfield](#) and [Rachel Harris](#), who also sold the raffle tickets. Silke and Jill together with Fiona rushed hither and yon when the tickets were chosen and the prizes awarded. It was Rachel and Fiona's first trip to a Mutual Support weekend and it was the honour of Angie and myself to host them (not that they needed spoon feeding at all).

We had an army cadet brass band, which was excellent for entertainment before the quiz was held. In short all those attending had a lovely weekend, with plenty of banter and laughter. Everyone left the venue with a broad smile on our faces.

If I can make a recommendation, it would be for more members to put their head above the parapet and see if they could in some way to assist - either on the team or on the actual day - make hotel recommendations, or suggest suitable speakers or entertainment.

Watch this space for news about the next weekend and put it in your calendars!

Yours

Graham Duncan



NHS Carers' assessments

If you care for someone, you can have an assessment to see what might help make your life easier. This is called a carer's assessment.

It might recommend things like:

- someone to take over caring so you can take a break
- gym membership and exercise classes to relieve stress
- help with taxi fares if you don't drive
- help with gardening and housework
- training how to lift safely
- putting you in touch with local support groups so you have people to talk to
- advice about benefits for carers

A carer's assessment is free and anyone over 18 can ask for one.

It's separate from the needs assessment the person you care for might have, but you can ask to have them both done at the same time.

How to get a carer's assessment

Contact adult social services at your local council and ask for a carer's assessment. If you're a parent carer or a child, contact the children with disabilities department. You can call or do it online.

[Find your local social services team \(England only\)](#)

➔ How to tell if you're a carer

You're a carer if you're looking after someone regularly because they're ill, elderly or disabled – including family members.

Carers help with:

- washing, dressing or taking medicines
- getting out and about and travelling to doctors' appointments
- shopping, cleaning and laundry
- paying bills and organising finances

They can also give emotional support by:

- sitting with someone to keep them company
- watching over someone if they can't be left alone

All of these count as being a carer.

To find out everything about Carers' Assessments and a lot of other useful information, click on the NHS logo below:



SAMARITANS

How we can help

Contact a Samaritan: If you need someone to talk to, we listen. We won't judge or tell you what to do.

Call us any time, day or night: Whatever you're going through, you can call us any time, from any phone for **FREE**. Call: **116 123**

Write us an email: Sometimes writing down your thoughts and feelings can help you understand them better. jo@samaritans.org response time: 24 Hrs.

Write to us: Sometimes writing down your thoughts and feelings can help you better understand them: **Freepost SAMARITANS LETTERS**

Chat with us online: Talk to one of our listening volunteers using our new web chat service. For now, we're running the web chat at a small scale, meaning it's not available to everyone yet. [CHAT NOW](#)

Self-help APP: Keep track of how you're feeling, and get recommendations for things you can do to help yourself cope, feel better and stay safe in a crisis: [Launch the app](#)



THE FORCES' MOTORSPORT CHARITY
MISSION MOTORSPORT
RACE | RETRAIN | RECOVER

OUR MISSION:
RACE RETRAIN RECOVER

MISSION MOTORSPORT, THE FORCES' MOTORSPORT CHARITY AIDS IN THE RECOVERY AND REHABILITATION OF THOSE AFFECTED BY MILITARY OPERATIONS BY PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH MOTORSPORT AND THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Whether you are a service leaver, veteran or family member needing a little help or you would like to volunteer, there are a variety of ways in which you can get involved.

CONTACT US



MUTUAL SUPPORT COORDINATING TEAM
(as at June 2022)

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