



AUSTRALIA

# MS Australia seeks commitments for the 2019 Federal Election

Find out the 9 important ways our politicians can help people affected by MS.





**MS is the most commonly acquired neurological disease in young adults** around the world with over 2.3 million people affected.

**25,600 Australians live with MS** and over 7.6 million Australians know or have a loved one with this potentially debilitating disease.



Diagnosis of MS is mostly between the ages of **20 and 40 years.**



On average **more than 10** Australians are diagnosed with MS **every week.**



**Three quarters** of all people with MS are women.



**There is no known cause or single cure, but a cure could well be within reach.**

There is now an opportunity for this generation of political leaders and decision-makers to provide improved support for the management and care of MS, through systemic improvements to the health care, disability care and aged care sectors.

## **MS Australia seeks election commitments from all sides of politics to implement the three enclosed Roadmaps:**

- 1.** Prevent and ultimately **defeat Multiple Sclerosis** in Australia through a significant investment in research funding for better treatments, prevention and ultimately a cure for MS.
- 2.** Improve support for people with **MS living with disability.**
- 3.** Support people **ageing with MS**

# Roadmap 1. Defeat Multiple Sclerosis in Australia

Our Roadmap to *Defeat Multiple Sclerosis in Australia*, co-developed by MS Australia and MS Research Australia, was launched on World MS Day, 30 May 2018, by the Health Minister, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, and received bi-partisan support from both the Health Minister and the Hon Catherine King, Shadow Minister for Health. **Having received commitment from the two major parties** for the three pillars of this Roadmap, we are now developing an associated Implementation Plan.

	What needs to be done	BI-PARTISAN COMMITMENT RECEIVED
<b>1. Stop MS and find a cure</b>	Invest in and expand promising signature areas of best quality, competitive and impactful research to find the cure for MS.	✓
<b>2. Prevent MS</b>	Addressing smoking, Vitamin D deficiency, obesity and glandular fever will prevent 60% of MS cases. If we also develop a vaccine against the Epstein Barr Virus (EBV), we could prevent 90% of MS cases.	✓
<b>3. Improve the management of MS</b>	Ensure all people with MS have access to the best possible models of care from onset of symptoms, through diagnosis and ongoing treatment and management including monitoring of efficacy.	✓

We seek commitments from our politicians to:

# Roadmap 2. Support People with MS Living with Disability

	What needs to be done	BI-PARTISAN COMMITMENT RECEIVED
<b>4. Fully address NDIS issues</b>	Address the many issues that have surfaced during the implementation phase of the NDIS.	—
<b>5. Improve employment options and workplace flexibility</b>	Ensure the Disability Employment Services program maximises choice for people with MS.	—
<b>6. Stop young people entering residential aged care</b>	Investment in dramatically improved accessible accommodation options, funding to provide an appropriate level of care within the NDIS, integration of the NDIS with the housing and health sectors, and investment in an appropriately trained disability support workforce.	—

# Roadmap 3. Support People Ageing with MS

	What needs to be done	BI-PARTISAN COMMITMENT RECEIVED
<b>7. Maintain the momentum of aged care reforms</b>	The recommendations of recent aged care sector reviews need to be implemented and the current reform process needs to be progressed as a matter of urgency, whilst the work of the Royal Commission into the aged care sector is undertaken.	—
<b>8. Help people to stay at home as long as possible</b>	People are adequately supported to stay at home for as long as possible through accurate assessment of functional impairments, making appropriate recommendations for their care and support and investing in additional, new home care packages.	—
<b>9. Equal access to assistive technology</b>	State and Federal Governments must come together to develop a sustainable solution to the equitable provision of assistive technology to all Australians.	—

# ““

## The voices of people with MS living with disability

*"I have been waiting on Centrelink since April last year, rang them 5 times to find out how it is going, they said they don't know what the hold up is and then on the 5th time told me they haven't processed it."*

*"The job capacity assessor (for a disability pension) could not understand the complexity of all my medical conditions so she put them as temporary."*

*"I've got severe fatigue and pain that's so crippling, but not I'm not disabled enough for an NDIS package! I'm flat out getting out of bed to look after my two little kids and run a household."*

*"Yep fighting for my son with MS, they tell me he is not disabled enough."*

*"Even with our current anti-discrimination laws, the minute an employer hears you've got MS there is a look that comes over their faces "Oh, this job is not going to happen."*

*"I am an emotional wreck, waking at 1.30 am thinking of how we will cope when we need services into the future, especially when my husband Bob gets to end of life."*

*"My wife Susan has had MS since 1962, is not eligible for the NDIS as she was over 65 when it was introduced. We are not eligible for any support as My Age Care is means-tested."*

*"I have a 67 year old client who is happy to be living at home; he has very high needs and his wife is his fulltime carer; but it is unlikely that his needs will be met by the Aged Care system."*

## The voices of people ageing with MS

*"In the past decade we have had to pay ourselves for various aids, most notably 4 mobility scooters. Being over 65 we've had to absorb the cost of home modifications to suit Jeff's disability now and into the future."*

*"A lot of carers are younger people looking after a parent, just when they might be able to have some freedom and a life of their own."*

# ””



Advocacy  
Research  
Awareness

# Neurological Alliance Australia



**MS Australia**

Level 19 Northpoint Building,  
100 Miller St  
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2060  
T: 02 8413 7977  
F: 02 8413 7988  
E: [info@msaustralia.org.au](mailto:info@msaustralia.org.au)  
W: [www.msaustralia.org.au](http://www.msaustralia.org.au)

