



PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION 2025-26

SUMMARY

Art by [Circular Blooms](#), an art project by Deanna, a person living with MS and a member of MS Australia's Lived Experience Expert Panel. Deanna creates digital art using MRI scans to challenge misconceptions about MS.



BETTER SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH MS

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is the most acquired neurological disease in younger adults around the world with over 2.8 million people affected. More than 33,300 Australians live with MS and over 7.6 million Australians know someone or have a loved one with this potentially debilitating disease.



Three times as many women have MS than men. Symptoms vary between people and can come and go; they can include severe pain, walking difficulties, debilitating fatigue, partial blindness and thinking and memory problems.

The current cost of living crisis has the potential to escalate into a significant health crisis for many people grappling with chronic diseases like MS, exerting long-term repercussions on their disease progression and overall well-being.

Australians experiencing financial hardship, while also contending with MS, find themselves not only struggling to afford necessities but also forced to make difficult choices regarding the management of their health condition. Many are compelled to postpone or forego necessary medical care.



For some, MS is characterised by periods of relapse and remission, while for others it has a progressive pattern of disability. MS robs people of quality of life, primarily driven by the impact of MS on pain, independent living, mental health and relationships.



MS Australia's 2025-26 Pre-Budget submission highlights key funding priorities to improve the lives of Australians living with MS. MS Australia advocates for strategic investments in research, healthcare, disability, and aged care to address the growing personal and economic impact of MS.

Our submission has **four asks** that will improve the lives of people living with MS and reduce the economic impact of MS on the Australian health, disability, social services and aged care systems, including:

1. MORE FUNDING FOR MS RESEARCH AND DATA

There is a critical gap in funding for research to prevent people from developing MS and shorten diagnosis time.



- **\$8 million** over five years to fund a National MS Biobank to support Australian studies towards early detection and prevention of MS.
- **\$300 million** over ten years for a Neurological and Neuromuscular Health Research Mission within the MRFF.
- **\$550,000** over four years to build on an AIHW scoping study to identify current neurological data gaps and opportunities.

2. IMPROVED ACCESS TO MS NURSES

The number of MS nurses is declining and one-third of Australians living with MS do not have access to life-changing MS nurse care and have consistently worse health outcomes.



- **\$6.5 million** to employ an additional 65 MS Nurses to improve access for the people living with MS.
- **\$1 million** to develop an MS Nurses National Strategy to strengthen and expand the MS nursing workforce.
- **\$3 million** over four years to fund an MS Nurses pilot project.
- **\$120,000** to develop an MS Nursing microcredential and provide scholarships for nurses undertaking study.

3. BETTER SUPPORTS FOR PEOPLE WITH MS LIVING WITH DISABILITY

People with MS living with disability need improved access to support from the NDIS.



- Fund a flexible, participant-focused NDIS with sustainable pricing for participants.
- Recruit, train, upskill and maintain a sufficient NDIA workforce.
- Attract, train, upskill and maintain a high-quality disability workforce.
- Improve housing and living supports.
- Develop a single, nationally consistent assistive technology program.
- Increase the rates of the Disability Support Pension, New Start Allowance and JobSeeker Payments.
- Implement the recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission.

4. INCREASED FUNDING FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH MS IN AGED CARE

Older people living with MS are overlooked in the Aged Care system which negatively affects their wellbeing and quality of life.



- Increase funding under the Support at Home program for older people with disability.