



Short Circuit

People with MS Victoria

**Conference 10am 3rd May, 2025,
At the Nerve Centre,
54 Railway Rd Blackburn**



**Share your thoughts
and ideas on research
about MS**

Deakin University's Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition (IPAN) is a world-leading research institute specialising in healthy lifestyle approaches to prevent and manage chronic conditions.

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Ameera Lee

Person with MS & Paralympic Archer represented Australia in Paris, 2024..

"Be creative, be inspired, Never give up"

**Art Exhibition
'Rekindled'**

**Researchers from Deakin University,
and Curtin University, and an MS
Dietician;**

"Nutrition and Multiple Sclerosis"

How can diet impact the risk, onset and progression of MS?

We cordially invite you to the Art Exhibition titled 'Rekindled' Showcasing works created by people with Multiple Sclerosis and other Neurological Conditions.

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Presentation by Homeable

Automate your home and make it smart!

**Discrimination against
people with disabilities
is illegal in Australia**

**For tickets contact; annerigg06@gmail.com
Mobile: 0400 214 260**

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People with disabilities should be treated with the same respect and access to services as any other person. It's against the law, under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, (Page 3)





President's report

Autumn 2025

We know that MS is a condition which affects sufferers in many ways; physical, emotional and mental. Moreover our ability to cope with the disease may also be influenced by medical and non-medical treatments and one's own resilience, and ambition. These in turn can be influenced by our admiring or being inspired by the achievements of others with afflictions similar to ours. The achievements of our Olympic athletes are a good example. 2024 was an Olympic and Paralympic year. Emily Petricola, cycling for Australia, overcame an MS flare to smash her own world record and successfully retain her 3,000m individual pursuit gold medal.

The Paralympics are a modern initiative. In 1944, the British Government, opened a spinal injuries centre at Stoke Mandeville Hospital to assist people injured during WWII. Over time, rehabilitation sport evolved into competitive sport, and in 1948, on the day of the Opening Ceremony of the London Olympics, the hospital organised a competition for wheelchair athletes named the Stoke Mandeville Games, a milestone in Paralympic history. They involved 16 injured servicemen and women who took part in archery. Four years later, coinciding with the 1952 Olympics, Dutch ex-servicemen joined in and the International Stoke Mandeville Games were founded. These became the Paralympic Games, which first took place in Rome in 1960, featuring 400 athletes from 23 countries.

Betty Cuthbert, (1938–2017), is one of Australia's best known athletes. She was the world's first athlete to win gold in 4 different Olympic track events. 100 metres, 200 metres and 4 x 100 metres relay in Melbourne 1956 and 400 metres in Tokyo 1964. Over her career, she set 16 world records. Tragically, she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1969. She became a dedicated advocate for MS. A tireless campaigner for national awareness of the disease she played a big role in the creation of MS Research Australia and recognised as having had an incredible impact on Australia's recognition and understanding of MS and inspiring many Australians.

Carol Cooke, AM; is a Canadian-born Australian cyclist, swimmer and rower, who has won a total of 3 Paralympic gold medals and 5 World championships. She moved to Australia in 1994 and was diagnosed with MS in 1998. As a swimmer she won five medals

(four gold and a silver) as a Disabled Athlete at the 2005 World Masters Games. In 2006, at the age of 44, Carol changed to rowing, in which she narrowly missed out on being part of the 2008 Beijing Paralympics. She then switched to cycling, at which she won a gold medal at the 2012 London Paralympics, two gold medals at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Paralympics and a silver medal at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics. Carol has written several books and is an accomplished public speaker advocating for people with MS.

Emily Petricola, OAM; is currently, the most prominent Australian sportswoman with MS. Emily is a Paralympic cyclist who was diagnosed with MS at the age of 27 and has competed at the highest level despite her condition. She is a world record holder, gold medallist at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics and again at the 2024 Paris Paralympics. She is also a multiple gold medallist and world record holder at the World Track Paracycling Championships. Emily uses her reputation and public profile to raise awareness about the "invisible" nature of MS.

Ameera Lee; is one of Australia's newer international Paralympians with MS. She is a single mother with a son – Huthaifa. She took up para-archery in 2016 after being encouraged by her fifteen-year-old son. She shoots from a wheelchair. Her first international competition was the 2018 Para-archery European Circuit in Olbia, Italy. She narrowly missed out on being selected for the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics. At the 2024 Australia Para National Archery Championships, she won the gold medal in the Compound Women's Open, and at the 2024 Paris Paralympics, she and her partner, made the quarter-final of the Mixed Team Compound competition

Many others; of course Australia has many other successful Paralympian athletes, both male and female all of whom I honour and congratulate. I have focussed solely on those who have or had MS because I know from my own experience what sort of challenges they faced, and I marvel at and am inspired by their achievements.

I hope that you (readers) are also inspired to read what some of your fellow people with MS have achieved.

Nigel Caswell, OAM, President

Discrimination against people with disabilities is illegal in Australia

People with disabilities should be treated with the same respect and access to services as any other person. It's against the law, under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, to discriminate against you, by treating you unfairly or bullying you, because of a disability.

There are many types of disability, including physical impairment, mental health disorders and learning difficulties. It's also against the law to discriminate against you because of your disability equipment or assistance animal, or to harass you because of your disability.

Discrimination occurs when a person with a disability is treated less favourably than a person without the disability in the same or similar circumstances. For example, it would be direct discrimination if a nightclub or restaurant refused a person entry because they were blind and had a guide dog. It is also discrimination to apply a rule or policy that is the same for everyone but has an unfair effect on people with a particular disability. (This is called 'indirect discrimination'). For example, it may be indirect discrimination if the only way to enter a public building is by a set of stairs, because people with disabilities who use wheelchairs would be unable to enter the building.

A person with a disability also has a right to the same employment opportunities as a person without a disability. If a person with a disability can do the main activities or 'inherent requirements' of a job, then they should have an equal opportunity to do that job.

Harassment because of a disability, such as insults or humiliating jokes, is also against the law if it happens in a place of employment or education, or from people providing goods and services. Harassment occurs when someone makes you feel intimidated, insulted or humiliated.

If you think you are being discriminated against the first thing you should do, if you feel capable, is take it up with the person doing the discrimination. They may not be aware they are doing it. And it is always a good idea to try and fix a problem at the source if possible.

If you experience discrimination, harassment or victimisation and you can't fix it locally then you can contact the

- Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission on tel; 1300 292 153 or Email at enquiries@veohrc.vic.gov.au.
- Or for complaints about NDIS providers contact the NDIS quality and safeguards commission at www.ndiscommission.gov.au;
- Or for complaints about disability workers contact the Disability Worker Commission at www.vdwc.vic.gov.au/.

For more information, the Disability Discrimination Legal Service Inc (DDLS) provides information, education and training about legal rights and responsibilities under disability discrimination laws for people with disabilities and the general community. DDLS may be contacted at tel; 9654 8644 or by email at info@ddls.org.au.

Nigel Caswell.



Share your thoughts and ideas on research about MS

Join the IPAN Consumer Network!

Deakin University's Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition (IPAN) is a world-leading research institute specialising in healthy lifestyle approaches to prevent and manage chronic conditions and improve wellbeing. We place a high value on consumers having a say about our research.

Our Consumer Network is a group of people from all ages and backgrounds who help us with all aspects of our research – including designing, developing and delivering research that can be used in the real world.

We are inviting people living with multiple sclerosis (MS) and immediate family members of people living with MS, to join our network and share their thoughts and ideas on research about MS. Some examples of this research include exploring the role of diet in the progression of MS, the development of a nutrition education program for people with MS and exploring whether the consumption of ultra-processed foods influences the onset of MS.

Our Consumer Network members tell us that the benefits of their involvement go beyond research outcomes. They report that they have built their own skills and knowledge through their involvement, and that they feel they have made a genuine contribution to research projects.

To get involved or find out more visit the IPAN website or contact the IPAN Consumer Network Coordinator: jean.crewe@deakin.edu.au.

DO YOU HAVE MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS?

ARE YOU A CARER OR IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER OF SOMEONE WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS?

BECOME A LIVED EXPERIENCE ADVISORY REPRESENTATIVE

For more information, scan the QR code on the right:

To become a lived experience advisory representative, contact Connie at s225083108@deakin.edu.au or on 0487 333 663



Involvement in art can help you manage your MS

Art therapy can help people with multiple sclerosis (MS) manage anxiety, depression, and fatigue. It can also improve self-esteem, hope, and social support. A pilot study published in 2014 in *The Journal of Neuroscience Nursing* looked at a four-week creative arts program with 14 women with MS in attendance. At the end of the program, there was a “statistically significant improvement on self-esteem hope scales.” And the study concluded the program also had a positive influence on self-esteem, participants self-efficacy to function and control their MS.”

Why is involvement in art good for people with MS?

Art can be incredibly beneficial for people with multiple sclerosis (MS) in several ways:

1. **Stress relief:** Engaging in art can help divert thoughts and focus on a proactive activity, which is useful for relieving stress. The slow, repetitive movements of painting, drawing, or sculpting can physically calm the body.
2. **Lessen Depression and Isolation:** MS symptoms can interfere with mobility and energy levels, leading to social isolation and depression. Participation in art activities, especially in group settings, can provide a sense of community and bonding.
3. **With verbal problems:** People with MS may find it challenging to express their symptoms and emotions verbally. Art provides a visual medium to communicate difficult thoughts and feelings, which can lead to more effective treatment and less suffering.
4. **Empowerment and Self-efficacy:** Creating art can boost self-esteem and self-efficacy, helping individuals feel, and therefore, be more capable of meeting challenges and achieving goals. It also offers a sense of accomplishment and hope.
5. **Cognitive and Motor Skills:** Art therapy can promote cognitive and motor skills, which are often affected by MS. The practice of creating art can help improve these.

The value of artistic expression has long been recognised by MS Plus. Renowned artist, Artur Lyczba, has been working at the Nerve Centre since 1997. His classes, held every Tuesday, attract a loyal group of committed artists. They come for the support, the mentoring and the camaraderie .

The outcome of this artistic activity is outstanding. Some of the works produced by the Nerve Centre Art Group are being showcased in an exhibition beginning the first week of May this year. The exhibition is being held in the Nerve Centre, Railway Rd, Blackburn, to coincide with the People living with MS conference.

Come along to the exhibition and maybe think about joining an art group.

Dallas Isaacs



Automate your home and make it smart!

How frustrating is it to have to rely on someone else, because you have limited mobility, just to turn the lights on or off or put the blinds down as the sun is shining in your eyes.

One of the best things we did was to automate the lights, blinds and ceiling fan in the bedroom. No more relying on someone else. With a "Hey Google" the blinds go up and down, the lights and bedside lamp can be switched on and off and the ceiling fan can be turned on when it gets too hot, you can control the speed too.



It was such a simple process just retrofitting what we already had. We found voice controls worked best for us, but you can also control everything with buttons and remotes. The TV can also be controlled with your voice as well as a remote using a Fire TV stick.

Everyone's needs are different so having a chat with Liam from 'Homeable' and our Occupational Therapist (OT) helped us decide what we needed and how it would work best for us. There are so many options available that can make a difference in your day-day life and help promote independence in your own home.

'Homeable's' stated goal is "to help make everyone feel safe, independent and comfortable where it matters most... The home!"

Liam from 'Homeable' <https://homeable.com.au> will be presenting at the PwMS Conference in May. So come along and see how technology can benefit you.

Alison Reece & Roger Reece

To enjoy the benefits, newsletters, latest research, annual conference with great speakers

Become a PwMS member,

<https://pwmsv.org.au/membership/>

Art Exhibition

'Rekindled'



Leon Waldhuter - Water Colour on Paper



Jennifer Bonato - Acrylic on Paper



Dianne Chenery- Acrylic on Paper

We cordially invite you to the Art
Exhibition titled
'Rekindled'

Showcasing works created by
people with Multiple Sclerosis and other
Neurological Conditions.

To be officially opened by
Keith Wolahan, Member of the
Australian House of Representatives.

When: From May 3rd – May 30th
Opening Reception, Saturday, May 3rd; 3pm – 5pm
Where: MS Plus, 54 Railway Rd, Blackburn VIC 3130
Parking: At rear of Solwood Lane
and onsite.
Some works are available for purchase.
Cash or Card.

**PEOPLE
—WITH—
MS**



**Only
\$10
LUNCH
INCLUDED**

People with MS Victoria 2025 conference

Saturday 3rd May, 2025, 10am
At the Nerve Centre, 54 Railway Rd Blackburn

“Be creative, be inspired, Never give up”

Overcoming the challenge of MS
to represent Australia in the Paralympics

Ameera Lee

Person with MS & Paralympic Archer represented Australia in Paris, 2024..

“Nutrition and Multiple Sclerosis”

How can diet impact the risk, onset and progression of MS?

Researchers from Deakin University, and Curtin University, will discuss how certain diets, foods, or nutrients might be linked to developing MS or might influence disease progression

Automate your home and make it smart!

How frustrating is it to have to rely on someone else, (because of limited mobility), just to turn the lights on or pull the blinds down!

Presentation by Homeable

Homeable is a Melbourne based NDIS provider that creates personalised smart home technology solutions to increase independence and home safety.

**Only
\$10**

For tickets contact Anne; annerigg06@gmail.com,
Mobile: 0400 214 260
*Limited assistance with transport and accommodation costs
Available on application*

**Only
\$10**

**Note the Conference Day will finish with
The opening of an exhibition of artworks by people with MS**