

The MSWA logo is a white rectangle with the letters 'MSWA' in a bold, sans-serif font, set against a red circular background that partially overlaps the top left of the main image.

MSWA

Life not limits

A photograph of two women, Cheryl and Melissa, smiling. Cheryl is an older woman with short grey hair, wearing glasses and a yellow floral patterned top over a black turtleneck. She is seated in a wheelchair. Melissa is a younger woman with dark hair, wearing a red polo shirt with the MSWA logo on the chest. She is standing behind Cheryl, resting her hands on the wheelchair. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a blue and white striped fence.

Cheryl and Melissa celebrate Albany's new water wheelchairs. Read more on page 12.

Bulletin

Your MSWA Magazine

Djilba | Spring 2026

mswa.org.au

Inside

- MSWA x West Coast Eagles AFLW team up
- Water wheelchairs arrive in Albany
- The Life not Limits Grant is back
- Connect celebrations



The MSWA Mega
Home Lottery house.



Life not limits

Wilson Services Centre
29 Parkhill Way, Wilson 6107
9365 4888

Contact us

If you would like to comment on anything you read in this *Bulletin*, please email bulletin@mswa.org.au
For general feedback or complaints, please contact feedback@mswa.org.au

Editorial Working Group

Montana Moran, Tammie Chu, Belinda Sherry,
Emma Clarke and Eloise Husbands.

Contributors

Thank you to all our MSWA contributors from across our organisation, who take the time to share their knowledge and expertise for the benefit of our readers.

If there is a topic you would like to see included in our next edition, please email bulletin@mswa.org.au with your suggestion.

Client Engagement department

Our experienced teams will provide you with personalised support throughout your service journey with MSWA. Our trained staff will help you get the most out of your selected services.

For more information, please contact 9365 4888

Our services include:

- Community Support & In-home Care
- Connect (formerly known as Outreach)
- Counselling and Wellbeing
- Dietetics
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Social Welfare
- Speech Pathology
- Support Coordination

Nursing support

Our Neurological Liaison Nurses are usually the first point of contact after the neurologist's diagnosis.
Community Nurse: 9365 4888
Monday to Friday (7.00am - 7.00pm)

MSWA Connect

If you live in Perth, Rockingham, Butler, Bunbury or Albany, and are interested in a trial to experience the Connect community, get in touch via community.engagement@mswa.org.au

Employment Support

The MSWA Employment Support Service is the only specialist employment service for people living with multiple sclerosis and other neurological conditions in Western Australia. Our team can help you to stay in your current job or find employment in the open labour market.

Please call: 1300 865 209

See all our supports and services at mswa.org.au

Switch to Bulletin online today!

Help us reduce our environmental impact by going digital and connect with more engaging content.
Email us at marketing@mswa.org.au to sign up.

Welcome to Bulletin Djilba 2026 edition

Djilba is a transitional season, marked by a mix of cool, clear days and warmer, windier days. During this period, animals can be seen out and about with their own offsprings. Woodland birds are nest bound and protective, hence you may spot swooping behaviour from birds like magpies, willy wag tails and wattle birds.¹

Contents

From our CEO Melanie Kiely.....	4
Changes to services and charges	6
An update from your Client Committee.....	7
MSWA and West Coast Eagles AFLW team up	8
Life not Limits Grant: Turning ambition into reality.....	10
Making a splash: New pool wheelchairs for Albany ...	12
Fifty millionaires made, will you be next?	13
Introducing... Connect!	14
Footprints of the mind - Cordi's story	16
My New Zealand travel tips	17
Peripheral Neuropathy: Understanding the condition and living well	18
A sneak peek of Shenton Park!	19
Sharon's back in the pool	20
The action of no-action and the power of the pause ..	22
Finding your rhythm: Music for social and emotional development	23
Regaining independence: Greg's journey	24
A lasting difference: Miles' story	26
What's on in the community space.....	27
Another incredible year for Step Up	28
Our community fundraisers	30
Accommodation updates	32
Save the date	33
News in brief	34



Visit to the West Coast Eagles.

Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, MSWA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the many lands and language groups of Western Australia, and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

¹ Reference: Edith Cowan University, Cultural Leadership:
Noongar Six Seasons.



From our CEO *Melanie Kiely*

It seems like just yesterday that I wrote the address for our last edition of Bulletin. Thinking of what has happened, I realise winter has come and gone and now we can finally start to look forward to all that the warmer months have to bring!

Firstly, this year's MSWA Step Up was fun and heartwarming, and I not only saw many in our community taking part but also first responders from the police, fire department and riot squads facing the challenge! The event was a launchpad for our partnership with the 2027 World Police and Fire Games (WPF), one of the world's largest multi-sport events. This special collaboration will see the MSWA Step Up move from its usual date to March 2027! Read more on page 28.

We have also launched the rebrand of our beloved service Connect (formerly Outreach), where we'll continue to expand our community connections. It was great joining in on the launch party fun and taking part in the art and quizzes at our Butler and Rockingham Connect groups. I hear the other Centres were also buzzing with excitement. See all the fun on page 14.

On a more challenging front, in my last address I've mentioned that change is inevitable. The Minister for Disability Hon Mark Butler MP's address to the Press Club highlights that change is on the horizon for the NDIS, and we have already seen its impact on plan reviews and funding decisions. Furthermore, we empathise with the uncertainty and anxiety raised from recent news of the possibility of Ocrevus (ocrelizumab) and Kesimpta (ofatumumab) withdrawing from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

Well done to all of you that added your voice on the PBS matter as it resulted in a sensible outcome where both disease modifying treatments will stay on the PBS. The final decision is still to come in December and we will work closely with our governing body, MS Australia, to ensure equitable access of treatments for all. **This shows the power of community and how important your voice is, which we will call on as future changes arise with the NDIS.**



Launching our partnership with the West Coast Eagles AFLW.



Welcoming Senator Fatima Payman for a tour of our Wilson Services Centre.

Later in this Bulletin Chief Client Service Delivery Officer Simon Jennings, will speak more about the changes that are coming and the channels we will use to gather your input and feedback. You will all get more information as to if and how these changes will affect you. These are changes that are happening across the sector, but it doesn't make them easy, so we will be doing as much as we can to smooth the impact.

All I can promise, on behalf of MSWA, is that we will navigate these changes with you. Tough decisions will need to be made and how we implement some of these will be critical. Only you, via our Client Committee and other channels of input can guide us on how best to do this.

MSWA remains in a better position than most organisations because of our amazing community that trusts and supports us from purchasing lottery tickets, donating to our cause and contributing to our incredible neuro community.



Joining in on the Connect celebrations!

We will weather these changes together, and will keep learning, improving and working with you to do better. Please reach out to give your feedback or if you have any questions as we work through it. Regardless, we will all continue to embrace the positive and keep doing the good work.

Lastly, the MSWA Shenton Park High-Support Accommodation is almost complete and will be opening before the end of the year. Some of the residents had the opportunity to tour the site, and it was so heartwarming to see their faces light up as they explored the space that was built with their needs in mind. We are so excited to welcome our new residents and share the space. Read more on page 19.

I hope you all stay well and look forward to the new 'shoots of spring' which will bring the right changes and better outcomes and quality of life for you all!

Changes to services and charges

As I reflect on my time since joining MSWA three years ago, I am acutely aware that there has been a lot of change. In reality, ever since the beginning of the NDIS, MSWA has been constantly changing to adapt to the scheme. So, for many of you, this constant churn has been going on for an even longer period of time; sometimes the changes forced by the NDIS have been for the better and sometimes, no matter how hard we try, there has been an unavoidable impact.

We again find ourselves facing more change in the NDIS, with increasing staff costs and an ever more challenging fundraising environment, putting yet more onus on the need to do things differently. The latest changes are unavoidable, however our goal (as always) is to advocate for the unique challenges faced by people with a neurological condition and ensure, as changes are made by the Federal Government, they are done with a full understanding of what you deal with on a day-to-day basis.

My personal goal in every job I do is to leave the organisation in a better place than when I started. I see my role as a custodian for the purpose of MSWA. This basic principle guides every decision made, and we want to ensure MSWA is here and supporting you long into the future.

So, try as we might to keep things the same, there are going to be some hard decisions to be made over the coming weeks and months to ensure we can preserve our purpose; to empower people living with neurological conditions to live their best lives, while also adapting to changes to the scheme.

I wrote to you recently outlining the types of changes we are working through, and we will continue to speak with you directly, through your Client Liaison Coordinator (CLC), as we have more detail. As these changes happen, I hope you can understand they are necessary and are being made to protect the long-term future of MSWA.

Simon Jennings
MSWA Chief Client Service Delivery Officer

An update from your Client Committee

Here are some insights into what the MSWA Client Committee has been up to over the past year.

Firstly, we have undergone some member changes within the Committee. Gavin Harper (our inaugural Co-Chair), Jodi Russell and Maria Papadimitriou have departed after dedicating a combined seven years of commitment. A big thank you to them for their great contributions during their tenure and for sharing their opinions, information and ideas.

As a result, we have welcomed new members to the Committee – Rafael Ascencio, Robyn Pilcher, Stephen Ashburn and Sophie O'Donoghue. All the new members bring unique perspectives from their personal experiences and valuable insights into MSWA, as they access a range of funding types, come from different cultural backgrounds and span from being newly diagnosed to having lived with their neurological condition for decades. We look forward to what their fresh perspectives can contribute to our Committee.

The previous work of the Committee resulted in a range of projects being identified that could be worked on separately by smaller subgroups. These groups include nominated Committee members, relevant MSWA staff as well as other Clients who had expressed interest in being involved in these co-design processes.

For example, some areas the subgroups have been working on are:

- ✓ The transition to accessing domestic assistance and meal preparation supports from external providers. This change was necessary to ensure better value for Clients and increased viability of MSWA services, and was co-designed to reduce the impact of what was a difficult change for some members of our community. **(Complete)**
- ✓ The revision of MSWA Service Agreements for NDIS Clients, to ensure clarity, transparency and increased accessibility of this document for Clients. **(Complete)**
- ✓ Revising the MSWA Rights and Responsibilities documentation, again with a focus on clarity, transparency and accessibility. **(Complete)**
- 🔄 Testing the need for a Connect (formerly Outreach) Service in the Vasse region based on Client feedback. **(In progress)**
- 🔄 Therapy services arrangements, costing and communications. This project looks at opportunities to provide services to Clients more efficiently and sustainably, and how MSWA can effectively communicate available options to Clients. **(In progress)**
- 🔄 The introduction of a hardship process, to ensure fundraising money can go to members of our community who need it most in a fair and equitable process. **(In progress)**

We have had two Committee meetings this year with members able to join either in-person or online. During the meetings, we discussed a range of topics including progress of the working groups, how support can be provided to those living in South Australia and the Northern Territory and changes happening in the broader disability sector and to the NDIS.

If you're interested in being part of a working group, we welcome expressions of interest anytime.

Find out more



If you have any comments or feedback, please approach any one of us. We'd love to hear from you!

We look forward to continuing to add a Client's perspective into MSWA's planning and projects.

Ellen-May Eaton
MSWA Client Committee
Co-Chair



MSWA CEO Melanie,
Client Shannan and
WCE CEO Don Pyke.



(L-R) West Coast Eagles Coach Daisy Pearce, West Coast Eagles Player Ella Roberts,
Melanie Kiely and Don Pyke.

MSWA and West Coast Eagles AFLW team up

MSWA has announced an official partnership with the West Coast Eagles AFLW team, uniting two organisations with a community led focus.

The partnership is looking to open new pathways for people living with neurological conditions to feel supported within their communities and recognise the powerful role sport plays in bringing people together.

Research shows women account for around three in every four MS diagnoses in Australia, making the partnership with the AFLW program particularly significant as both organisations champion opportunities for women on and off the field.

"The AFLW Eagles' community program has already established a strong presence in regional and remote Western Australia, with the team's work in the East Pilbara reflecting a shared commitment to reaching communities where access to services and support can be genuinely difficult to come by," said Melanie Kiely, MSWA CEO.

West Coast Eagles CEO Don Pyke said the partnership was built on shared values and a desire to make a positive impact across the community.

"Our AFLW team is passionate about using football as a way to connect with and inspire communities, and there is clear alignment with MSWA's commitment to ensuring people feel supported, connected and included, regardless of where they live," Don shared.

"We look forward to working closely with MSWA throughout the season and creating meaningful experiences for their clients, our members and the broader WA community."

The partnership has also resonated with MSWA Client and big Eagles fan, Shannan Ferraro, who has been supported by MSWA for over 20 years.

"It's exciting to see MSWA and the AFLW joining forces, bringing together two important parts of my life," Shannan said.

MSWA visits Newman

MSWA's new partnership with the West Coast Eagles is providing an accessible and culturally safe pathway to engage with remote Aboriginal communities through the shared connection of community sport.

Participation in the 2026 Warlawuuru Footy enabled MSWA to connect with families and young people in Newman and the wider Pilbara, while developing a deeper understanding of community needs, priorities and barriers to neurological healthcare. The partnership highlighted the value of sport as a trusted avenue for raising health awareness, building relationships and informing MSWA's approach in regions where specialist services and community knowledge is still emerging.

Building on these early connections, the next phase of the partnership will focus on translating community insights into sustainable, community-led outcomes. MSWA will work alongside Aboriginal health providers, community organisations and local elders to increase neurological health awareness and education, strengthen referral pathways, and explore opportunities for screening through existing health and community services. Through the WCE partnership, MSWA will continue our presence

at major community events, explore telehealth and outreach service models, and co-design culturally relevant resources with Niyiyaparli and Martu communities. This ongoing work will help improve access to information, early diagnosis, service navigation and support for people living in remote Western Australia.

Julia Tran

MSWA Research Coordinator



Team members Julia Tran and Emily Ace visit Newman.

At MSWA, I've found a real sense of community and support through attending Connect, so I'm excited to see what comes next and the opportunities this partnership could create across WA.

The AFLW season commenced on the 6 August, and this exciting collaboration will create new opportunities for our community to experience the AFLW season like never before. Throughout the season, we're giving away tickets to selected home games, giving you the chance to cheer on the Eagles from the stands and enjoy a great day out with family and friends!

Together with the West Coast Eagles AFLW, we look forward to creating meaningful experiences for our Clients and the broader neuro community.

Acil Tayba

MSWA Partnerships Manager

Enter Here



Life not Limits Grant: *Turning ambition into reality*

The recipients of the inaugural Life not Limits Grant in memory of Ros Harman, have been laying the groundwork over the past year to turn their ambitions into reality. Excitingly, the next Grant round opens this October. If you have an interest, passion or idea you dream of bringing to life, this Grant could be for you!

Lauren finding her groove again

Dance has always been a big part of Lauren Edward's life, from when she first stepped foot on the dance floor at five years old to experiencing some of her first symptoms with MS.

Now, with the support of the Grant, she has taken her passion to the next level by opening her own line dancing company Western Star Linedancing. Based south of the river, Lauren hosts weekly classes across Kelmscott, Byford and Queens Park; with sessions ranging from absolute beginners to intermediates.

Through this Grant, I've found a good group of friends which has provided me with a sense of belonging and community.



Lauren's line dancing class.

Andrew's debut solo art exhibition

Through a collection of bold, expressive and deeply personal artworks, viewers are invited on an emotive journey through life in the footsteps of someone with Young Onset Parkinson's Disease (YOPD). With Andrew Grero's diagnosis strongly influencing the passion and direction of his craft in recent years, this exhibition supports his mission to inspire others and reframe the idea of what it means to live and thrive with Parkinson's.



Q&A with aspiring writer Sam

Sam Zinner is working on her debut novel. After completing the first part of an intensive writing course, she always wanted to continue with the second part and sharpen her skills even further. With the support of the Grant, she is one step closer to bringing her story to life.

Tell us a little bit about yourself

I'm Sam, a retired actor and filmmaker, currently working in finance. My days are mostly filled with medical appointments, work, my husband and my puppy!

Could you share your journey with MS?

In 2018, I was living in Sydney and experienced months of pins and needles in my arms, along with what I now know is Lhermitte's. By mid-2019, I was having frequent blinding headaches and eventually felt I needed to give up and come home to my mum! Two days after driving into Perth, I lost sight in one eye which led to an MRI and diagnosis within six weeks. The 'blinding' part of the headaches had actually been optic neuritis. It was a huge relief to have the diagnosis.

What do you love most about storytelling?

I like to say that I'm just a lifelong storyteller. I've been a voracious reader since the age of four and always loved films and how stories connect us. Opening our minds to seeing the world from a different perspective than ours; or making us feel seen in ways we might not feel in real life. I also think some books find you at the exact time in your life that they're meant to. I'd love to be that for someone else one day.

Tell us about the novel you're working on?

It's a young adult fiction novel. It actually started with a dream about a decade ago. I've always had bonkers dreams that I usually remember. I originally thought it would make a feature film script, but I'm happy it's going to be a novel instead. There is just so much more you can capture in a book than on a screen.

How does writing make you feel?

Like I didn't have to give everything up. There's also a lot more freedom in making your own art versus always waiting to be part of someone else's.

What kind of impact would this Grant have on your life and writing?

It gave me permission to follow through. When you have a chronic illness and a job, life is a constant balancing act and your creative pursuits are constantly being shoved to the bottom of the pile. I completed an initial draft of the

novel in 2022 but never made my way back to finalising it. The Grant has allowed me to get out of my own way and I'm already seeing the benefits on the page.

What do you hope to achieve after you complete the course?

The best possible second draft for my book, ready for the next steps on the road to hopefully publishing it!

Is there anything else?

I'm so grateful to MSWA for the support I've received in the last seven years, and especially for this opportunity as a recipient of the Life not Limits Grant. My sincerest thanks to Ros Harman for truly embodying, "Whoever said MS has to stop you from doing anything?"

Could you be our next recipient?

Whether there's a passion you'd like to take to the next level, a course you'd like to enrol in, or to continue doing what you love, now is your chance to turn it into reality.

The next round of the Life not Limits Grant opens this October.

Find out more



*Tammie Chu &
Vanessa Paredes*
MSWA Marketing team

Making a splash: New pool wheelchairs for Albany



MSWA team with Client Cheryl, Scott Leary MLA Member for Albany and Albany Leisure and Aquatic Centre Aquatics Supervisor Hayden Parker.

There's good news making waves at the Albany Leisure and Aquatic Centre.

Two brand-new bariatric aquatic wheelchairs were officially unveiled on 1 July, to allow people living with disability to enjoy everything the pool has to offer – from a leisurely swim to hydrotherapy and rehabilitation services.

The upgrade was driven by advocacy from MSWA Community Engagement Coordinator Ronnie Mills and MSWA Client Cheryl Crabtree, who lives with MS.

Cheryl highlighted concerns about the aquatic centre's ageing wheelchairs during a visit from Scott Leary MLA, Member for Albany.

Every day, people in our community face accessibility challenges – stairs without ramps, narrow door frames, inaccessible bathrooms – and I wasn't prepared to let the local pool become another inaccessible space.

That conversation sparked action. Thanks to a joint funding effort between the City of Albany, MSWA and Scott Leary MLA, the two new wheelchairs are now available for the wider disability community to enjoy.

Albany Leisure and Aquatic Centre Aquatics Supervisor Hayden Parker said the upgrade will help ensure everyone feels more welcome.

"Pools have always been a place for communities to come together, and whether you use swimming for recreation or essential rehabilitation, these new

wheelchairs make sure the aquatic centre remains safe and accessible for people of all abilities," he said.

Adding to the feel-good story, the aquatic centre is also home to the annual MSWA Swim Albany, a seven-hour relay that raises funds to support West Aussies living with neurological conditions.

In a full-circle moment, money raised by event participants has helped make the new wheelchairs a reality. The upgrade will also make it easier for more people to take part in future MSWA Swim Albany events.

Client Cheryl said everyone who has supported MSWA Swim Albany should be proud of what they've helped achieve.

"This upgrade should make MSWA Swim Albany participants and MSWA supporters very proud. It's wonderful to see money raised locally being invested back into the community that worked so hard to raise it," she said.

The new wheelchairs were officially celebrated with an unveiling ceremony and morning tea at the aquatic centre, where staff, supporters and community members gathered to mark another positive step towards making Albany's aquatic facilities welcoming and accessible for everyone.

The exciting announcement even earned a front-page feature on The Albany Advertiser's The Extra, along with a feature in The West Australian.

This is proof that when a community works together, great things really can happen!

Vanessa Paredes
MSWA Marketing Officer

Lotteries

Fifty millionaires made, will you be next?

The MSWA Mega Home Lottery is back – and after making 50 millionaires, you could be next! Every ticket purchased helps support West Aussies living with neurological conditions, turning limits into lives changed, with more than \$50 million contributed towards neurological research.

\$4.1M Grand Prize package

For the first time, the latest Mega Home is located in the highly desirable South Perth, combining sleek contemporary design with practicality. Crafted with premium finishes and exceptional attention to detail, this stunning \$4M home comes complete with all the mod cons and thoughtfully designed spaces for effortless modern living. Plus, not only will the Grand Prize winner win this amazing home, but they will also win a huge \$100,000 in cash!

Hear from our past winners

With 50 millionaires made, we thought we'd speak to a few of them to share their first reactions and how the wins have changed their lives.

Lea, Grand Prize winner \$3.6M Shenton Park home and \$250,000 cash shared, "I was just overwhelmed, it's so surprising, you always buy a ticket hoping there might be an off chance you might win a blender and then I was just overwhelmed to hear that we won this amazing house."

As well, Briana, Super Early Bird Winner \$1.3M Mount Lawley apartment shared how the win changed her life.

It let me be carefree, because we were mortgage free at 25. My partner and I were a year into living in our first home – a new build – when we won. We were watching the interest rates go up and up, wondering how we could afford it all, and then this win happened!



You may have also spotted a new face in our campaign, meet the star Fifty-Mil!

Meet Fifty-Mil

Heyaaaa! I'm Fifty-Mil.

Now you're probably wondering about my name. I'm named after the 50 millionaires already made in the MSWA Mega Home Lottery. That's right, 50 MILLIONAIRES!

I'm the hype man for these millionaires and maybe for you too. Because this lottery, we're making millionaires 51 and 52. That's two shots at a life-changing prize, two chances to join a very exclusive millionaires club!

Your impact

While 50 lucky winners have become millionaires throughout the history of MSWA Mega Home Lottery, the impact extends far beyond the prize draw. Together, our supporters have helped contribute more than \$50 million towards neurological research, driving breakthroughs that are improving diagnosis, treatment and quality of life for thousands of West Aussies living with neurological conditions.

Dana Alamsyah, MSWA Head of Lotteries shares, "Fifty-Mil gives us a fun, memorable way to welcome new supporters into our story while celebrating the incredible milestone of 50 millionaires created. We couldn't be more excited to bring him to life."

With a 1 in 19 chance of winning from over 10,900 prizes, there's something for everyone.

Buy tickets now!



Introducing... Connect!

Since day one, our neuro community has always described Outreach as a place where they go to have fun, have a good laugh and create new friendships. At the heart of it all, Outreach has always been a place for connection. Naturally, its new name, Connect perfectly encapsulates this service that brings together our Clients, staff and wider community.

In June, we celebrated the new name in style with special themed events across each hub as each Connect was also bestowed with its own signature colour! And to top it all off, special t-shirts were prepared for each Client with their own unique identifier on the back.

This massive milestone would not have been possible without our incredible team. A big thank you to everyone who worked behind the scenes to make the recent events so much fun and welcome this new chapter in style!

If you would like to get in on the fun, make sure to fill out an expression of interest.

Our doors are always open, so come and Connect anytime!



Melissa Coombs
MSWA Community
Engagement Lead

Check out all the celebrations!

Butler

Mission accomplished! To celebrate the name reveal, Butler embarked on a special space voyage to uncharted land. From the moment our astronauts arrived, the atmosphere was filled with curiosity and teamwork - accompanied by space themed treats prepared by our Chef, Paul. We all worked together to solve a mystery activity and celebrated with a delicious brunch.

Thank you to all who took part; the celebration was out of this world.



Beechboro

The Beechboro community gathered around a campfire and toasted marshmallows to a new chapter for Connect! The camp brunch gave us the opportunity to enjoy time together, while the camping-themed photo booth captured plenty of smiles and wonderful memories throughout the day. Here's to a new name and new adventures!



Albany

Sun, sand, a new name and some fun - Albany celebrated by hosting a beach party, very fitting for our southernmost group! To mark the day, the group decorated the new Connect sign, played games and had brunch, all while watching the FIFA World Cup. When asked what words the group uses to describe Connect, they wrote: fun, companionship, chatting, meeting friends and connection - and we couldn't agree more!



Rockingham

The Rockingham group chose Above & Beyond as the launch party theme as they take Clients on a journey every day. We love the name Connect because it reflects the heart of what we do - bringing people together through community and meaningful relationships.



Bunbury

Bunbury went back to the 80s and welcomed the name Connect in true retro style! We celebrated with a fun-filled throwback party full of colour, vibes and plenty of 80's energy. From the outfits to the atmosphere, it was a fantastic way to mark this exciting new chapter and bring everyone together for a totally rad celebration.



Wilson

Mamma Mia! Wilson celebrated by bringing the energy of Greece all the way to Perth. The week was celebrated through dancing, singing, games and delicious Greek food which brought everyone together - perfectly encapsulating the new name, Connect. Opa!





Footprints of the mind – Cordi's story

Moving to Australia was a lifelong dream. Growing up in rural Austria, surrounded by the hills that inspired *The Sound of Music*, I always felt a pull to travel and see the world. In 2010, that dream became reality when my South African husband, our two sons and I packed up our lives and moved across continents from England to Perth. It was exhilarating, overwhelming and though I didn't know it then, the beginning of a very different journey.

In early 2012, everything shifted. After developing optic neuritis, an eye specialist suggested I see a neurologist, as it could be a sign of multiple sclerosis. Hearing those words made my world fall apart. The shock, denial, fear and the terrifying images of the worse possible scenarios all came rushing in. I imagined limitations and a life I no longer recognise.

But as the emotional storm settled, something inside me shifted. I began reading stories of others living with MS – stories of strength, adaptation and hope.

I learned that around 10% of people with MS live with what many would call a 'normal life'.

*I realised 'Normal is what the masses do.'
I've never been one to follow the crowd,
so why start now?*

A year later, I discovered Clinical Reflexology and read about its ability to support physical, emotional, mental and spiritual balance. Shortly after a new reflexology course opened just minutes away from my home. I took it as a sign and enrolled immediately.

That decision changed everything.

Since then, I've completed a Diploma of Reflexology and expanded my skills to include Reiki, Indian Head Massage and Emmett Technique. My business, Footprints of the Mind, has grown into a space where I can support others while honouring my own health needs. MS means I must pace myself and limit how many clients I see each day, but running my own practice gives me the flexibility to do what I love without compromising my wellbeing.

Over the years, I've had the privilege of working with children, adults, seniors of all abilities. I've also taken my practice into workplaces for wellness days and spent a decade volunteering with Solaris Cancer Care.

In September 2025, I also had the opportunity to volunteer at MSWA Connect (formerly Outreach) for World Reflexology week. As someone living with MS, I understand the emotional and physical challenges that come with the diagnosis. I also know the strength, resilience and hope that can grow from it. I am mentally and physically strong enough to support others on their path to better health.

My story is not one of limitation, it's one of transformation. MS may be part of my life, but it does not define it. Instead, it has guided me toward purpose, compassion and a career that allows me to help others find balance and healing in their own lives.

Cordi Blood
MSWA Client

Interested in reflexology services
with Cordi? Scan the QR code.



Cordi running a reflexology session.



My New Zealand travel tips

Before recently travelling to New Zealand, I was quite concerned about managing my fatigue and the overstimulation that can come with overseas travel. Airports can be particularly challenging, with crowds, bright lights, noise and long queues.

Having previously told Clients about the **Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard**, I decided to get one for myself and see if it made a difference. I can honestly say it was a very positive experience with a great outcome.

Travelling from Perth to Auckland with Air New Zealand, airport staff immediately recognised the lanyard and directed me through an accessible shortcut at border security. My partner, Steve, was also able to accompany me. This reduced stress significantly and helped me feel safe and supported. Air New Zealand staff also understood the lanyard and allowed me to board early. I had arranged wheelchair assistance as a backup, and it was reassuring to know support was available if needed.

When we arrived in Auckland, Air New Zealand staff met us and assisted us through border security and baggage collection was much faster than it would have been had we managed it ourselves.

It took a lot of pressure off and made the start of our holiday much more enjoyable.

We also booked accessible accommodation and obtained a temporary New Zealand mobility parking permit. If you already have an Australian ACROD permit, applying is straightforward. Both made a significant difference in managing fatigue and avoiding unnecessary exertion!

Throughout our travels around both the North and South Islands, I wore the Sunflower Lanyard regularly. Some people did not know what it meant and asked about it, but once I explained, they were generally very willing to help.

Airport staff in Queenstown were extremely helpful when I became overwhelmed by the bright, noisy environment and assisted me to a quieter area while I waited for my partner.

Our return journey with Air New Zealand was excellent, and their staff consistently demonstrated a strong understanding of hidden disabilities.

Working in Customer Service at MSWA, I have often recommended the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard to Clients and having now experienced it firsthand, I can confidently say that if you are considering overseas travel, I highly recommend getting one!

If concerns about fatigue or accessibility have been holding you back from travelling, there are now some fantastic supports available that can make a real difference.

More information



Tracey Hockey
MSWA Client Service Coordinator

Peripheral Neuropathy: *Understanding the condition and living well*

Peripheral neuropathy is a common neurological condition that affects millions of people worldwide.

It occurs when nerves outside the brain and spinal cord—the peripheral nervous system (PNS) become damaged or diseased. These nerves are responsible for carrying messages between the brain, spinal cord, muscles, skin and internal organs. When communication is disrupted, a wide range of symptoms can develop, from mild tingling in the feet to significant pain, weakness, and balance problems.

What is Peripheral Neuropathy?

The term *neuropathy* refers to any functional disturbance or pathological change affecting the peripheral nervous system. Peripheral neuropathy develops when damage occurs to either the nerve axon (the nerve fibre) or the protective myelin sheath that surrounds it. Unlike nerves in the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord), peripheral nerves retain some ability to regenerate after injury. However, recovery depends on the cause, severity and duration of nerve damage.

Peripheral neuropathy may affect a single nerve (mononeuropathy), such as carpal tunnel syndrome, or multiple nerves (polyneuropathy), which is the most common form.

Symptoms can range from mild tingling and numbness to significant pain, weakness, and disability. Although neuropathy may not always be reversible, many people are able to live active, fulfilling lives through early diagnosis, management of underlying causes, regular exercise, good nutrition, foot care, fall prevention and support from a multidisciplinary healthcare team.

There are many conditions that can damage peripheral nerves, including diabetes, vitamin deficiencies (such as in Vitamin B12, Vitamin B1 and Folate), autoimmune disease, trauma and compression, kidney diseases, alcohol misuse, infections and more.



Living well

Living well with peripheral neuropathy is not simply about managing symptoms, it is about maintaining independence and focusing on what can be achieved. While there is currently no cure for many forms of peripheral neuropathy, there is much that can be done to reduce symptoms, such as:

1. Manage underlying conditions
2. Stay physically active
3. Protect your feet
4. Reduce the risk of falls
5. Optimise nutrition
6. Manage neuropathic pain
7. Look after emotional wellbeing
8. Work with your healthcare team

By working with our MSAW Nurses and our multi-disciplinary team at MSAW, they can work with you and help better inform you about your condition and learn effective self-management strategies that can improve your quality of life.

Dee Lucey

MSAW Metro Clinical Nurse Manager



Future residents Judy and Jennifer get a first look of MSAW Shenton Park.

A sneak peek of Shenton Park!

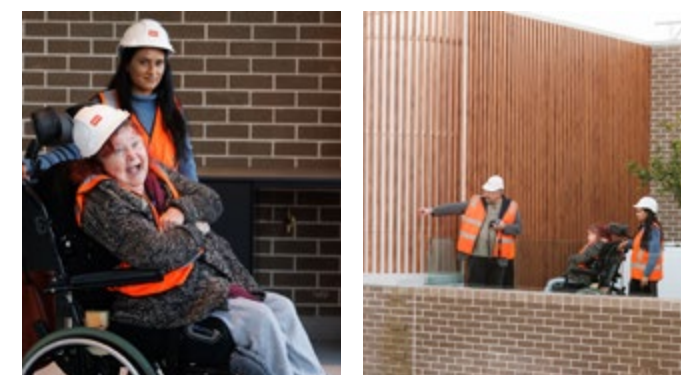
It's been years in the making, and for the first time, our residents got an opportunity to tour their future home.

The MSAW Shenton Park High-Support Accommodation marks a new chapter in neurological care, offering 20 state-of-the-art apartments which all consist of a bedroom, ensuite, kitchen, living area and courtyard or balcony. In addition, the new residents will have access to a range of amenities and facilities – not to mention, the location is surrounded by nature!

We've heard the residents were so excited to see the build reach its final stages and experience firsthand just how modern and impressive their new home is. Over the coming months, we will be sharing more about the official opening of MSAW Shenton Park and look forward to showcasing the new build and all the amazing features.

But, for now, we'll just let the photos (and the reactions) speak for themselves!

MSAW gratefully acknowledges the Western Australian State Government financial contribution to the project.



Sharon's back in the pool

For some, the hardest part of a neurological condition is the unexplained symptoms before receiving a diagnosis. And for others, it's the years that follow, trying to navigate a new normal and what life looks like now. Sharon Pattison's story is marked by over a decade spent dealing not only with multiple sclerosis, but with a leg wound that refused to heal – keeping her away from the things she loved and leaving both Sharon, her daughter Casey, searching for a solution.

Sharon remembers the exact day of her diagnosis, the 4th of April 2000. A date, she states, is still permanently etched in her mind. However, as many people living with MS know, symptoms usually surface long before you hear those two words. For Sharon, it was way back in 1994 after she had given birth to her miracle daughter Casey – a pregnancy she mentions was far from smooth. She had been having trouble walking, often relying on furniture around the house as a crutch as she moved from one area to another. For years, she recalls simply getting on with things and coping as best she could. However, as time went on, her symptoms didn't disappear.

"I'd spoken to the GP about it and as soon as he saw me, he wrote to the neurologist. I was seen within four days, so I just knew it was obviously important," she remembers.

After the official diagnosis, Sharon's health progressively declined while Casey remembers she began some caring duties for her mum at just seven years old.

Life carried on, and amid it all, Sharon worked to keep her MS symptoms at bay while Casey kept herself busy with school. One day in 2014, Sharon suffered a fall and broke her ankle. Not an overly unusual situation for a hospital to deal with, but it was then the issues started. Sharon's initial hospital visit was followed by several days of home care, but she was soon readmitted. The wound had worsened after an allergic reaction to the bandages led to infection. Six months on, it was still spreading.

"My leg got that sensitive, the doctors and specialists would try a new product or medication, and it would start healing and then my leg would just reject it," Sharon states.

What followed was years of potential remedies, followed by the devastation that, once again, the wound wasn't healing. Sparing the gory details, Casey recalls finding out everything she could about wounds, dressings, hospitals, doctors, pastes, medication, new products and potential solutions – with the hospital even offering her the opportunity to study nursing as she became so advanced in wound care. They explored different specialists in many fields of medicine; all the while hope was waning.

"Mum's wound would go all the way down, and then the next week it would grow twice as big. It just never wanted to fully close. It was so frustrating," said Casey.

On a particularly hard month, Sharon remembers they wanted to amputate her leg.

By this point, she had been living for years with an open wound and MS symptoms, and it seemed as though even the specialists were beginning to doubt it would ever truly heal.

But Casey and Sharon weren't ready to give up. By now, they both had over nine years of experience navigating this world of care and had come to understand all its intricacies. They had noticed that many specialists would alter the treatment plan after only a few weeks, each bringing their own distinct approach to the problem.

"If you get compression wraps done by Orthopedics, you get compression wraps done by Immunology, and you get them done by Plastics, each department will wrap it differently," Casey said.

Now armed with zinc wraps and bandages that Sharon noticed had worked well once before but are often only used for a short period of time, they dressed the leg with that same wrap, the same way, for just under a year.

Around the same time, they began working with Randall Rooney, MSWA Service Delivery Lead – Physiotherapy & Exercise Physiology Services.

"I prescribed Sharon a lymphoedema pump to help manage her swelling," he said.



Sharon's first time back in the pool!

In addition to the lymphoedema support, the MSWA Dietetics team also worked to ensure she was meeting her fluid, protein and micronutrient needs to aid her skin integrity.

"The combination of zinc bandaging, lymphoedema support and dietetic intervention, coupled with Sharon's determination and Casey's tireless advocacy for her mum, led to a remarkable outcome!"

"Her wound completely healed," Randall shared.

This milestone was monumental – few will ever truly understand how far Sharon and her daughter had to reach this solution. But now, their eyes were firmly fixed on a different horizon.

"Before her injury, Sharon loved swimming and hydrotherapy, but she hasn't been able to enter a pool in 13 years," Randall said.

So, with Randall and Casey by her side, Sharon finally was able to get back into the Hydrotherapy pool at Wilson. It was a milestone amongst milestones – one she simply describes "was absolutely amazing".

Sharon and Casey are firm believers in perseverance, the value of personalised support and the power behind self-advocacy, with Casey dedicating years of her life to caring for her mum and understanding all the little things that helped her heal. With regular hydrotherapy now part of her routine and a new approach to caring for her leg, Casey and Sharon are ready finally to move forward. When Sharon was asked how she'd made it this far, despite so many doubting their decade long journey, she simply answered, "oh, I don't give up."

The action of no-action and the power of the pause

In Indigenous culture, the second winter period, Djilba, typically spans the months of August to September, and is often referred to as the 'season of conception'. The days start to warm up and the first of the newborns emerge with their parents and learn foraging skills.

While winter can be a time to withdraw, take stock after a busy year, slow down, rest and recuperate. Spring on the other hand can be a time of growth, change and new experiences. As we engage with this, it is important to manage our energy, resiliency and enthusiasm.

Less is more

When we get busy and distracted, it can be hard to notice what is happening to ourselves and others. We may become disconnected from everyday experiences, fail to notice what we need or what this emerging situation might require. It is hard to manage what we do not notice such as when we are feeling 'full steam ahead' or 'in the groove'.

This illustrates how sometimes doing less can help you achieve more. When we pause, slow down, remember to breathe and notice what is happening in us and around us - we can then regroup and re-engage in ways that are more sustainable and productive.

Resisting the pull

Sometimes when we allow ourselves to slow down and be present, the mind often likes to interrupt through our thoughts, interpretation, and judgement - inviting us to get busy again. Learning how to notice, relax, let it go, and be fully present with yourself in the moment, even if only briefly, is a valuable lesson.

We might think of this as getting out of autopilot and sitting back in the cockpit before we take control. When we are in control, we avoid being triggered or reacting and instead be able to pause and respond with awareness. This process is not a passive, but an active intervention that requires effort and practice over time.

Psychotherapist Michael Stone shares, "Whenever there is a moment of non-reactivity, this is a moment of action. This is the action of non-action". He encourages us to work on "the cultivation of stillness when habit pulls you into its familiar arms".

Ian Sampson
MSWA Counsellor

Finding your rhythm: Music for social and emotional development

Spring is upon us and music is in the air as the birds and bees fly amongst the flowers. It is also a perfect time for you to get out of the house and find your rhythm.

Neurological conditions can affect an individual's ability to communicate, which may contribute to social isolation. Engaging in complementary therapies can help address symptoms of depression and anxiety. Research has shown that drumming-based interventions offer a promising approach to enhancing cognitive and emotional wellbeing.

Group drumming is a highly inclusive activity that requires no previous musical experience, enabling people of all skill levels and abilities to participate and be challenged appropriately. It encourages learning, engagement and motivation by allowing individuals to contribute at their own level. As drumming does not rely on verbal communication, it can help people develop meaningful connections and strengthen social bonds in alternative ways.

The Djembe drum is a powerful instrument that can help individuals connect with their bodies through mindfulness and grounding practices. It is often played at a tempo that mirrors the resting heartbeat, a rhythm associated with feelings of calm and security and with regulation of the body's stress response. The lower-frequency vibrations produced by the drum resonate throughout the body, particularly in the lower abdomen and diaphragm region, and may influence the parasympathetic nervous system by slowing breathing and stimulating the vagus nerve.

Lower-frequency rhythms, played on the bass tone of the drum, are believed to resonate with the body's natural physiology and may positively influence functions such as heart rate, respiratory rate and blood pressure.

Studies have shown that rhythm-based interventions performed at approximately 60 beats per minute (bpm) can support regulation, promote focus and calm, reduce repetitive anxiety-related behaviours and encourage a sense of internal pacing.

Psychological wellbeing benefits may include:

- Enhanced personal growth and self-acceptance.
- Greater feelings of accomplishment.
- Increased sense of control over life circumstances.
- Improved social wellbeing.
- Stronger social connection and sense of belonging.

The MSWA Wellbeing Service promotes resilience and health by providing evidence-based tools, activities and resources that support wellbeing and foster a positive outlook.

Our Counselling and Wellbeing team is introducing the Djembe drum as a therapeutic tool, combining music-making with cognitive reflection. This approach aims to strengthen social connections, enhance social and emotional awareness, improve emotional regulation, promote overall wellbeing and reduce feelings of social isolation and social anxiety.

Reach out to our team if you're interested in drumming or the Wellbeing service!

Scan the QR code



Trudy Tuckey
MSWA Counsellor

Regaining independence: Greg's journey

After Greg's diagnosis of MS, he found himself quite lost with everyday tasks, not knowing why or how issues were happening or any solutions to help. The biggest impacts he experienced was time, efficiency and his sense of confidence whilst navigating everyday life.

There wasn't a lot of independence at first. I was relying a lot on the carers to move me and get me organised.

Greg's journey with the MSWA Occupational Therapy team started nine years ago when he attended a fatigue management workshop. Unbeknownst to him, this workshop would begin his longstanding relationship with the MSWA OT team, and the fatigue management principles he learnt would become central to his symptom management and day-to-day life.

For Greg, fatigue management allows him to remain as independent as possible with day-to-day tasks and helps him conserve his energy for activities which mean the most to him.

Adapting the way

Over the years, Greg and his OTs have worked together to find practical and individualised ways to engage with everyday tasks to expand what he is able to do, from adapting how tasks are approached, the tasks themselves and the support he utilises to help.

All these modifications link back to the fundamental principle of fatigue management. Whilst some adjustments supported his mobility, others managed his thermoregulatory dysfunction or hand strength, it all linked back to reducing fatigue – allowing him to conserve his energy and focus on what is important.



Greg's top tips for fatigue management include:

One (or two) things at a time

Aim to accomplish one to two tasks a day, rather than trying to do too much and making little overall progress. For Greg, this can look different day-to-day. If his main activity for the day is to visit friends, he may ask for more assistance from carers for meal preparation, or if meal preparation is his goal for the day, perhaps carers assist more with transfers. This flexibility allows him to prioritise and complete key activities each day.

Utilising assistive technology (AT)

Assistive technology (AT) refers to any device, equipment or software that helps overcome barriers in daily living to help you stay safe and live more independently. One such example is the power assisted wheelchair Greg uses to move around his house, pop in to visit his neighbours and to navigate his local community independently. He further utilises transfer aids, like a Sara Steady which assists him to transfer in a quick, efficient and safe manner. He also uses an electric lift and recliner chair, making it easier for him to sit, stand and relax. Smaller, hand-held assistive technology can also make a big difference to everyday tasks, such as adapted cutting boards, cutlery and plates.



These AT items help Greg to complete tasks with less effort, maximise efficiency and safety, improve his confidence and overall reduce his fatigue. The use of AT has made a world of a difference to his fatigue levels, and more significantly, his life!

1. Home modifications

Home modifications are adjustments made to a home environment to improve safety, accessibility, independence and overall ability to complete everyday activities.

Various minor home modifications, including the addition of grab rails, custom ramps and flooring changes, have taken place in Greg's home. These allow him to access his house and all the activities within it with improved safety and ease.

2. Savouring the ordinary

As Greg shares, "These tasks sound very ordinary... but they are a big step forward for me".

Visiting his friends, making a salad, even going to the toilet – though these everyday tasks may sound ordinary, he revels in the ability to live life with more independence.



Small wins that mean everything

Implementing these changes completely changed everything for Greg and allowed him to continue to live his colourful and social life. He can now easily manoeuvre his wheelchair whilst opening a flyscreen door, open the pet food to feed his beloved cat, Angel and easily wheel across his retirement village to catch up with his friends!

Occupational Therapy has given me the attitude, skill and AT to move past the problem. I wouldn't even give my previous problems a second thought now!

These practical solutions have also enabled Greg to conserve his energy to continue doing what he loves most: creating and connecting with others! He loves to write, paint and play the piano, all of which he now has the time and energy for (and conveniently, double as hand therapy practice)!

He also regularly attends MSWA Connect (formerly known as Outreach) to paint and he is currently working on a beautiful ocean-scape artwork.

Could your story be next?

When asked if he had a message about MSWA OT and how it has impacted his life, Greg shared, "Do try OT and their services. You can be assured your ability to move will improve greatly and it will give you the confidence that you need to interact with your environment and people around you."

Get in touch



Sarah Coutinho

MSWA Service Delivery Lead – Occupational Therapy

A lasting difference: *Miles' story*

Have you been meaning to write or update your Will? Now could be the perfect time. Between 14-28 September, MSWA has partnered with SafeWill to offer our neuro community the opportunity to create a Will free of charge.

Having an up-to-date Will is one of the simplest ways to look after the people you love and ensure your wishes are known. It can also give you peace of mind knowing your affairs are in order.

Writing a Will can also be an opportunity to think about the causes that matter to you and the difference you wish to carry on into the future. Leaving MSWA a gift in your Will is a meaningful decision that can help ensure people living with neurological conditions continue to have access to the services, expertise and connections they need for years to come.

Miles knows firsthand how much of a difference the right support can make - after having a stroke in 2016 that paralysed his left arm and sustaining a neck injury during a brain seizure in 2025.

"I had no speech at all. I couldn't say a single word for six whole weeks. Even when I left the hospital, I left in a wheelchair, I wasn't walking," he remembers.

"MSWA helped me with physiotherapy when I was at that stage and I still need ongoing support - I still do weekly sessions with my physio. MSWA has also provided me with a shower chair, which I use daily, and helped me to get a leg brace. It's made a huge difference and means I don't need to use a wheelchair."

"I've put a gift in my will to MSWA because I think it's important that when someone's going through the same sort of thing that I've been through, MSWA is there when people reach out to them. They can get that connection, get support and be helped along the way with their journey, the same way that I have," Miles said.

Consider writing or updating your Will for free from 14 to 28 September, and if you wish, leave a gift to MSWA to help provide support to generations for years to come.

Jackie George
MSWA Individual Giving Specialist



Miles receiving physiotherapy.

Create your
free will here



What's on in the community space

These past few months, we've been working towards providing the community with more opportunities to connect and belong. There have been countless new connections formed through the Neuro Collective, our ongoing After Hours program, and newly created Mothers' Group. We are also in the final stages of launching our long-anticipated digital community hub, Synapse.

We heard your feedback that you would love more opportunities to get the whole family involved in our social events, so we have been exploring how we can bring our wider neuro community together in a fun and meaningful way. We are so excited to announce a brand new event on the calendar, the MSWA Family Fun Day at Perth Zoo! The MSWA Family Fun Day will be falling on Sunday, 25 October. If you're interested visit our website (via the QR code) for more information.

As we head towards the final months of the year, we're looking to continue fostering meaningful connections, both in-person and digitally, and hope to provide the neuro community with even more opportunities to belong.



Mothers' Group

Earlier in July, we had our first Mothers' Group catchup! The group caught up at Croc's Playcentre Cannington and had the chance to connect over a coffee and a bite.

If you're a mum with children aged 4 and under, we'd love for you to come along and get together for some casual coffee chats and connect with others going through a similar experience.



Sign up
here!



After Hours

After Hours has become an extremely popular community program run by MSWA, with more than 100 people signing up in its inaugural year.

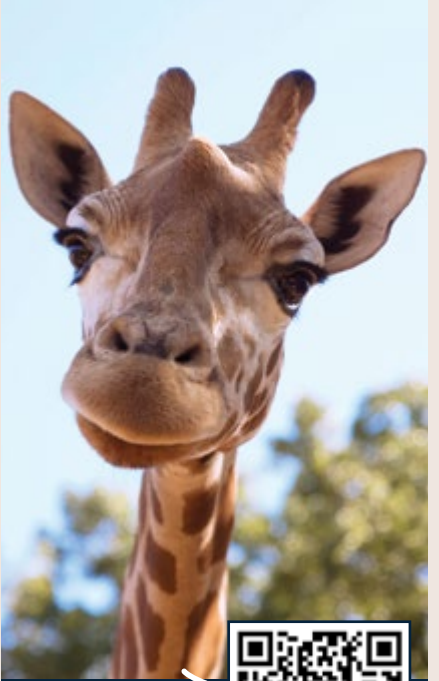
Taking place at Lawson's Flats in the CBD, After Hours connects working professionals living with a neurological condition to catch up every month for a few drinks - with the first one on us!

We encourage both MSWA Clients and individuals from the wider neurological community to attend!

Keen to join our next After Hours event?



Join the
crew!



RSVP for
Family Fun Day



Neuro Collective

Become a 'Connector' and join the Neuro Collective!

The Neuro Collective is a safe space for the neuro community, no matter your diagnosis or journey. Shaped through MSWA Client and community input, this initiative is a way to connect everyone in the neuro community in a way that doesn't require funding or any other prerequisites.

By becoming a 'Connector', you'll gain access to a number of exclusive benefits such as first access to our platform Synapse, discounts and giveaways from MSWA partners, invitations to exclusive events and more!

Anyone in the neuro community can join including MSWA Clients, carers, family members or anyone who lives with a neurological condition.



Another incredible year for Step Up

In June, more than 1,000 participants came together to conquer Perth's tallest building, Central Park Tower, for the 19th annual MSWA Step Up!

This year's event raised nearly \$245K, thanks to our partners, Retravision, City of Perth, Central Park and our incredible community of participants, fundraisers and donors.

A special thank you goes to Retravision for helping bring our Spin to Win marquee activation to life. As our official Matched Giving Partner, Retravision's support not only boosted our fundraising efforts but also created one of the biggest highlights of the day. The marquee was buzzing all morning, with hundreds of participants stopping by to spin the wheel, win prizes and soak up the atmosphere.

Event day was electrifying, with families, friends, colleagues and volunteers cheering climbers on

from the ground all the way to the roof of Central Park Tower! While it was absolutely freezing at the top, many braved the cold to cross the finish line and were rewarded with breathtaking views of Perth's spectacular skyline.

Participant Di shared of her experience, "this year was my 15th year taking part in the Step Up challenge, I am mainly doing this for my sister with MS. This is a very meaningful cause and it's so close to my heart!"

Events like Step Up simply wouldn't be possible without our generous community, including our partners, suppliers, volunteers and most importantly our participants who put themselves out there to take on the challenge! A heartfelt thank you goes out to all who took part in making the event another outstanding success. Together, we've shown that every step makes a difference.

2026 Step Up at a glance



19th
annual event



1,055
participants



88
teams



\$244,125
raised for West Aussies living with neurological conditions

MSWA Step Up join forces with the World Police & Fire Games

MSWA

STEP UP



This year's Step Up also became a launchpad for a partnership with the Perth 2027 World Police and Fire Games (WPFG), one of the world's largest multi-sport events.

MSWA is proud to be a Community Partner of the World Police and Fire Games 2027 and to celebrate this special collaboration, MSWA Step Up 2027 will move from its usual June date to Sunday, 21 March.

This one-off change coincides with the World Police and Fire Games Stair Race and gives our participants the opportunity to share the stage with an international competition.

The WPFG brings together thousands of police officers, firefighters, paramedics, emergency service personnel and volunteers from more than 70 countries to Perth.

By aligning our event with WPFG, we're creating a unique opportunity to showcase the impact of MSWA and raise awareness of neurological conditions on an international stage. Together, we'll be part of a weekend that celebrates resilience, determination, community and service - values that are at the heart of both events.

"This partnership represents an exciting opportunity to bring the World Police and Fire Games down under for the first time in decades," shared Games Executive Director and WA Police Force Inspector Jeremy Petersen.

"We are set to welcome around 20,000 visitors from across the world to WA, and through our partnership with MSWA we will help raise awareness for Western

Australians living with neurological conditions on a global stage."

We believe this partnership will make the 2027 MSWA Step Up bigger and more inspiring than ever and we'd love for you to join us!

**Expressions of
interest are
now open!**

**Sunday, 21 March
2027 Central Park
Tower, Perth**



Scan the QR code



A winning day at the 2025 Rockingham Beach Cup

MSWA is incredibly grateful to have been selected as one of the beneficiaries of the 2025 Rockingham Beach Cup & Rotary Community Festival, receiving a generous donation of \$10,000 from the Rotary Club of Palm Beach WA.

Since its inception in 2016, the Rockingham Beach Cup has become one of Western Australia's most unique and iconic community events, bringing together two of the state's favourite pastimes, a day at the races and a day at the beach. Held on the beautiful Rockingham foreshore, the event attracts thousands of locals and visitors for a weekend of entertainment, family fun and community connection.

The horses showcased in this social event are second-tier or recently retired thoroughbreds, selected specifically because they are well suited to this style of display racing. They race at approximately three-quarter pace over a short distance on firm sand. There is no whipping, no betting and no prize money. Only experienced track riders and licensed jockeys participate, and every aspect of the event is designed to minimise risk and place horse welfare first.

The Rockingham Beach Cup is a unique community spectacle designed to promote the City of Rockingham, providing accessible and inclusive family entertainment through the free Rotary Beach Community Festival.

The Club has proudly partnered with and supported Racing WA's Off the Track WA program, helping promote positive outcomes for retired thoroughbreds. In addition, funds raised through the event have been used to support significant Rotary environmental projects, including the construction and repair of more than 100 penguin nesting boxes and major conservation initiatives for threatened black cockatoos.

As we celebrate the success of last year's event, we're also excited to see the City of Rockingham and the Rotary Club of Palm Beach WA bring this iconic community event back on the weekend of 14-15 November. We encourage our MSWA community to support those who support us by making the trip to Rockingham and enjoying everything the Beach Cup has to offer, from family entertainment and local markets to the spectacular beachside racing. It's a wonderful opportunity to experience one of WA's most unique events while supporting organisations that make a meaningful difference in our community.

This very generous \$10,000 donation to MSWA will help us continue providing essential services and support. On behalf of everyone at MSWA, we sincerely thank the Rotary Club of Palm Beach WA, event sponsors, volunteers and attendees for their generosity and for choosing MSWA as a beneficiary of this event.



A family turning challenge into community action

What began as a soccer trip to Perth in 2025 took an unexpected turn for 15-year-old Yianni Palioudakis. After feeling unwell and struggling to walk, Yianni was taken to hospital, setting in motion a journey that would change life for him and his family.

Months later, Yianni received his diagnosis of Paediatric-Onset Relapsing-Remitting Multiple Sclerosis (RRMS). Since then, Yanni and the Palioudakis family have adapted to many changes, including frequent travel from their regional home to Perth for specialist appointments and treatment.

Determined to make a positive difference, they decided to raise awareness of MS within their community while supporting others affected by the condition.

In May, the Palioudakis family organised the "Our Family's Fight Against MS Sausage Sizzle" at the Oasis Playing Fields in Kalgoorlie. The fundraiser coincided with local sporting events and was met with overwhelming community support. Friends, family and locals came together in a show of generosity that exceeded all expectations.

Francesca Palioudakis, Yianni's mother, said she was amazed by the response, which led to the need to purchase additional supplies after selling out within the first hour.

"We want to raise awareness within our community," Francesca shared.

Thanks to the incredible support of the Kalgoorlie community, the event raised an outstanding \$8,422! The fundraiser served as a powerful reminder that no family faces MS alone when surrounded by such strong community support.



Running for a Reason!

The HBF Run for a Reason never fails to showcase the incredible spirit of our community.

This iconic event has seen more than 40,000 runners, joggers, walkers and wheelers come together to raise over \$1.85 million for 350 charity groups. Each year, thousands of West Australians brave the chilly Perth morning to hit the streets, whether it's to support a cause close to their heart or to achieve a new personal best.

This year was no exception, with more than 100 participants choosing MSWA for their reason. Some ran in honor of their mothers, fathers, family members and friends, while others were inspired by the important work MSWA does to support West Australians living with neurological conditions.

Whatever their motivation, we cannot thank these incredible supporters enough. Together, they raised an outstanding \$19,674 for MSWA.

We were also delighted to hear about a special mini 5km run organised in honour of our Client Hayley, who lives with MS. Her mother, sister, brother-in-law, niece and two nephews took part in a scenic run along the Swan River to show their love and support. Thanks to their incredible efforts and generosity, the family raised a fantastic \$515, which is a wonderful achievement.

To everyone who ran, walked, wheeled, donated, fundraised and cheered from the sidelines, thank you for making a difference. You can join in on the fun for the next HBF Run for Reason on Sunday, 23 May 2027.

Trish Watson
MSWA Community Fundraising Events Officer

Accommodation updates



Get to know Stuart!

My name is Stuart Jarvis, and I'm the Senior Residential Services Manager at MSWA.

Before joining MSWA, I spent 11 years working in the aged care industry, where I developed a strong passion for providing person-centred care and supporting people to live with dignity and independence.

I have been with MSWA for the past 7.5 years, beginning my journey as a Care Support Worker before progressing to a Coordinator role and then into my current position as Senior Residential Services Manager, a role I have held for the past 2.5 years.

These experiences have given me valuable insight into the importance of building strong relationships with Clients, families and staff while fostering a positive and supportive environment.

I currently oversee the operations of both Butler Accommodation and City Beach Respite. I am pleased to introduce the new leadership team at City Beach Respite, which includes Maddie Williams, our Respite Coordinator, Sara Stark, our Residential Neurological Nurse, and myself. Together, we are committed to delivering safe, person-centred care and ensuring every Client feels respected and supported throughout their stay.

We look forward to welcoming you to City Beach Respite and working with you to make your stay enjoyable and tailored to your individual needs. Our team is committed to creating a warm, supportive environment where you feel empowered to make the most of your respite experience.

Stuart Jarvis
MSWA Senior Residential Services Manager

Connecting at Treendale Gardens

In July, Helen Moon, Bunbury Community Engagement Coordinator and Paula Kennedy, Manager at Treendale Gardens, organised for the newly named Connect (formerly Outreach) to take place at Treendale Gardens!

A number of Clients from the community, along with Treendale residents, attended and enjoyed a fun-filled morning of games, quizzes, morning tea and plenty of laughter. Staff from our community and residential teams worked together to support all our Clients to ensure everyone had a good time.

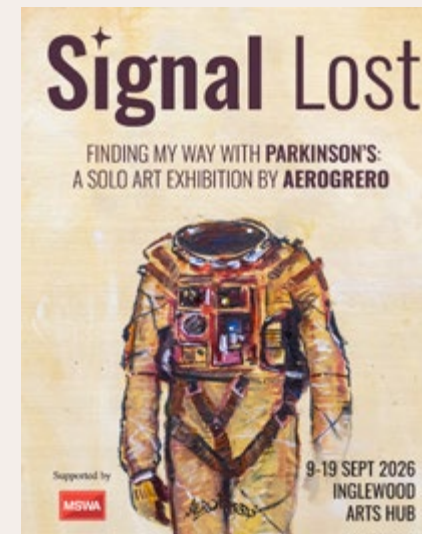
We hope to continue to Connect at Treendale Gardens!



Connect at Treendale!

Save the date

Visit our website
for the latest
events! →



Signal Lost Art Exhibition

9-19 September 2026
Inglewood Arts Hub

Life not Limits Grant recipient, Andrew Grero is debuting his first solo art exhibition, Signal Lost. Drawing from his varied interests and featuring influences from pop culture, this body of work blends subject matters to explore a changing sense of self following Andrew's diagnosis with Young Onset Parkinson's disease.



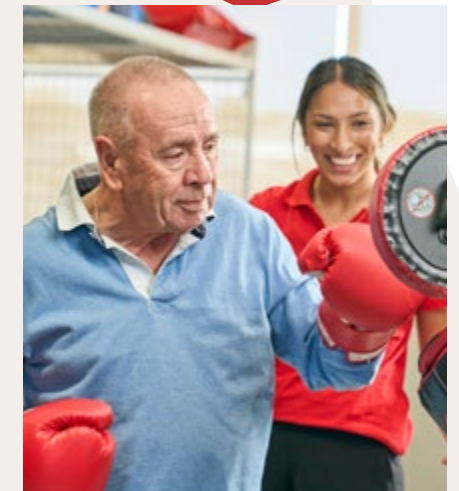
Client Christmas Parties

Come together and celebrate the festive season!

We're delighted to announce that the MSWA Client Christmas Parties will be held across WA in both November and December. These parties are a special occasion where our community can come together to celebrate the year. Spots are limited, reserve your place early!



RSVP



Allied Health Professions Day

14 October 2026

Allied Health professionals play a vital role in ensuring holistic Client care for better health and wellbeing. At MSWA, we're beyond proud of our team of allied health professionals who provide excellent care and expertise every day.

Whether it's your physiotherapist, dietitian or counsellor, Allied Health Professions Day is an opportunity to say thank you!

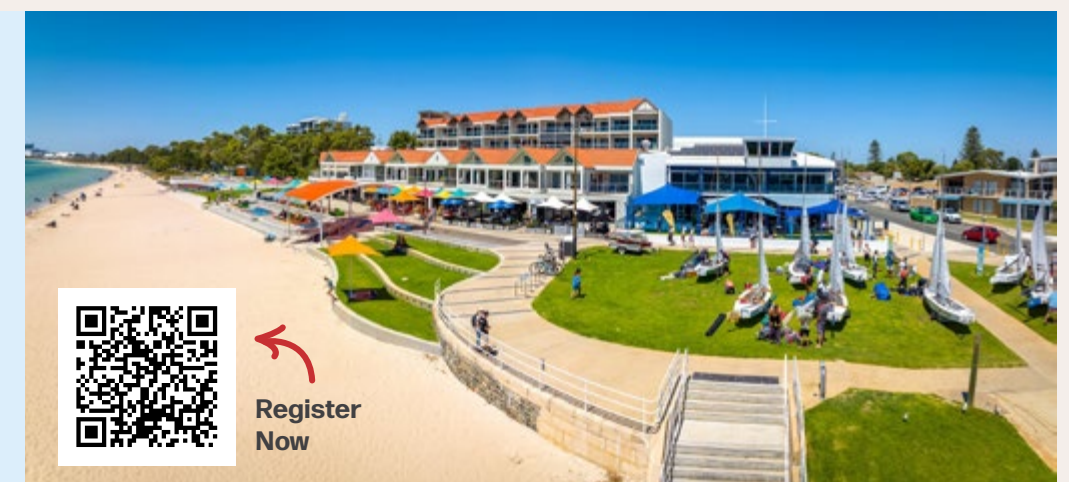
Connect by the Coast

25 September 2026
Rockingham
Foreshore

Join us for a delicious BBQ and a day full of games, food and fun by the beach!



Register Now



News in brief



Janet, George and their team of support!

Honouring Janet's journey

Our team had the privilege of joining Janet, her husband George and her support network on Global MND Awareness Day to honour her 15-year journey with motor neurone disease. Inspired by the iconic Big Freeze campaign, everyone proudly wore a FightMND beanie.

Janet's husband, George shared, "Janet has had many lovely people looking after her personal and medical needs. She is not only much loved by family and friends, but also by all of the support staff."

Standing alongside sector organisations - Enable West, Cam Can Organisation and MND Association of WA - moments like this highlight the importance and impact of coordinated care.



Jacqueline celebrating with cake.



Jacqueline and the MSWA team.

An incredible 30 years with MSWA

As an MSWA Connect and Community Support Worker, Jacqueline Dinsey's journey began with volunteering and grew into a career built on care and compassion. Three decades on, it's the simple things like shared laughter and meaningful moments that make her role so rewarding.

"It was the Clients who inspired me right from the beginning. Seeing what they were going through day to day, and how positive and happy they still were. It really stayed with me, and it's what's kept me here all these years," she shared.

Congratulations Jacqueline on this incredible milestone! And thank you for the difference you continue to make every day.



Bulletin Survey

In our previous Bulletin, we invited you to share what you'd like to see more of in future editions. Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond - we appreciate your feedback and will use it to help us shape the upcoming Bulletins.

While the survey has now closed, we'd still love to hear from you! If you have feedback, ideas or would like to contribute an article, please email us at bulletin@mswa.org.au

Watch our Founders Factory recap!

Want to see everything the five startups got up to during their time in Perth with Founders Factory?

Scan the QR code below to watch a recap of the week and discover the tech innovations that will potentially change lives.



Submit your article to us

Do you have a story about living with a neurological condition in WA that other MSWA Clients might like to read? We invite you to share your experiences with us.

Email your submission to bulletin@mswa.org.au for consideration.

Suggestions, complaints and compliments

We want to hear from you. Your feedback helps us to understand what is working well and where we can improve.

You can raise a concern or acknowledge the support an MSWA staff member has provided by contacting us using the details below.

Phone
6454 3173

Email
feedback@mswa.org.au

Write to
Quality and Compliance;
Locked Bag 2,
BENTLEY DC 6983.

For more information, visit mswa.org.au/who-we-are/contact-us

Celebrate our outstanding team members

Has an MSWA team member made a meaningful difference in your life, or gone above and beyond to support you and your family? The MSWA End of Year Awards 2026 are an opportunity to recognise and celebrate their contribution.

We welcome multiple submissions. Help us recognise outstanding team members by submitting your nomination before Friday, 6 November.

Submit your nomination





MSWA

Life not limits

To find out more about our services, create connections or show support for our cause, visit mswa.org.au

*A Journey Between Worlds
Drey Jackson, Art Without Limits artist.
A vibrant cosmic landscape unfolds as
meteors streak across a star-filled sky
above glowing planets, while a bear and
her cub walk together along the horizon
beneath a crimson celestial glow.*