

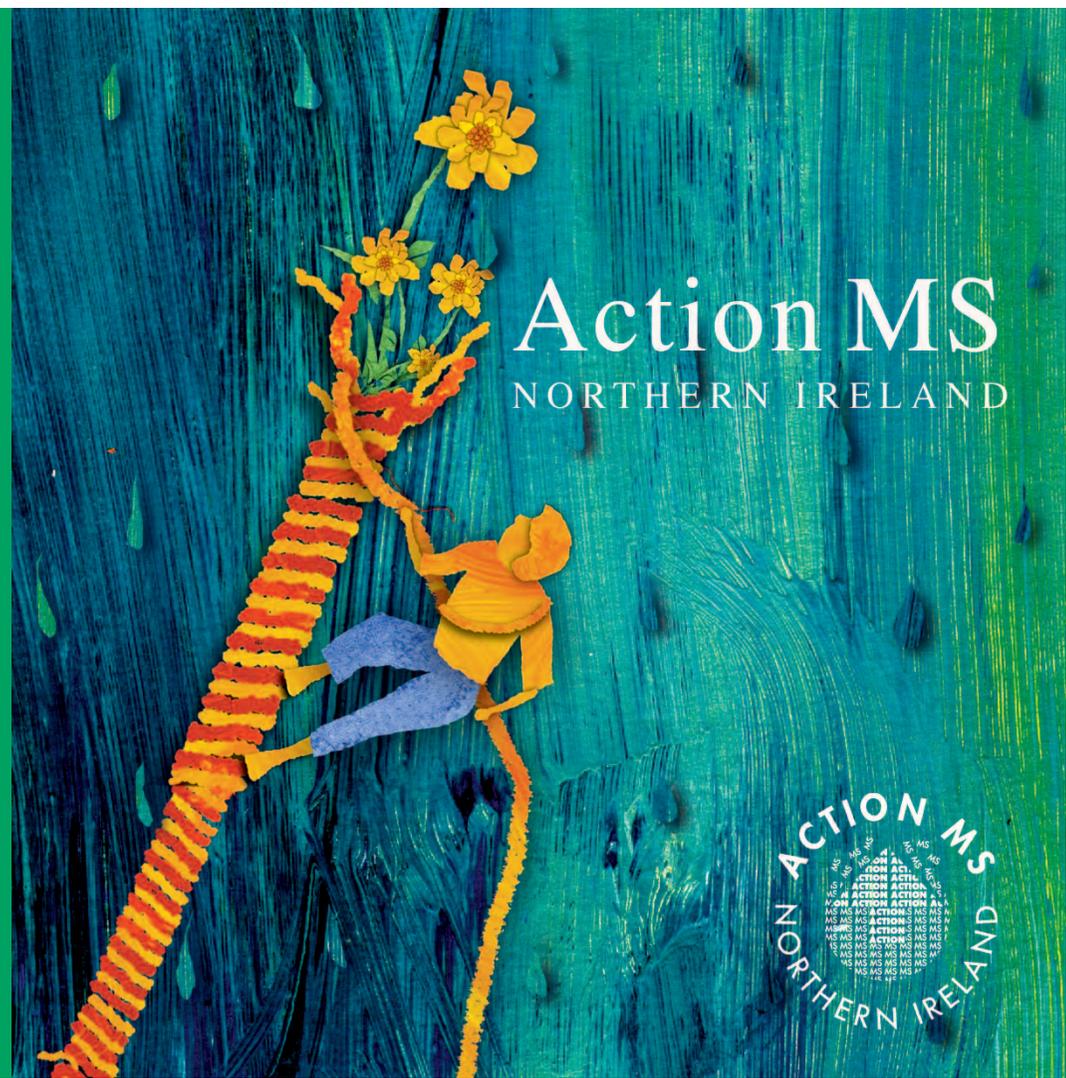
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For more information contact:

**ACTION MS**

ACTIONVILLE,  
KNOCKBRACKEN HEALTHCARE PARK,  
SAINTFIELD ROAD,  
BELFAST BT8 8BH  
TEL: (028) 907 907 07  
FAX: (028) 9040 2010  
info@actionms.co.uk  
www.actionms.co.uk

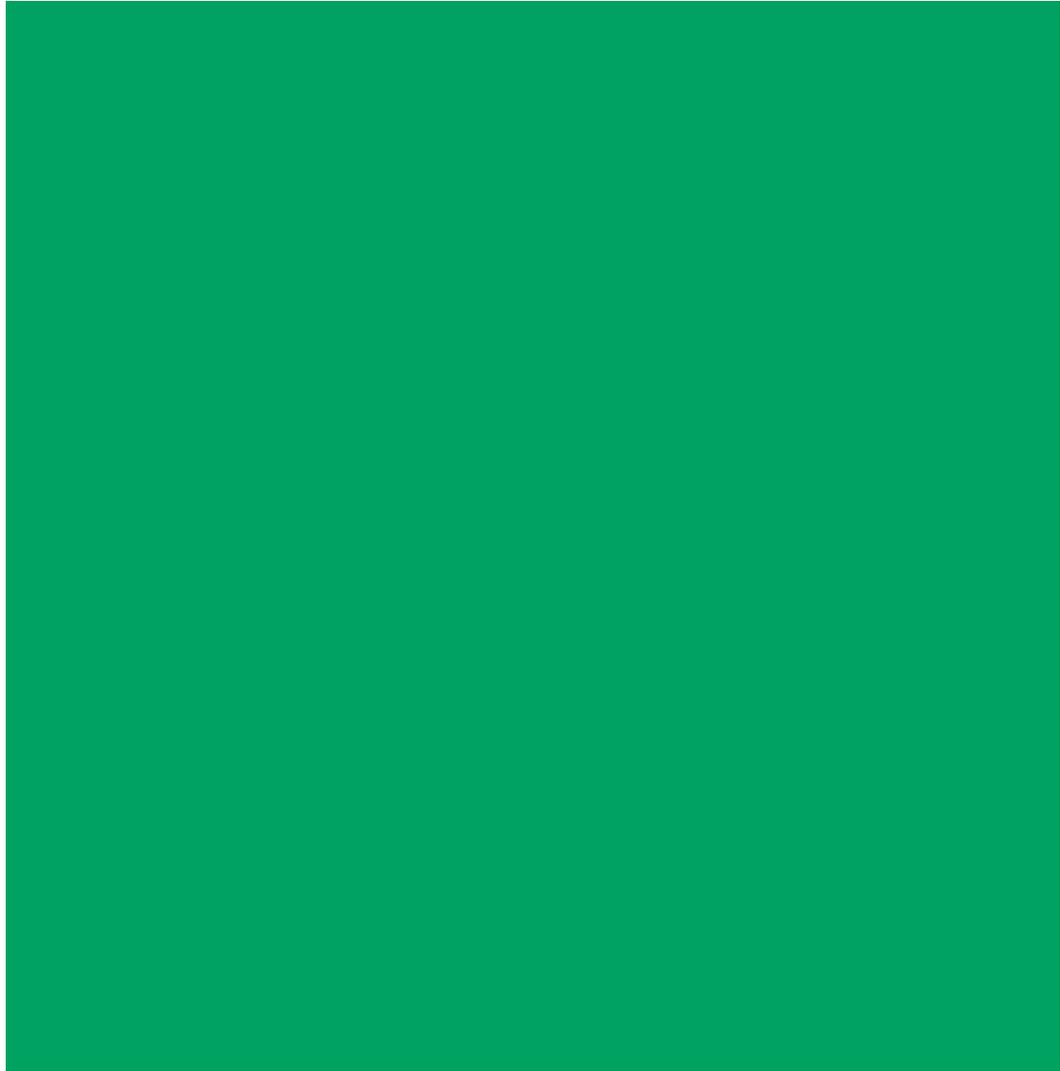
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# Action MS

NORTHERN IRELAND





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Action MS - fighting MS since 1976

*Action MS Northern Ireland was formed in 1976 when a small group of people with MS, families and friends decided to do something to fight multiple sclerosis, a disease of the central nervous system for which there is as yet no cure.*

### *Medical Research*

The most obvious starting point was to raise funds for medical research. Over the years with the support of the whole community Action MS has raised thousands of pounds for research work at the Royal Victoria Hospital and the Belfast City Hospital. MS is still a puzzling disease but advances have been made in developing treatments and enhancing quality of life.

### *Caring Services*

Action MS tries to live up to its name. That means offering support to people with MS and to those who care for them. We have over the years learnt to listen and to find out what is most needed by those who live with MS.

## ■ *Action MS Support Services*

### *Family Support*

Action MS has always recognised that when one person has MS the whole family can be affected and we continue to work to support all family members; spouses, partners, parents, children and siblings.

Fishy Tale, the Action MS storybook for children and young people continues to be a vital tool in our work with children.

*“As a parent who has multiple sclerosis I found this fascinating story gave Lucy, my ten year old daughter, a clearer understanding of the symptoms of MS and how these can affect me. This was an invaluable help for Lucy and the family”*

## ■ *Des Keenan Mobile Holiday Home*

The Action MS fully adapted holiday home sited in Portstewart continues to be fully occupied throughout the season. The holiday home is open to anyone who has multiple sclerosis, their families and carers.

People who use the holiday home tell of the benefits of a break away from home and they often talk of a feeling of relaxation.

The holiday home remains one of our most popular resources, providing rest and family time in a relaxed way. The cost of a stay in the Action MS holiday home is heavily subsidised and as there is a lack of suitably adapted holiday accommodation in Northern Ireland, this facility is much sought after.

**Remember Action MS is here for you.  
We would love to hear from you**



## *User Led Groups*

We have four user led groups, New B's and Luncheon Club in Belfast and luncheon Clubs in Coleraine and Cookstown. These are monthly meetings with a varied programme of events including talks by specialist nurses and other professionals to social outings including the theatre , cinema and informal get togethers.

These meetings offer the opportunity to informally chat over a cup of tea or coffee. It also gives those who have MS the chance to meet other people with multiple sclerosis in their area. The groups offer friendship and support in a social environment and are co-ordinated by members of the social care team and volunteers. Members of our social care staff are available at these meetings to answer questions and offer assistance.Home Visits

## *Home Visits*

The hallmark of Action MS care is that we work with individuals on a one to one in a place of their choice, in their homes or our offices or elsewhere. We recognise that needs and people are different and it is important to listen. Action MS provides emotional support as and when requested for however long that support is needed.

*“When I was diagnosed with MS part of me died but with the help of the Action MS support services part of me was brought back to life. I value the advice, friendship and fun which I have been given”* Anna, Belfast

## ■ *Advocacy*

There are times when we all feel overwhelmed with our own particular situation. There seems to be no way out. It is at times like these that the Action MS advocate is there to help and support you. The advocate will meet with you to discuss any issues you may have. The advocate will support you in making a decision about the best way forward in your particular circumstance.

The advocate will be there at all times until you feel your difficulty has been resolved satisfactorily.

Our professional care team may not know all the answers but they always manage to help people clear the air and find solutions. The team ensures that a client is never left feeling unsupported. The advocacy service does, and will, remain a core element of the work of the social care team.

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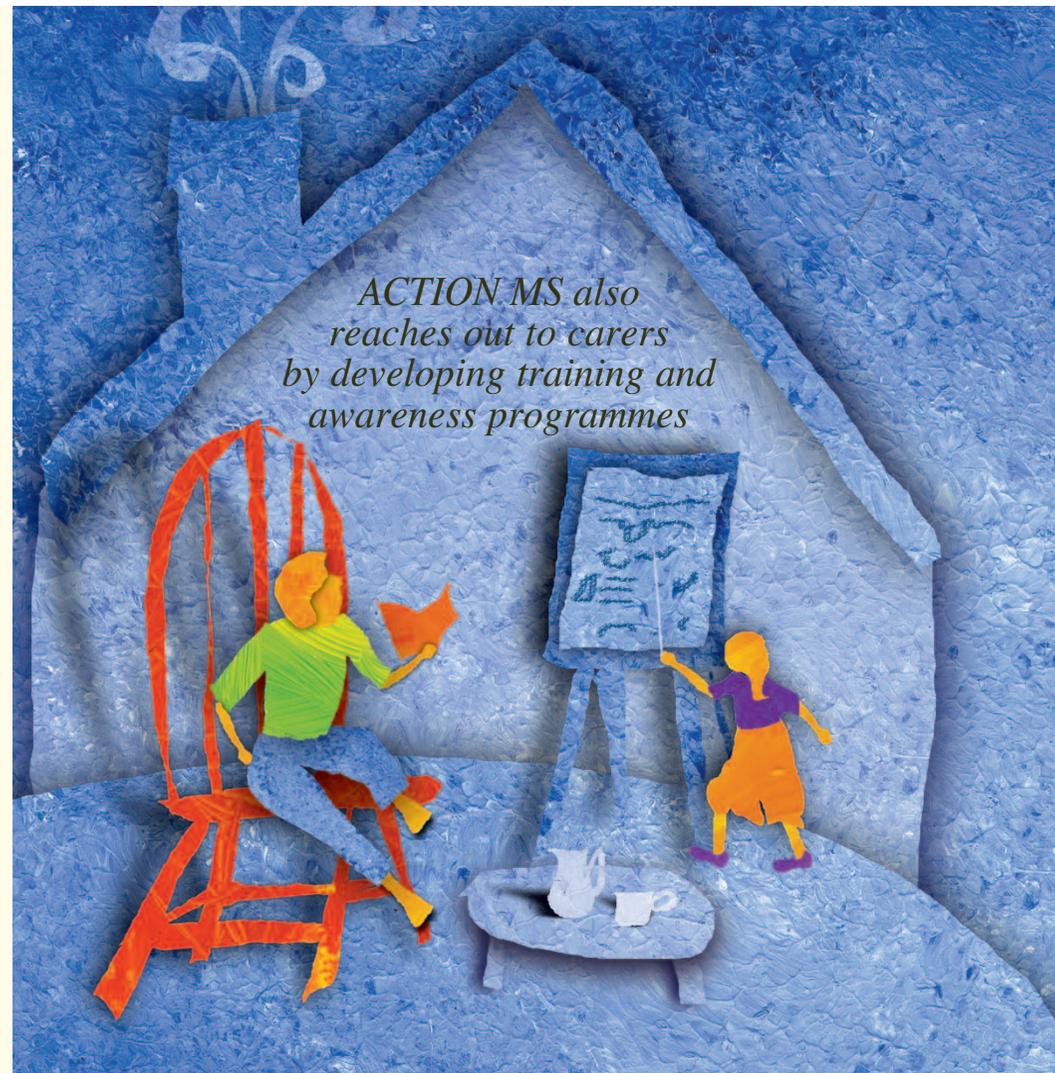
Professional Care Advisors act as a vital link in the care network provided by statutory and other support services in the community. A member of the team will visit you in your own home or arrange a meeting to talk about your situation and help you work out the best way forward.

In addition to the help offered by your Advisor and friends, CAP co-ordinates focus groups. These focus groups are specifically designed to allow younger people with MS to join together to share experiences and to socialise. There could also be a training and development element in such meetings that offer some practical benefit to you as you learn to live with multiple sclerosis.

Action MS also reaches out to carers by developing training and awareness programmes. These are aimed at helping professional carers in a variety of disciplines to understand the non-medical impact of multiple sclerosis on an individual and his/her family.

*“AMS is a new and practical initiative in caring for the MS community. AMS will connect people with what they need when they need it. The AMS team offers a wide range of expertise and experience and will play a vital role in improving the quality of life for people learning to live with multiple sclerosis.”*

Ann Walker, MBE, Action MS Director



*ACTION MS also reaches out to carers by developing training and awareness programmes*

## ■ *Education*

Schools play an important role in the Action MS fundraising campaign. However, as well as making appeals to schools, Action MS educates and develops pupil awareness of the impact of multiple sclerosis on the individual and the family.

Many primary school pupils have become active helpers in their teenage years. Indeed some of these young people go on to make careers in the caring services.

## ■ *Professional Training*

Action MS provides training for health and social care professionals, for example, nurses, occupational therapists and social workers. The emphasis in this training is on understanding the non-medical impact of MS, the impact that MS can have on an individual and on the entire family.

## ■ *Volunteers*

Many people find personal fulfilment in offering help to people less fortunate than themselves. Action MS greatly values volunteers who help with many of its services including advocacy, befriending, fundraising, administration and specialist expertise. The Action MS/Des Keenan Mobile home is a wonderful asset and the smooth running of this facility would not be possible without the support of our volunteers.

## ■ *Member Support*

Action MS sustains a network of care and support across the country. The professional care team offers home visits and support groups as well as updating information in relation to diet and benefits whilst encouraging participation in various activities.!

## The Action MS Vision

Action MS looks forward to a time when medical science will find a cure for multiple sclerosis. In the meantime we will continue to help individuals and families to live with MS.

Thank you for your support.

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# Learning to live with MS

## *Some Suggestions*

- Join an MS support organisation such as Action MS. It helps to share problems and exchange information with others.
- Be patient and don't expect too much from yourself or others. Perfection is not always possible.
- Eat a healthy, balanced diet.
- Learn some useful exercises and keep practicing!
- Live one day at a time.
- Get adequate rest and sleep.
- Be informed - ask questions, know where to get answers.
- Seek advice - understand the symptoms of MS.
- Use the Health and Personal Social Services.

- Use GP's neurologists, MS Nurses, physiotherapists and other professionals.
- Use specialist agencies as necessary such as Relate and Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Claim your right to benefits and allowances.

*Everybody Needs Help Sometime!*

**For more information contact:**

**Action MS**

Actionville, Knockbracken Healthcare Park,  
Saintfield Road, Belfast BT8 8BH  
TEL: (028) 907 907 07 FAX: (028) 9040 2010  
info@actionms.co.uk www.actionms.co.uk  
www.facebook.com/ActMS.

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## Action MS Information Services

Action MS provides various free information booklets. If you would like to receive more information please tick the appropriate box on this request card and send it to Action MS at the address below.

Information is also available on the Action MS website at **[www.actionms.co.uk](http://www.actionms.co.uk)**.

Action Ms invites new members. If you would like to avail of our services and learn more please enclose £4 annual subscription and you will be entitled to our free MS professional support services and updates on our work.

Regular updates are available on our web site, facebook and twitter

### *Send to:*

**Action MS, Actionville,**  
Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast BT8 8BH  
Tel: 028 907 907 07 Fax: 028 9040 2010  
E Mail: [info@actionms.co.uk](mailto:info@actionms.co.uk)

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### *Booklets List (please tick)*

- Action MS Northern Ireland
- Multiple Sclerosis? Questions and Answers/Help is at Hand
- More About Symptoms
- MS and the Family
- Coping with MS/Diet & Exercise
- I wish to become a member of Action MS
- I enclose £4.00 annual membership subscription

**Name:** .....

**Address:** .....

.....

**Postcode:** .....

**Telephone number:** .....

**Email :** .....

