



Overcoming
MS

Impact Report

2022



Contents

4.
2022 impact

6.
Welcome

8.
About us

10.
Inform:
Sharing research
and books

12.
Inform:
Website
and digital
communications

14.
Inform:
Podcast

16.
Inform:
Webinar

18.
Voice of the
community:
Deanna's story

22.
Support:
Circles

22.
Support:
Community
events and
digital support

24.
Empower:
Campaigns

26.
Empower:
Community
Engagement
Surveys

28.
Voice of the
community:
Denise's story

30.
Collaborate:
Partnerships

32.
Collaborate:
Partnerships

34.
How you can help

36.
How your funds
are spent

38.
What we plan
next

“
I discovered Overcoming MS
recently and it has been like a
light going on.
– Overcoming MS participant”

Our impact in 2022

We reached a record 379,000 people from over 100 countries with our web content in 2022, contributing to our mission of enabling everyone with MS to achieve optimal health by taking control of their health and wellbeing, through making informed lifestyle choices.

Read other key figures from 2022 below.

Inform

Website
1,156,000
webpage views



YouTube
62,500
views



Newsletter
22,000+
People subscribed to monthly e-newsletter



Book scheme
475
free books in the UK, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand



Podcast
117,000
downloads
34 episodes in 2022



Webinars
4,000
views of 14 webinars.
5,000 people from 40 countries registered



Support

Support Groups
98
circles in 28 countries



Volunteers
142
volunteers contributed
7,632 hours annually



New support programmes
2

programmes piloted for people with MS and their families

Social media
28,898 Facebook followers
Also followers on Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest and LinkedIn



Empower

Public
2
campaigns run to raise awareness and empower people with MS



Healthcare professionals
1
new extended website section to empower healthcare professionals to support people with MS

Collaborate

Events
5
in-person events and conferences. **Over 200** discussions with key stakeholders



Lifestyle research
£9,800
to support research into lifestyle and MS and open access to 3 studies



Working Group
6
major MS charities working with us

MS

Course partners
2
new partnerships tested in the creation of new support programmes

Welcome

From Dowshan Humzah, Chair of the Board



Becoming Chair of Overcoming MS as we reached the special milestone of our 10th anniversary really brought home to me what an extraordinary difference the charity has made to thousands of people worldwide in the past decade.

Our purpose is to enable everyone with MS to achieve optimal wellness by making informed lifestyle choices that enable them to take control of their health and wellbeing. We focus upon the growing scientific evidence that people can take daily practical steps to help improve their MS, offering greater hope and optimism.

At the same time, we continuously seek to further improve our services to the MS community, expand our partnerships with other related organisations, and better influence the wider MS landscape.

During 2022 we restarted face-to-face events, launched several new programmes and saw record numbers of people reaching out to us for support.

In a post-pandemic world of further challenged circumstances for global health services, we designed a tailor-made information hub targeted at healthcare professionals, written by healthcare professionals, to enable them to help their patients more easily.

We firmly believe that collaboration across all sectors is important, and more so for us across health and charity sectors. We partnered with other MS charities to provide evidence on the impact of MS on people's mental health.

I would like to thank Stephen Richards for the significant contribution he made to Overcoming MS as interim CEO during our 10th anniversary year. I am also incredibly grateful to everyone who has supported us in this important year – from trusts and foundations, individual donors and fundraisers, our dedicated staff team, community and volunteers including our Board members.

We have ambitious plans for 2023 and a lot of important work to do as we welcome our new Chief Executive, Alex Holden. I look forward to sharing further successes with you through the year.

“
I believe that people with
MS need Overcoming MS
now more than ever.”

– Dowshan Humzah
Chair of the Board, Overcoming MS

From Linda Bloom President



I am so proud of everything we have achieved at Overcoming MS, having now reached the milestone of our 10th anniversary. I want to express my thanks to our Trustees, our long-standing facilitators, and our staff and volunteers for making our vision possible with such passion and dedication.

And of course, my overwhelming gratitude is to our community – people with MS, or those who have a close connection with MS. You bring the Overcoming MS Program to life, you share your experiences and support for others within the community, share tips, advice, recipes, thoughts and are there to listen to each other. You are Overcoming MS, and I look forward to our future together.





About Overcoming MS

Who we are

We are a global charity supporting people with MS to lead the best life they can through informed lifestyle choices. These choices enable people to achieve optimal physical and mental health based on what's possible for them as an individual.

Our work includes providing a range of insight, support and services – spanning multimedia resources, training, events and supportive local Circles – to enable people to make evidence-informed lifestyle changes. The research-based Overcoming MS Program guides the thinking around our approach and focuses on specific everyday choices as part of a healthy lifestyle. It includes following a plant-based whole food diet with seafood, exercise, vitamin D supplementation, medication and stress management.

Knowing people with MS can change their risk of deterioration through lifestyle choices gives hope to us all. **Sharing this hope and inspiring people to make changes is central to our work.**

“
When I found Overcoming MS in 2009, it was life changing. I'd been going downhill since diagnosis.”

– Claire,
Overcoming MS participant

Other Benefits of the Program:

The lifestyle program can have positive health benefits beyond MS, as it also leads to improved general health and the primary prevention of other chronic medical conditions, such as heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. Following the program with your family therefore can help them as well as you to avoid these common conditions.



Our Key Pillars:

1. Inform



Ensure people are aware and fully informed about the Overcoming MS Program as an evidence-based way to help self-manage MS through lifestyle choices.

2. Support



Facilitate a supportive, accessible, and responsive community to allow people with diverse MS needs to adopt the Overcoming MS Program, meeting them wherever they are in their journey.

3. Empower



Help people with MS feel more hopeful, optimistic, and empowered, knowing they can take control of their MS and lead a more full and healthy life.

4. Collaborate



We make everyone feel welcome, whatever their background, status or symptoms. We influence and collaborate with the broader MS community – including friends, family, healthcare professionals and other MS charities – to enable them to understand the benefits of self-management and lifestyle choices for people with MS via the Overcoming MS Program.



Sharing Lifestyle Research

The research that sits behind the program is central to our work.

Dr Jonathan White continues to write accessible blog articles on key data from new research relating to MS. He also reports the latest research findings by the Neuroepidemiology Unit (NEU) of the Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne, Australia who run a range of important longitudinal studies, including the HOLISM study, following progression of MS in the long term. There was particular interest in our community in January 2022 in our content about the research findings indicating a link between the Epstein Barr virus and MS.

(Longitudinal analysis reveals high prevalence of Epstein-Barr virus associated with multiple sclerosis - Science.)

(Epstein-Barr Virus Found to Trigger Multiple Sclerosis - Scientific American.)

In November 2022, a very important breakthrough occurred in the evaluation of diet for people with MS. The US Journal Neurology, the Journal of the American Academy of Neurology, reported that: "there is sufficient evidence to recommend a healthy diet as an adjunct intervention in MS". Having lifestyle being recognised as playing an important role for people with MS by such important publications represented a milestone for us.

(The Role of Diet in Multiple Sclerosis: Food for Thought - PubMed [nih.gov].)



**Professor George Jelinek,
Creator of the Overcoming MS Program**

Sharing Books

Promoting the Overcoming MS books – written by Professor George Jelinek and explaining the evidence-based lifestyle changes which can positively impact people with MS – remains central to our priority of informing the community about the Overcoming MS Program. This includes the original book by George Jelinek, Overcoming Multiple Sclerosis and the recently published Overcoming Multiple Sclerosis Handbook. In 2022, we were able to introduce the free books scheme in Australia and New Zealand thanks to a donation and this scheme continues.

2023 will see the 10th anniversary of the 'Real Life Stories of Hope and Inspiration' book, and we plan to launch an audio version of this book as well as interviewing some of the contributors to find out their tips and advice 10 years on.



475

**books were distributed in
the UK, Ireland, New Zealand
and Australia**





“ Thank you for providing so much useful information. Overcoming MS continues to give me support, hope and community. ”
 – Overcoming MS participant

Website and Digital Communications

The website sits at the centre of our Inform pillar. It is our central hub for our global community.

To ensure we provide new and engaging content to those we support, in 2022 we continued to work with members of the community on the creation of content (blogs, meditations, recipes, and exercise videos.) We shared our podcasts and webinars on the website, as well as findings from the latest research papers about the impact of lifestyle on MS.

During 2022, we rolled out a significant update to the website, combined with changes such as making the site more accessible on mobile phones, even more important as over two thirds of our audience visit our site via mobile phones, and ensuring we had an increase in the diversity of abilities present on the website.

We continued to expand our YouTube channel with useful content, with the most popular videos including those covering diet, meditation, personal Overcoming MS stories and the Beginner’s Guide to Overcoming MS, enabling those new to the charity to learn how lifestyle changes can help them.

- We reached 379,000 global website users in 2022
- There were 1,156,000 website page views
- We achieved 62,500 YouTube views
- 22,000 people have subscribed to our enewsletter, which shares tips about living well with MS as well as our latest recipe, podcast and blog content

“ The key changes made to the website in 2022 have created a more positive user experience, especially for our significant number of mobile visitors. Our digital content reached audiences across the globe, helping them discover the importance of lifestyle and providing inspiration and advice to support the lifestyle changes they choose. ”

– Vicky,
 Head of Digital



Sign up to our e-newsletter at overcomingms.org/newsletter and follow Overcoming MS on all major social media platforms to receive the latest news and information

- facebook.com/OvercomingMS
- twitter.com/OvercomingMS
- instagram.com/overcomingms

Podcast

Our podcast is one of our key channels for keeping our community informed about living well with MS through interviews with a range of experts and community members.

2022 saw the successful completion of our 4th podcast season.

Thank you to our volunteer, Geoff Allix, who continued to host the Living Well with MS podcast, and Overcoming MSer, Gina Beach, who managed the overall podcast.

- There were 117,000 unique downloads during 2022
- 34 new episodes with 100% iTunes 4 and 5 star ratings
- 2,308 downloads per episode on average from new episodes created during the year
- Our earlier seasons continue to be downloaded, with our inaugural episode with Professor George Jelinek now at over 10,000 downloads
- Our total downloads are now over 300,000, which was a great milestone during 2022

To mark our 10th anniversary year, in September 2022 we invited Professor George Jelinek, the founder of the Overcoming MS Program, to take part in a special series of short podcasts. These were downloaded over 4,000 times across the globe.

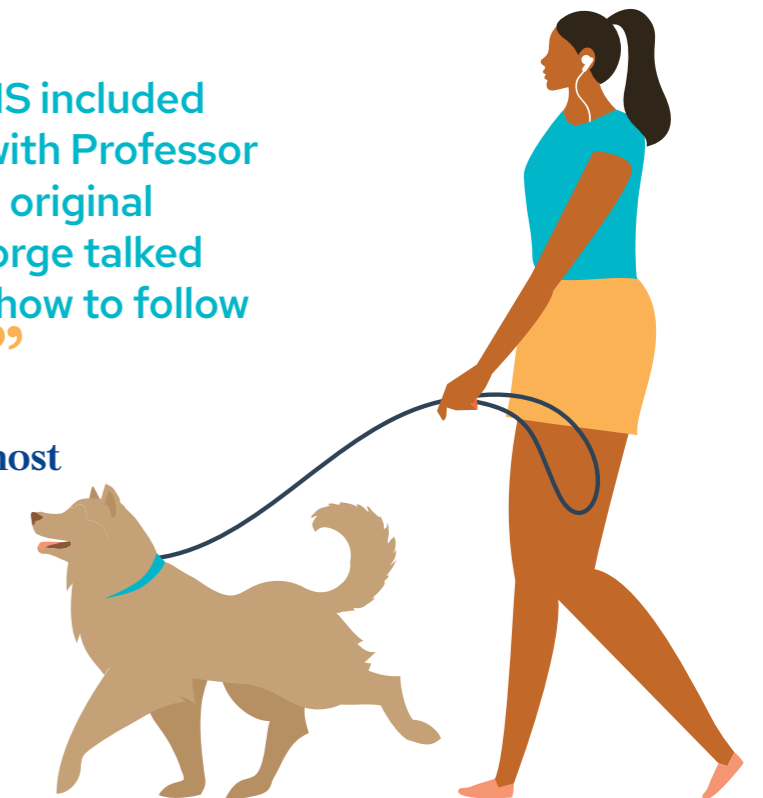
As part of our commitment to diversity and inclusion, we continue to produce transcriptions of past episodes with the support of our fantastic volunteers.

“I love the podcast - thank you so much to you and the team who make it happen.”

– Amy,
Living Well with MS Podcast listener

“Season 4 of Living Well with MS included an interview and short series with Professor George Jelinek, creator of the original Overcoming MS Program. George talked about his latest book, sharing how to follow the Overcoming MS Program.”

– Geoff,
Living Well with MS podcast host



You can subscribe to our podcast on all the major platforms, including iTunes.

The show notes and transcriptions can be found at:
overcomingms.org/podcast

Webinar

Our webinar programme continues to provide in depth information for community members keen to understand the importance of lifestyle.

We returned with Season 3 of the Finding Hope with Overcoming MS webinar season in 2022, delivering 14 webinars. We drew on the experience and expertise of several people from within the MS Community including the founder of the Overcoming MS Program, Professor George Jelinek, award winning Neurologist Dr Aaron Boster from the Boster Center for MS in the USA and Circle Member and author Nigel Bartram to showcase his book - 'MS - a funny thing'.

- 5,077 people registered for our webinars
- 1,426 attended live with over 4,000 playbacks

- We had participants from 40 countries
- We delivered over 14hrs of webinar content
- We achieved an overall quality score of 91%

The session on Diet and Evidence hosted by Overcoming MS Facilitator Dr Jonathan White with guest speaker Dr Steve Simpson-Yap, a Senior Researcher from the Neuroepidemiology Unit in Melbourne, saw a record-breaking 902 people registering for the webinar.

“The session was very interesting. I learnt more in the webinar with Dr Boster than from my MS consultant. His message of a healthy lifestyle and exercise was my biggest takeaway.”

– Overcoming MS Webinar Participant



You can rewatch all previous webinars and view materials by visiting overcomingms.org/webinars

Some of our webinar guests



Professor George Jelinek
Overcoming MS Program founder



Dr Aaron Boster
Neurologist



Brett Drummond
MS Researcher and Science Communicator



Michelle Overton
Mental Wellbeing Services UK



Sam Josephs
Nutritional Therapist



Yasmin Neves
Healthy HR

Deanna's Story

"My name is Deanna and I am Overcoming MS.

My diagnosis

I was diagnosed in 2007 with relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis. I was only 17 years old. It was really hard when I first got my diagnosis. There wasn't much support offered to me at the time, and I found it really scary at such a young age.

My MS symptoms were that I woke up one day and I had vision loss in my left eye which progressed to full color desaturation. I rushed to see an ophthalmologist and neurologist which showed several lesions on my brain. They said it could be MS but they weren't sure. Within a month I had another relapse. I had severe bouts of vertigo, I kept falling to the floor and vomiting because the vertigo was so bad. So, I was taken to have another MRI and the diagnosis was confirmed over the phone to my mum a few days later that I did have MS.

Overcoming MS for me

What Overcoming MS means to me is living life to its fullest despite having a chronic illness and facing each day with resilience and hope for the future. And I can say that from being diagnosed 16 years ago to now things have gotten better, and they do get better.

Overcoming MS makes me feel really hopeful for the future. I've adjusted so many things in the last few

years, whether it be diet, exercise, or taking vitamin D, it's been really great to take hold of my health and work towards a better future for myself. I've realised that having a disability and having MS shouldn't limit my potential, that I can do anything I set my mind to whether that be getting out of bed and facing each day or backpacking around Europe by myself. MS really shouldn't limit you or anything that you do so don't place limits on yourself.

How I support the charity

I support Overcoming MS by being involved in the community of other people who live with MS. I did the program and learnt so much about healthy eating, the benefits of exercise, vitamin D, and I found that really rewarding. Also I'm impressed with the online platform portal and getting to know other people with MS and be able to read about their bios, their lives and their stories. It honestly made me feel less alone and more visible in living with a chronic illness.

I cannot wait to see what my future holds."

“Overcoming MS makes me feel really hopeful for the future.”

– Deanna



Share your own Overcoming MS journey by emailing us at digital@overcomingms.org

Circles

We help people living with MS to feel supported through Overcoming MS Circles, our growing global network of volunteer groups.

- Overcoming MS Circles, our local community support groups, are facilitated by volunteer Ambassadors. They provide support for people who have started the Overcoming MS Program.
- Support is available both online and offline.
- 98 Circles (vs 94 in 2021)
- 108 Ambassadors (vs 100 in 2021) contributing on average 4 hours per month
- 2,754 Circle members
- 28 countries

“ I really appreciate the ease with which you can be contacted and your responsiveness when I’ve needed to ask for your help. You have also provided events, surveys and training etc. which have been very useful to me personally, and to help keep the Overcoming MS Ambassadors in touch with each other and what’s going on with Overcoming MS, which is no mean feat given the geographic spread of Circles and Ambassadors! Well done!”
 – Voice of the Community



To find our Circles, visit overcomingms.org/circles



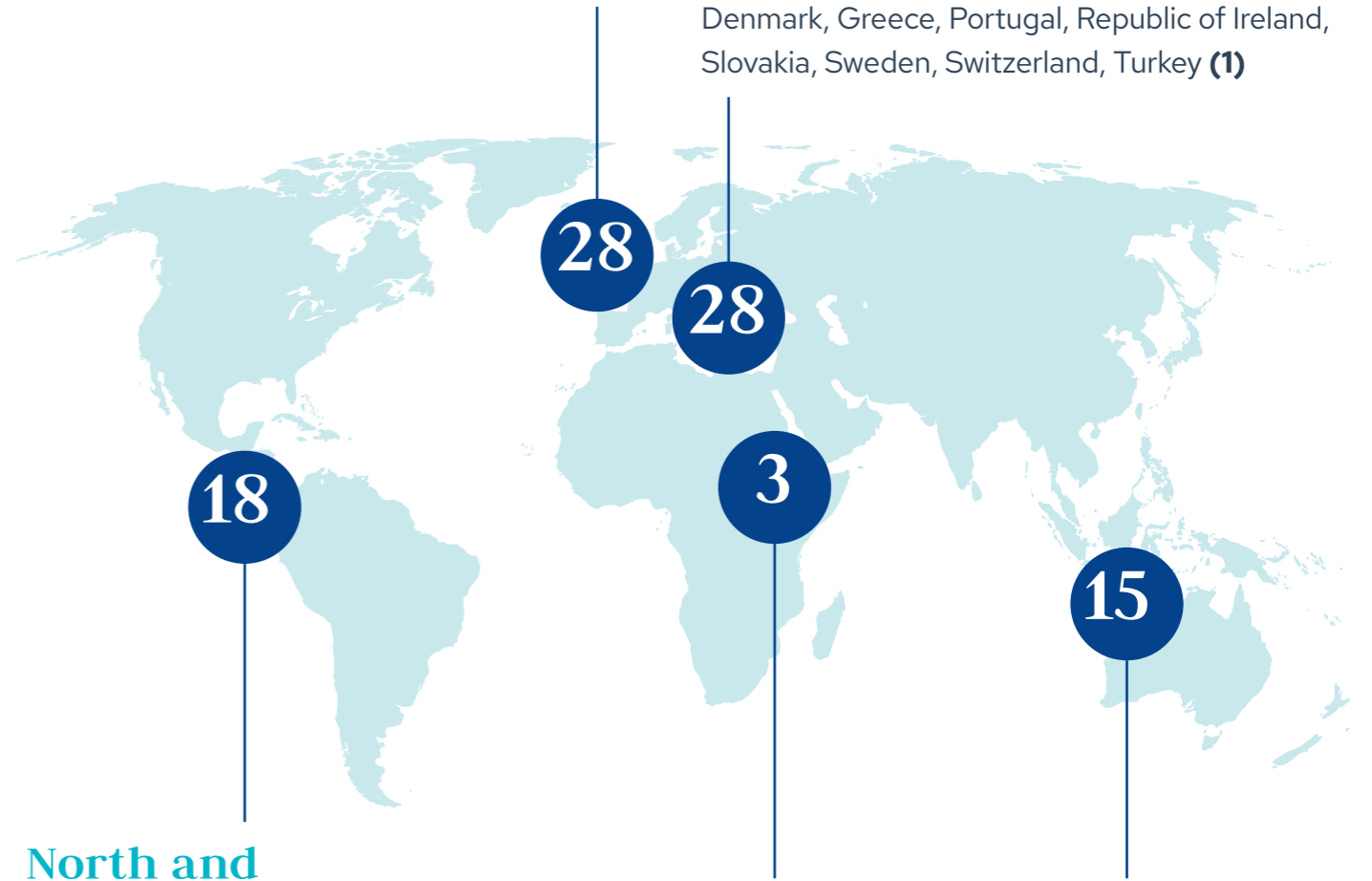
Global Connections

United Kingdom

England (24), Scotland (4), Northern Ireland (2), Wales (1)

Europe

Germany (10), The Netherlands (3), Italy (2), Belgium (2), Spain (2), Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey (1)



North and South America

USA (13), Canada (4), Brazil (1), Columbia (1)

The Middle East

Israel (1)

Australia and Asia

Australia (8), New Zealand (4), India (1), Hong Kong, Taiwan (1)

4 Thematic Circle

Living well with Progressive MS, Global Circle, Family Life and MS, Pathway to Overcoming MS

Live Events and Courses

2022 saw the long awaited return to in person events, following a 2-year hiatus due to Covid restrictions.

Events

Some of the highlights included:

- Delamore Arts Festival – Overcoming MS were the chosen charity partner at an event organised by an Ambassador from a Circle in the UK supported by the 30 Circle members and raising £11,000 for the charity
- British Society of Lifestyle Medicine (BSLM) Conference – Facilitator Dr Jonathan White presented to the 1,000 strong crowd, with the team manning a stall and networking with the public and healthcare professionals
- Manchester Mindfulness Festival – Overcoming MS funded free tickets for the community members and showcased MS Nurse, Sue Tibbles' mindfulness research study, sponsored by Overcoming MS
- Other community events attended included the Clacton Community Fair and Leamington Eco Festival in the UK

As part of Volunteers Week in the UK, we held an exclusive online event featuring personal stories from our community, with an invitation featuring the design work and art of an Ambassador.

To support our Ambassadors in their role, we piloted a new Safeguarding training module delivered in partnership with HR Fit for Purpose. This will be rolled out in 2023. We also ran Ambassador check-in sessions every 6 weeks with over 65 Ambassadors attending and delivered 3 self-development sessions with Yasmin Neves from Healthy HR with 149 Circle members signing up.

Course: Pathways to Overcoming MS

A pilot of a four-week online course delivered by our expert Overcoming MS Facilitators to 25 participants across the globe including Australia and Canada, focusing on increasing people's confidence, knowledge and understanding of the Overcoming MS Program.

Evaluations showed 100% would recommend the course to family and friends and 43% of respondents scored themselves as having the highest level of confidence to follow the Overcoming MS Program post course vs 0% pre-course. As a result, we have developed our plans to deliver 2 cohorts of the course in 2023.

One participant told us *"My diagnosis was only recent and my anxiety still takes over. Being on the course and seeing other people doing well gives me enormous hope and strength. Thank you!"*.

“ We regularly see first-hand the optimism, hope and passion that the Overcoming MS community has for the program and in sharing it with new and existing audiences. Thank you to everyone who has engaged with us, both online and in-person, we are looking forward to growing our diverse programme of events to bring to the community in 2023. ”

– Jake,
Community Engagement Administrator





Campaigns

Healthcare Professionals Engagement

We established and worked closely with a group of expert MS health professionals and commissioned specialised digital content to empower the healthcare professional community. As people working in healthcare play essential roles with those diagnosed with MS, we want to enable them to access the research that indicates the importance of lifestyle changes. This will empower them to make more of their patients aware of the importance of lifestyle choices on the progression of their MS.

2023 will see the expansion of our healthcare professional engagement programme, through collaborations and networking at key health professional events.

New Contacts from Events

We attended five in-person events and conferences, where we had over 250 conversations with key stakeholders including healthcare professionals, members of the community and other organisations. We made 20 new key organizational contacts.

I am Overcoming MS

We ran our first outreach campaign linked to 'I am Overcoming MS', featuring our founder, Linda Bloom, alongside some of our long-standing facilitators. This campaign aimed to help raise awareness of what 'overcoming MS' can mean to people.

Although there is no cure for MS, we know that following the Overcoming MS Program can lead to positive mental and/or physical outcomes, which leads people to talk about 'overcoming MS'.

The specific outcomes of lifestyle change vary by person, depending on their starting point and risk factors. Having launched the campaign with Linda and the facilitators for our 10th anniversary, we invited community members to share their own stories of what 'overcoming MS' means to them, regardless of their experiences.

These will form part of a campaign in 2023.

“
When I found Overcoming MS, it was life changing.”
– Voice of the Community,
Claire

I am Overcoming MS video participants



Dr Jonathan White
Medical Advisor



Linda Bloom
President, Overcoming MS



Dr Véronique Gauthier-Simmons
Yoga expert



Dr Rachael Hunter
Clinical academic working in the NHS

Surveys and Insight

The research that sits behind the program is central to our work.

We repeated our Ambassador survey which saw an increase in how supported our Ambassadors feel, with 82% feeling very informed in their role (4+). In addition, we recruited members of the community to participate in a focus group, enabling us to get feedback and insight from the community in developing and shaping new projects.

We also ran our MS Conversations survey, focusing on emotional and practical support needs of our community. Over 50% of respondents struggled to have a conversation about their MS and said that talking to employers, colleagues and family were the biggest challenge. Support with how to talk about their MS was most needed in relation to talking with healthcare professionals.

Following feedback from our community about the desire to be able to connect with each other on mobile, we piloted two new community app platforms in partnership with 12 members of the Overcoming MS community. These community members were actively involved in the design and development stages of the trial and their feedback has enabled us to shape our app which is launching in 2023. The app is designed to optimise the user experience and will enable Circle members to easily connect with each other, receive the latest tips and advice and have their questions answered about making lifestyle changes.



“We strive to be community-led and committed to listening to and understanding the lived experiences of people with MS who follow the Overcoming MS Program. We are passionate about using insight and translating it into meaningful ongoing work which empowers people living with MS to live a happy, healthy life.”

– Liz,
Community Engagement Programme
Manager

Reach Out Project

To find out more about Circles with lower numbers we carried out a small research project, interviewing Ambassadors to understand some of their experiences. We identified 5 main themes from the interviews, which included the need for translatable resources and peer support.

“Although I appear fine, the risk of future disability has permeated every important decision for the past decade. Whether or not to have kids, where to live, buying a house that is accessible if my mobility goes, diet and lifestyle choices, choice of partner, leaving a corporate job etc. I would like to convey how much risk and uncertainty there is to juggle on top of actual health issues.”

– Voice of the Community



Dee's Story

"My name is Dee and I am Overcoming MS. When I was diagnosed with MS, I felt utter shock. I remember lying in that MRI scanner thinking "I don't have MS." And then I felt grief for the life of adventures I was planning to have.

My diagnosis

My symptoms were completely numb feet. I couldn't feel the ground beneath them. I could feel the vibrations as I walked but that was it. It was like walking on blocks of wood.

Overcoming MS for me

What Overcoming MS means to me is hope, resilience and empowerment. The scientific information you share really helped me to understand why I needed to make the changes that I did.

As a result, I feel able to have those adventures I was looking forward to. I feel optimistic, and I've got a lot to look forward to. And I can live a really healthy life with the exercise programme and the diet. When I was screened, the usual 40-year-old screening by the NHS, the nurse told me that I had the lowest chance of developing cardiovascular disease of anyone she had screened.

How I support the charity

I support the Overcoming MS charity by making video recipes to help people transition to the diet or just to give people more ideas. Join us in Overcoming MS."

“
What Overcoming MS means
to me is hope, resilience and
empowerment.”

– Dee



Share your own Overcoming MS journey by emailing us at digital@overcomingms.org



Collaborate

We influence and partner with the broader MS community, including healthcare professionals.

Our aim is to help them understand the importance of self-management and lifestyle choices for people with MS and the benefits of the Overcoming MS program.



MS Charities Working Group

Working with five other MS charities – MS Society, MS Trust, MS-UK, Shift.MS and MS National Therapy Centres on policy and campaigns to influence the long term outcomes for people with MS, informed by the experiences of people with MS. Our goal is to advocate for better recognition, treatment and access to support for all people living with MS.

Hope Reborn

We were delighted to work with musician and video producer Fabio D’Andrea and the MS Society on the production of a short film starring Rose Leslie. The film, Hope Reborn, aimed to raise awareness of some of the challenges experienced by those with multiple sclerosis while also sharing the idea which is central to Overcoming MS, that there is hope after a diagnosis.

Starring actress Rose Leslie, Ambassador for the MS Society and well-known for her roles in Downton Abbey and Game of Thrones, the film also featured members of the Overcoming MS and MS Society community. The film launches in 2023.



“Partnership working is integral to the success of Overcoming MS and achieving our strategic ambitions.

Our strength comes from the commitment of our Overcoming MS Community, our volunteers, our dedicated staff team, people following the program and our partnerships with other organisations and professionals. I am excited for the future, with the introduction of new services and support we can offer our Overcoming MS community.”

– Sian,
Head of Programmes



Collaborate

Hello Self Family Support Programme

Building upon the knowledge that 52% of survey respondents (MS Conversations 2022) struggled to discuss their MS with family members and knowing the impact that a person's MS can have on the wider family / carers around them. We worked in partnership with Hello Self to deliver online group and one-to-one psychological support to 12 family members / carers of people living with MS.

80% of respondents felt more confident in obtaining information and support from Overcoming MS.
100% of respondents would recommend the Family Support programme to other people supporting somebody living with MS.

“
The facilitators were really great and well informed. I would definitely recommend them. They were friendly yet challenging.
– Voice of the Community

Funding Open Access: the Neuroepidemiology unit, University of Melbourne

We provided £9,800 in funding to the NEU at the University of Melbourne, who are running research into the importance of lifestyle for MS. Our funding provided open access to 3 new research studies, enabling more people to access their findings about the difference that lifestyle can make to people with multiple sclerosis.



Support us

We need your help to continue supporting people with MS.

All our services are paid for by money donated by individuals and trusts. We are truly grateful for the support we receive.



Giving Money

Our services that support people with MS, such as our information, webinars, podcasts and events are only possible through money raised from trusts, individuals donating or fundraising. If you are able to, please consider helping us support more people with MS by taking part in a fundraising activity, setting up a regular donation or even leaving a gift in your will.

Thank you, so much, to every individual or group that has helped us raise £126,106 in 2022. In 2022, we received generous donations from trusts and significant funds from a range of individuals. People in our community raised money in a range of ways, from Delamore Arts to sponsored marathons.

Any financial gifts, however small, add together to make a difference. Please donate at overcomingms.org/donate to enable more people to live well with MS.

“I support this charity by being an Ambassador of an Overcoming MS Circle, making financial contributions, helping with fundraising and by staying active and participating in the Overcoming MS community.”
– Vicky, Overcoming MS Ambassador



Giving time

Our team of volunteers is essential to our success, as they enable us to make our impact and have direct connections with people with MS around the world. As well as Ambassadors leading our 98 Circle groups, who provide direct connection and support to others in their local areas, we have a range of roles including representatives on our Communications Advisory Group, enabling people with MS following the Overcoming MS Program to

give thoughts and advice on our communications plans, our volunteer healthcare professional advisors, and a number of other roles. In 2022, we had 142 volunteers without whom we would not be able to function effectively.

Please consider donating your time to help us support people around the world with MS. Email volunteer@overcomingms.org

Voices of the Community:

“I support the work of Overcoming MS by volunteering time to be the host of the Living Well with MS podcast.”

– Geoff

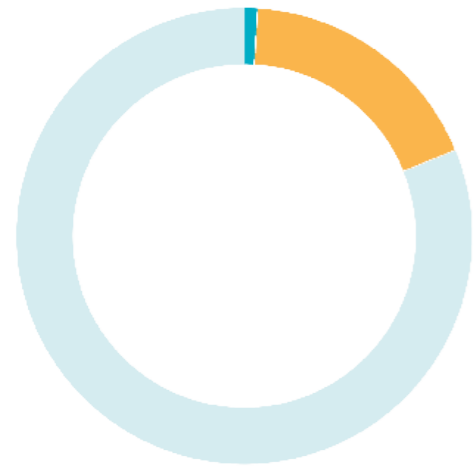
“I support the Overcoming MS charity by making video recipes to help people transition to the diet or just to give people more ideas.”

– Dee

“I support OMS in every way that I can. I run two Zoom fitness sessions per day. I highly recommend OMS to everyone.”

– Claire

Income



- **<1%**
Investments, other **£976**
- **19%**
Donations and community fundraising **£145,262**
- **81%**
Grants **£611,676**

(Pie charts demonstrating figures audited accounts 2022)

Our total 2022 income was £757,914, fundraised through donations, community, and grants. In 2021 our total income was £757,131.

We are encouraged by our 2022 results, maintaining a consistent level of income versus the previous year, despite the challenges we experienced and the economic and political uncertainty in the external environment. As a small charity we will continue to work hard with our funders and supporters to expand our program of support and help more people with MS live a full and healthy life.

We are grateful to all our funders. We would like to thank The Happy Charitable Trust for their support in 2022. To individual fundraisers, including those who ran the Marathon des Sables, and those who ran an event at Delamore.

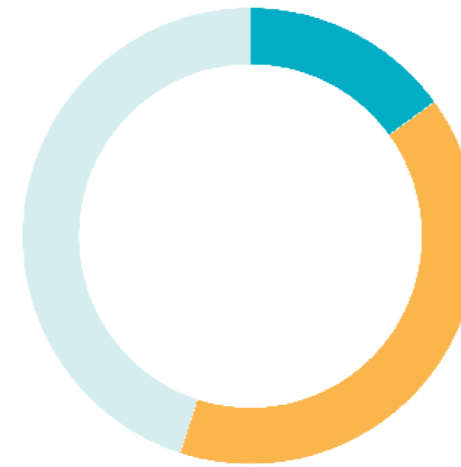
We are regulated by the Fundraising Regulator and adhere to the Fundraising Code of Practice. We did not receive any complaints about our fundraising activities in 2022.

Gift-in-kind

We received gift-in-kind design and brand support from JMA Creative in Melbourne, Australia. **The value amounted to £20,831.**

We also received pro bono HR and legal support with an **estimated value of £10,000.**

Expenditure



- **15%**
Fundraising and publicity **£135,827**
- **40%**
Overhead **£366,332**
- **45%**
Charitable activities **£415,110**

Our total expenditure was £917,269

- Our total fundraising expenditure in 2022 was £135,827. Our new fundraising strategy was approved by the board in 2022.
- Almost half of our expenditure was spent on delivering and expanding our programme of support.

- We continued to improve our operational infrastructure through updating our IT to improve remote team working and reduced our overheads by closing our permanent physical office in England.

Reserves

At the end of 2022, we held £317,101 in total reserves including £297,360 in unrestricted reserves.

We closed 2022 with £19,741 in restricted reserves. This is income **gifted by generous donors to be spent on specific projects and regions.**



You can download a full copy of our audited accounts and Trustee annual report at:
overcomingms.org/about-us/overcoming-ms-governance

What we plan next

Some of our 2023 plans:



Inform

- UK Pop up tour, reinvigorating our face-to-face connections with our Circles and others around the UK and inspiring them with engaging expert talks
- New Pathways courses, taking the outstanding feedback from the 2022 pilot, to help even more members of the community make progress with the program through collaborative live training
- Six months to Overcoming MS course, providing entry-level, step-by-step guidance for those wanting to build up to following the Overcoming MS Program



Support

- New digital platform, our new innovative and integrated digital tool to enable our Circles to easily connect and support each other, as requested by our community
- 'Train the Trainer' to extend our capacity to provide information, courses and support, through training additional expert facilitators with lived experience



Empower

- Retreats, restarting our flagship, in-depth, in-person events which have been shown to provide a unique and empowering experience for attendees, committed to lifestyle change
- 'I am Overcoming MS' community campaign, inspiring others by sharing stories to show the diverse ways that people can feel empowered despite their different experiences of MS.



Collaborate

- Launch 'Hope Reborn' in collaboration with MS Society, Fabio D'Andrea and Rose Leslie, sharing the message that there is hope after an MS diagnosis
- Partner with UK MS charities to increase the impact of our campaigns, reach and strength of voice by working together towards shared outcomes



Thank you

“Thank you so much for all that you do, it is so helpful to us in the Overcoming MS Community and really appreciate your hard work and support.”

– Voice of the Community

To all of our:

Volunteers

including our Trustees and Ambassadors who give their time and expertise.

Fundraisers

who attend virtual quizzes, and run, walk or wheel.

Donors

who give what they can, when they can.

Thank you for helping to inform, support and empower people with MS.

With your help, more people can live well with MS.



OMS

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40 Overcoming MS Impact Report 2022