



MS Therapy Centre (NW)

Charity Reg No: 1095695

Company Number: 04501975

ENRICHING THE LIVES OF THOSE LIVING WITH
MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS



Trustee Application Pack

Welcome

The Trustees would like to personally thank you for showing interest in finding out more about the MS Therapy Centre (NW) and how to become a Trustee.

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a long-term condition that affects the central nervous system. It impacts the ability of nerves to conduct electrical impulses to and from the brain, and this produces the various symptoms of MS. The increasing level of symptoms and disability experienced by many can affect working, family and social life.

Since 2003 the MS Therapy Centre (NW) (MSTC) has been supporting those with Multiple Sclerosis to lead more positive, enriched lives by providing complimentary therapies, Oxygen therapy, support and wellbeing services. It remains MS centric but also extends its reach to those with other neurological conditions, cancers, long covid and other specific conditions. Last year we provided 1,000 hours of chamber Oxygen therapy to 5,000 people and a further 2,000 hours of surface oxygen. Our chamber operators are a dedicated group of highly trained volunteers and without our volunteers we would be unable to provide the support that we do.

This small but vibrant organisation offers the right people variety and challenge in shaping its future. The Trustee Board needs people with a wide range of skills and experience to support this dynamic organisation. Since buying the current property in 2019 the Charity has experienced a wealth of change as well as those challenges presented by the pandemic and ensuing economic changes. We are at the beginning of the next exciting stage in renovating the building and diversifying the services which we can provide. To do this we need additional Trustees who are as passionate as we are about helping our service users, their families and friends attain all that they can and wish to achieve.

We don't believe that MS should define people and we aim to make the journey of every person who comes through the Centre doors more bearable and positive through the support we give.

I hope that once you have read and considered this pack that you will be inspired to submit an application for consideration. If you would like to discuss this further before doing so, please contact Ann Hedley on T: 07926 377876 or E: comms@mstherapynw.org

Kind regards

Ann, Barrie & Martin (The Trustees)

Background

In 2002 the original Charity was forced to close down due to lack of funds. Our current Trustee Martin Clancy and former Trustee Andy Gilbody decided to reestablish it, realising the impact on their family service users' mobility and quality of life without the services which the Centre offered. The new organisation was registered 29th January 2003 with plans in place for a bright future and a base from which to blossom and grow.

The new Charity was originally sited in Trafford Park in rented accommodation. This space was becoming too small for the growing number of those seeking our services and support. We also wanted to grow our offering and to diversify. The previous premises were based on an industrial estate with limited parking and poor public transport links. In addition the landlords wanted to expand their business from their adjacent property into the one which we occupied. The rent was seen as lost funds and the then Trustees sought to find a building to purchase which would future proof the Charity and allow flexibility going forward. Having built up reserves with the intention of the Charity securing their own premises in the future; it was now in a great position to do so.

The current property was found and purchased in 2019 and fundraising began in earnest to convert the property and to make it fully accessible. Just as renovations were about to begin Covid struck and the Charity was unable to progress. Since then a great deal of work has been undertaken. Whilst superficially it looks as though only the ground floor of the building has been completed major works such as the staircase to the second and third floors, lifts, toilets, ground source heat pump and internal insulation is hidden away behind the scenes. We are now looking positively towards completing the Physiotherapy Suite and a further set of toilets on the third floor.

The reserves set aside for renovations were eaten away by mortgage payments and expenses during the pandemic. However, things are now back on track and as we look forward we see positive changes ahead and a real move towards the intended diversification of services.

The move to these premises and the facilities in the new building were planned following consultation with our Centre users. The choice to complete the Physiotherapy Suite next is a reflection of the service which they are missing the most.



Objectives and Activities

Our purpose as registered with the Charity Commission and stated in the Memorandum and Articles of Association is:

‘The Charity is principally engaged in acting for the public benefit to aid and improve the condition of all those suffering from multiple sclerosis and other neurological conditions by providing advice, guidance and moral and practical supports to sufferers and their carers by arranging, providing and operating facilities for therapeutic treatments to aid and enhance the management of the disease.’

In order to support these objectives we plan to:

- Provide a range of treatments and therapies that provide relief from symptoms of MS and other neurological and chronic conditions in order to enrich lives;
- Provide a drop-in Centre, information point and counselling service as a hub of support to tackle psychological symptoms and reduce isolation for people with Multiple Sclerosis, their carers and family in the North West;
- Promote and support physical and mental well-being together with healthy living. We will offer friendship, companionship and support to encourage physical exercise to enhance mobility through Physiotherapy sessions/classes, use of equipment, massages and fitness and wellbeing classes along with our main therapy of Oxygen Treatment.

Our Vision is to be able to offer a welcoming, beneficial environment which enriches the lives of people living with MS and related conditions.

Our Values

- Listening: Listening to our service users allows us to adapt to their needs
- Inclusive: We believe that everyone can make a contribution to our Centre and we feel it is important to provide the space for this to happen
- Celebrating Success: Our volunteers and service users are at the core of our Centre and we recognise their support and achievements.
- Non-Judgemental: This allows the space for our service users to be themselves and to feel comfortable to be who they are.



Our Board of Trustees and its Purpose

The Board of Trustees at MSTC are responsible for providing oversight and leadership of the Charity, ensuring good governance and effective probity. The Trustees ensure there is a clear strategic direction in line with its charitable purpose. Just as importantly, they support and challenge the staff to enable the Charity to grow and thrive. We are a small organisation and the Trustees also volunteer in a variety of roles both onsite and behind the scenes.

Time Commitment Required from our Trustees

- The time commitment required from a Trustee can vary but is approximately 6 half day meetings a year plus preparation time. This includes:
 - Attendance at four board meetings, usually taking around three hours in the day plus travel time.
 - Attendance at the Annual General Meeting
 - Attendance at important occasions including fundraising events.
 - Representing the Charity and public speaking

It is likely that new Trustees may be asked to undertake a specific responsibility reflecting their skills and expertise in order to drive the Charity forward.

Location of the Role

Most meetings are held at the Centre in Eccles at a time when the Charity is closed. It is understood that online attendance might be necessary to fit with other commitments, however, it is expected that a proportion of meetings will be attended in person within any given year.

Main Duties

- Provide oversight to ensure that MSTC adheres to and is run in accordance with its charitable purpose, governing documents, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Setting and approving strategic direction and approving any associated business plans and budgets, ensuring the financial stability of the organisation.
- Agreeing key areas of priority and ensuring that the organisation has the capacity to deliver them
- Reviewing the Charity's performance against target in relation to its plans and budgets.
- Provide oversight to ensure the protection and effective management of the Charity's assets, including any investment funds.
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of the Charity, including having appropriate policies, procedures and controls in place. To include appropriate risk management systems.

- Agreeing terms of reference for committees, panels, working groups and volunteer engagement.
- Ensure that key risks are being identified, monitored and controlled effectively.
- Review and approve the financial statements.
- Supporting, providing direction and managing the performance of senior staff in the exercise of their delegated authority and systems of internal control.
- Follow proper and formal arrangements for the appointment, supervision, support, appraisal and remuneration of the staff.
- Keep abreast of changes in MSTC's operating environment.
- Contribute to the broader promotion of MSTC objects, aims and reputation by applying skills, expertise, knowledge and utilising appropriate contacts.
- Attend and actively participate in Board meetings (being adequately prepared and ready to contribute to discussions).
- Be a positive representative for the Charity and work to safeguard, uphold and promote the brand and values.

Benefits of becoming a Trustee:

Becoming a Trustee is a great way to develop leadership skills, gain experience in governance and understanding all aspects of running an organisation. It can build confidence, resilience and provide a real step change for people looking to advance in their careers. It is also an opportunity for experienced people to use their knowledge for a Charity whose aims they support. It's also incredibly rewarding knowing that you are making a real difference and achieving more collectively than you would individually.

It can also be fun and socially fulfilling.



Who We're Looking For

We are looking for several applicants with energy, drive and a passion to make a difference to others to join our Board of Trustees. We are looking for individuals who have a strong empathy with our objectives and who are able to bring a range of different skills, backgrounds and expertise to the table.

Being a Trustee is hugely rewarding; learning new skills and ultimately helping to make a real difference to the lives of those we support on a day to day basis. There are serious responsibilities too, as a Trustee you accept ultimate legal responsibility for directing the work of our Charity. This includes making sure it is well-run, financially solvent and is delivering our charitable outcomes for the benefit of our service users, their families and the wider community.

Applicants should:

- Have a commitment to the aims and ambitions of the MSTC and have conscious enthusiasm to be involved and contribute to the Board's work.
- Have relevant skills, experience and knowledge drawn from either a professional or not-for-profit background.
- Strategic vision.
- Have a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to the Charity in addition to Trustee meetings.
- Have good independent judgement and the ability to constructively challenge
- Have an ability to understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Trusteeship.
- A commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- Have the ability to work as a member of a team but also to contribute an independent perspective but being willing to accept and support majority decisions.
- The ability to think creatively and independently with the desire to try new things whilst being conscious of risk.
- An understanding and commitment to the brand, with an ability and willingness to represent MSTC in an ambassadorial capacity.
- Commitment to principles of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Have strong communication skills and the ability to analyse and interpret information and data using electronic means of communication.
- Have financial literacy.
- Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
- Be at least 18 years of age.

Skills

We welcome applications from candidates with knowledge and background across the following areas:

- Human Resources and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Marketing, Communication and Public Relations
- Clinical and Care Provision
- Safeguarding
- Project Management
- Social Media Management
- Facilities Management
- Finance and Investments
- IT Systems
- Third Sector Management
- Fundraising and Trading

You don't necessarily need to have experience of governance in the Charity sector – knowledge you have gained from other roles and sectors and your energy, drive and enthusiasm will make a difference to our Charity.

TRUSTEE MYTH-BUSTING

There can be several misconceptions of what's needed to be a Trustee, so we thought we'd bust some of those myths!

- **YOU HAVE TO BE INVITED TO BE A TRUSTEE:** This isn't true. We advertise our Trustee roles both internally and externally and welcome applications from people we haven't yet met.
- **YOU ARE PERSONALLY LIABLE IF THINGS GO WRONG:** Don't worry – this is not true! Personal liability is limited to £1 per Trustee, meaning that even if the Charity were to close you would not have to personally pay for any debts. Legal responsibility requires you to act with honesty, integrity, in the best interests of the Charity and without any conflicts of interest.
- **I DON'T FIT THE IMAGE OF WHAT A TRUSTEE SHOULD BE:** There is no right or wrong image of what a Trustee is – old or young; male, female or non-binary; formal or informal, etc. Our board aims to represent the wide range of communities we serve across the North West. This means we want our Trustees to be a mixture of ages, gender, ethnicity, knowledge, social background, skills and lived experiences.
- **I'M NOT THE TYPE OF PERSON WHO WOULD MAKE A GOOD TRUSTEE:** There are so many talented, experienced and passionate people who would make the perfect Trustee, but who count themselves out because they don't consider themselves confident or experienced enough. This is a huge loss for those boards, and your perspective could be the very thing that can change an organisation for the better. Please don't count yourself out.

How to Apply

Thank you once again for your interest. To make an application please provide a copy of your CV or outline of your personal/professional profile, alongside answers to the following key questions:

1. Why do you want to become a Trustee at the MSTC? (250 words maximum)
2. How do your unique skills and experiences make you a brilliant candidate to be a Trustee - thinking about both professional and lived experiences. You may wish to read through the 'Who We're Looking For' section and consider how you meet the criteria. (500 words maximum)
3. What values and objectives resonate with you and why? (300 words maximum)

Please add anything else that you think is relevant to your application in your covering letter. This might include personal, organisational or counselling experience; paid or unpaid work etc. (total letter 750 words maximum)

Applications will be assessed against the needs of the Trustee Board. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an interview and tour of the Centre. At this point you will also be asked to provide the names and contact details of two referees. References will not be taken up without your permission.

Please email applications to: comms@mstherapynw.org





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