

Therapists in MS (TiMS)

Aims and Constitution

Our mission statement:

To improve the lives of people with multiple sclerosis (MS) by supporting, strengthening and promoting the therapist's role in their holistic care and management and to share expertise and develop skills and knowledge of UK therapists working with people with MS.

Aims

TiMS aims are based around the following key areas:

- Service Development
- Education
- Research
- Communication and Promotion

Service Development:

- To develop and improve therapy services for people affected by MS
- To define and promote the use of specialist therapists in MS
- To produce guidelines, audits and clinical tools for use with people with MS

Education

- To develop, produce and promote educational initiatives for UK therapists with an interest in MS
- To develop, produce and promote educational initiatives for people with MS
- To support UK therapists, from novice to specialist, who have an interest in MS, through the sharing of expertise and best practice

Research

- To promote therapists in the field of MS to embed research and audit findings into their clinical practice
- To promote therapists to be research active in the field of MS
- To support therapists in the field of MS by facilitating access to key research-related tools, schemes and organisations via the TiMS website

Communication and Promotion:

- To be a proactive voice for UK therapists with an interest in MS
- To increase awareness of the therapist's role in MS amongst other health and social care professionals and stakeholders
- To provide a way for therapists with an interest in MS to be in contact and share knowledge and experience with other interested practitioners
- To monitor and raise the profile of therapists working at specialist level
- To forge links with related professional organisations, both nationally and internationally



The TiMS website

TiMS is an initiative which brings together therapists and other allied health professionals who share a special interest in multiple sclerosis.

This dedicated website is the vehicle for communication amongst TiMS members and a way for all therapists with an interest in MS to get involved. It is divided into four sections which reflect the aims of TiMS: service development; education; research and communication and promotion. It contains information about the current activities of TiMS, tools and resources, links to related websites and organisations and items of interest to therapists working in the field of MS and can be accessed at: www.therapistsinms.org.uk

TiMS members can input suggestions and feedback on the website content by emailing therapists@mstrust.org.uk

Becoming a member of TiMS

Therapists and AHPs interested in becoming a member of TiMS should contact the MS Trust. Their details are recorded (name, profession, position, address, contact details) and they will receive a welcome letter and a copy of the Aims and Constitution. Benefits of membership are as follows:

1. They can pose a question about the management of MS which will be sent to TiMS Working Group for a response.
2. They will receive quarterly newsletters containing a summary of the minutes of the Working Group.
3. They will receive emails concerning items of interest to AHPs working with people with MS.
4. They can become a member of the Working Group when a vacancy arises (see criteria below).

Therapists Working Group

Aims

- To facilitate and deliver projects and activities that fulfil the aims of TiMS.
- To represent TiMS members
- To respond in a timely and appropriate way to issues which affect TiMS members

Membership Commitment

Members of the Working Group will be drawn from the TiMS membership. They will fulfil one or more of the following criteria:

- Possess expertise in a specific area of MS
- Work in an MS specialist role
- Have experience of MS related research
- Have experience of initiating or developing MS services
- Have responsibility for a particularly high MS caseload

In addition to the above, the Working Group members must:



- Have current active involvement with an MS caseload, or bring relevant experience and commit to attend group meetings. These are one-day meetings and locations may vary. The number of meetings per year may vary; up to a maximum of four.
- Commit to active involvement in progressing a project. Project groups will additionally meet at key points and will also communicate by e-mail and conference calls
- Act to establish links with other therapists in their local region to keep them informed about the activities of TiMS
- Represent and promote TiMS in their day-to day work environment

Composition of the Working Group

- The group can include representatives from any professional group currently registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), who have regular involvement in the care of people with multiple sclerosis
- The total number of Group members will not exceed 25. The minimum number required at a meeting to make decisions is 12
- Proportions of professions within the Group will, as far as possible, be based on the HCPC registration figures for each professional group
- Attempts will be made to ensure that representatives come from a wide geographical spread across the UK
- Attempts will be made to ensure that the group contains representatives from different clinical settings and areas of MS expertise

Becoming a member of the Working Group

- It is the intention to have a blend of professional groups, geographical locations and experience within the Network Working Group
- Group members will be asked to re-state their commitment annually and can remain for a term of 3 years
- At the end of 3 years, individuals can indicate their willingness to continue and would then be subject to a voting process if there are more volunteers than places available
- New members will be recruited from the TiMS membership list.
- The opportunity to join the Group will be advertised annually to all TiMS members.
- Potential members should submit a short statement describing their reasons for wanting to join the Group and their experience of working with people with MS to the co-chairs who will decide on their suitability for the role
- Suitable candidates will be recruited when a vacancy arises

Co-Chairs of TiMS



The Working Group will have two appointed Co-Chairs who will work together to fulfil the following roles:

- Facilitation
- Leadership
- Clarification
- Providing a different perspective
- Guidance
- Promotion
- Fulfilment of the aims of TiMS
- Representation
- Consultation
- Effective communication

The Co-Chairs will:

- Be a member of the HCPC
- Have experience of working with people with MS
- Not be included in the total number of the Working Group
- Hold office for 3 years
- Not hold office for more than 2 terms

Appointment of a Chair:

When a Chairperson steps down, a replacement will be nominated by the Group and approached to ascertain if they would be prepared to stand. All those prepared to stand will provide a short CV and mission statement and the Group will democratically elect the new Chair.

Decision making in the Working Group

In general, decisions will not require a vote however if necessary:

- The decision to take a vote will be made by the Co-Chairs or Chair of the particular meeting
- All members of the Group have the right to a vote, however, only those present when the decision to vote is taken are entitled to vote on a specific issue
- In the event of a split vote, the Co-Chairs will have the final decision

MS Trust Support for TiMS

The MS Trust provides financial support for the Working Group meetings and all projects. Travel expenses for attendance (if individuals are unable to source support from their employers) are also available. Travel expenses for attending the TiMS meeting held at the MS Trust Annual Conference and any project meetings will be agreed on a case-by-case basis. The MS Trust also provides facilitation and support for TiMS activities and projects.

