

Annual Report 2025

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المتعدد
National Multiple Sclerosis
Society

2025 has been a year of progress and lasting impact, one that advanced support for people with MS through awareness campaigns, community programs, research funding, and strategic partnerships.

This report captures our collective efforts and determination to shape a UAE where MS care, understanding, are accessible to all. Each milestone achieved reaffirms that progress is always possible when community, innovation, and advocacy come together.

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Foreword

In 2025, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society continued to build on its progress for the third consecutive year, a journey inspired by the legacy of the UAE's Founding Father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, and guided by values of ambition, determination, humanity, and resilience.

From the beginning, our vision has been clear: to build a future where no one continues to suffer from multiple sclerosis (MS).

What began as a vision to improve the lives of people living with MS has evolved into tangible progress, strengthening systems of care and improving quality of life for those affected by MS.

Community remains at the heart of all our efforts.

Aligned with the Year of Community, declared by President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, this work draws inspiration from his visionary leadership and the nation's guiding principles of collaboration and shared responsibility to unify efforts and strengthen our systems of care.

Guided by these values, we have expanded partnerships across regulators, healthcare, and academic institutions to ensure sustainable and meaningful progress.

In 2025, the Society strengthened its policy leadership by advancing progress towards the national adoption of the first-ever MS treatment guidelines and ensuring that stakeholders across the healthcare ecosystem are ready to translate these guidelines into effective practice.

In parallel, we continue working with partners to unify efforts to shape policy, strengthen care systems, and accelerate scientific research.

At the same time, we continue to engage the youth, strengthen awareness, and explore new research frontiers that contribute to redefining how MS is understood, managed, and experienced across the UAE.

Living with multiple sclerosis does not limit potential; rather, it calls for collective effort and shared commitment. Through these collective efforts, we are building a sustainable ecosystem that enables the MS community to thrive.

The achievements of the past year are shaped by the dedication and lived experience of those living with MS, their primary carers, and the advocates who stand alongside them.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the Society's employees, Board of Trustees, and Medical Advisory Committee, for their dedication and their continuous efforts to advance the Society's work.

As we move forward with confidence, year after year, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society remains steadfast in its commitment to an inclusive and supportive UAE, where every individual is empowered.

Inspired by the legacy of Sheikh Zayed and guided by the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, we continue to draw on every pathway and source of knowledge to advance towards a world free of multiple sclerosis.

HER HIGHNESS SHEIKHA HASSA BINT MOHAMED
BIN HAMAD AL NAHYAN

Chairperson of Board of Trustees, National Multiple
Sclerosis Society

Welcome Message

At the National Multiple Sclerosis Society (NMSS), our focus has always been to transform commitment into action, and vision into measurable impact for the MS community.

Over the past year, NMSS has acted with the same determination and urgency that have guided us since our inception, pushing us to strengthen partnerships, tailor programs, provide essential support, and fund critical research that expands our knowledge and shapes the future of MS treatment both in the UAE and globally.

Through collaboration, we have built upon the solid foundations of our early years. The expansion of the NMSS Research Grant Program, the adoption of the UAE's first MS Treatment Guidelines, and the formation of the National Coalition for MS all reflect our commitment to translating progress into sustainable, long-term impact. These milestones not only advance care and understanding but further reaffirm the UAE's leadership in fostering an ecosystem where healthcare, research excellence and compassion are intertwined, setting a new global standard for care.

Our goals to address the challenges posed by MS could not have been achieved without the collective efforts of our multi-sector partners. It is through collaboration that aspirations are transformed into tangible outcomes and systemic change takes root.

As we look to reshape the future of MS, may we remain inspired by the values of our wise leadership, who have charted the nation on the course of ambition, humanity, optimism, and resilience, and continue to build a society where people with MS are empowered to thrive, with their lives defined by inclusion and hope.

DR. FATIMA AL KAABI

Vice Chair, National Multiple Sclerosis Society

About Us





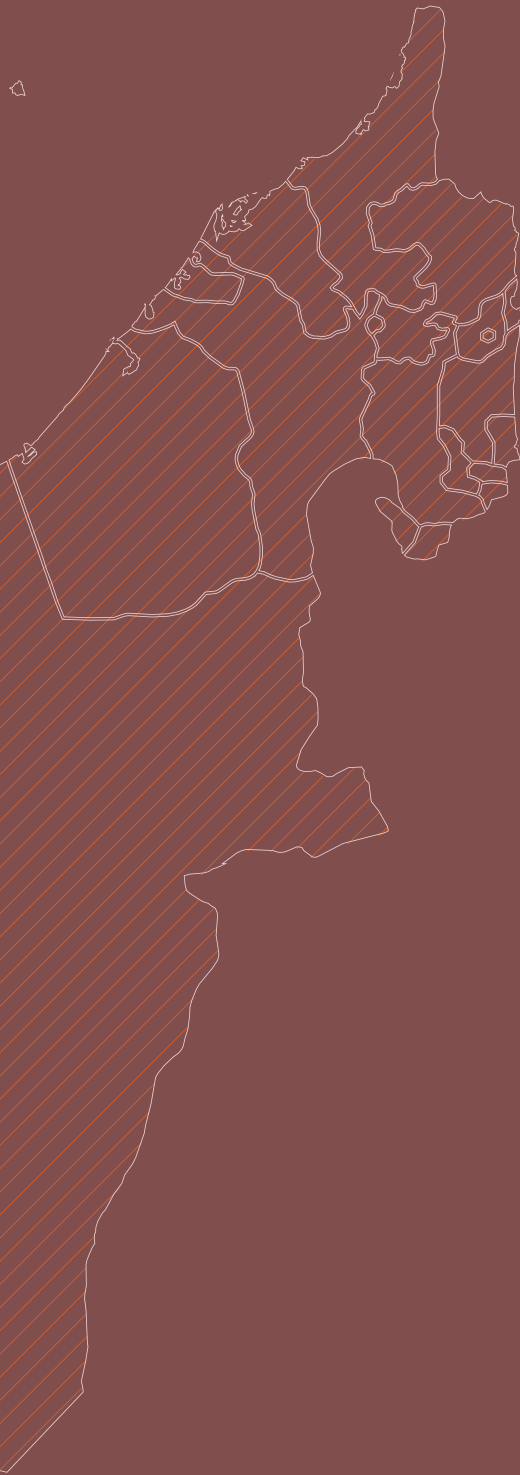


MS commonly begins in young adults, with an average age of onset of around 26 in the UAE

26 Years

19 / 100,000

The number of people with MS in the UAE is estimated to be approximately 19 out of every 100,000 people



While MS awareness in the UAE is on the rise, NMSS still strives to create a future where no one continues to suffer from MS.

NMSS at a Glance





VISION

We strive to create a future where no one continues to suffer from MS.

MISSION

Our mission is to empower the MS community in the UAE through advocacy, support programs and advancing global efforts to finding a cure for MS.

OBJECTIVES

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society (NMSS) is dedicated to building a supportive ecosystem for the MS community in the UAE, by providing comprehensive resources that empower people with MS to navigate daily challenges and lead healthier lives.

Recognizing that change requires a multi-dimensional approach, NMSS is actively collaborating with a network of multi-sector partners to improve access to care, standardize guidelines, and fund pioneering research to advance treatment outcomes.

These actions, coupled with sustained awareness and advocacy efforts, are what translate intent into tangible impact and shape a more inclusive future for the MS community in the UAE.

347

Talks Registered Participants

Initiatives to Date

20

NMSS started with a vision of improving the lives of people with MS in the UAE. In just three years, we have moved from outlining plans and identifying community needs to implementing full programs, launching a dedicated MS Helpline, and funding impactful research that is shaping the future of MS care and support.

Our work is guided by three core pillars: providing meaningful support and resources, raising awareness to break stigma, and advancing research and development to improve treatment. These pillars have shaped every program, partnership, and initiative launched since our establishment.

Living with MS can bring challenges that touch every aspect of life. That is why NMSS creates spaces and platforms for connection and support, where people with MS, their families, and carers can share experiences and insights, and find the resources they need to navigate their diagnosis with confidence.

Awareness remains central to our mission. Through culturally resonant campaigns, community talks, and collaborations with local institutions, we continue to replace misconceptions with understanding and empathy. Our goal is not only to promote early diagnosis but also to build an environment where people with MS feel seen, heard, and supported.

Research is a vital pillar of our work. We champion and fund studies that focus on the UAE's unique population, ensuring that MS treatments and management strategies are relevant and effective. By building strong partnerships with leading specialists, nationally and internationally, we bring local representation to global research efforts to understand MS, advance treatments and, ultimately, find a cure.

Now in our third year, NMSS has grown from a vision into a catalyst for progress.

Events Participated In

20

9.1M

Total Research Grant Amount Allocated

Partners

50+

500+

Students Reached

Publications

12

500+

People Reached Through Helpline

Our Year in Review





Guiding Framework

In 2025 our efforts to increase awareness, develop resources, and create ecosystems that empower the MS community to live better, more empowered lives. These efforts grew into national campaigns and global representation, continuing to shape and inspire the organization's work.

Across its three core pillars, NMSS achieved measurable progress, deepening its impact for people and families affected by MS and making significant investments in MS research.

Driving Research & Development

Fund cutting-edge research in the UAE and internationally to improve the quality of life of people with MS and build the capacity of the homegrown research workforce.

01

Providing Support & Resources

Listen to the MS community and develop programs and resources that respond to their needs.

02

Raising Awareness & Reducing Stigma

Increase public understanding of MS across the UAE to foster empathy and reduce stigma.

03

THEME
Research

PORTFOLIO
MS Research

PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

- Research Grant
 - Registry
 - Treatment Guidelines
 - Fellowship
-

THEME
Community & Educational
Resources

PORTFOLIO
MS Connections

- PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
- Talks
 - Community Engagement
-

THEME
Holistic Wellbeing

PORTFOLIO
MS Living

- PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
- Art Therapy
 - Physical Wellness
(AZM and Nourish+)
-

THEME
Medical Care & Support

PORTFOLIO
MS Care

- PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
- MS Helpline
 - Access to Care
 - Training & Development
-

THEME
Stakeholder Engagement
& Fundraising

PORTFOLIO
MS Engage

- PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
- Move for MS
 - National Coalition for MS
-

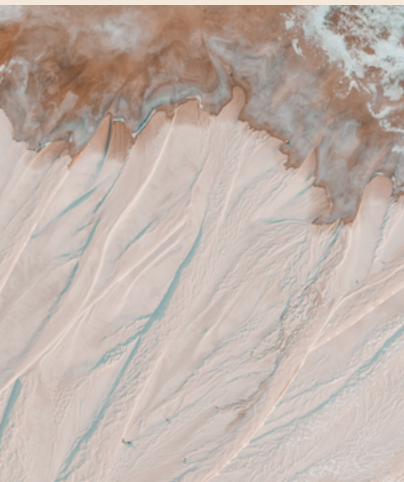
THEME
Education & Advocacy

PORTFOLIO
MS Educate

- PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
- Youth Awareness
 - World MS Day
-

Driving research and development to advance treatment for MS





—
PORTFOLIO

MS Research

Research remains at the cornerstone of our mission to advance treatment across the UAE.

By supporting innovative studies, NMSS strengthens the local research ecosystem, empowers talent, and drives progress towards standardized, context-specific treatments, improved healthcare systems, and a better quality of life for people with MS.

A fourfold increase in research proposals during our second grant cycle, along with strengthened partnerships with academia, regulators, and healthcare providers, reflected the growing momentum of MS research in the UAE. Building on this progress, NMSS launched its third grant cycle to further expand knowledge, deepen collaboration, and accelerate meaningful advancements for people living with MS.

This year also marked a milestone with the inaugural Research Grant Award Ceremony, which brought together regulators, medical professionals, and researchers to celebrate the expanding impact of national MS research.

The event reinforced collaboration across sectors and underscored MS as a growing priority within the UAE's health research agenda.

MS Research

INSTITUTION
 BABELYI STREET
 BEIJING CENTER (HONG)

PRIMARY INVESTIGATORS
 Dr. Muhammad Saqib

RESEARCH TITLE
 EARLY PREDICTION, TIMELY
 DIAGNOSIS AND ACCURATE
 PROGNOSIS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS
 FROM MULTI-MODAL DATA USING
 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

ABOUT THE RESEARCH
 This study aims to use advanced AI algorithms to analyze data from patients with MS, including brain MRI scans and patient's clinical history to improve the detection, diagnosis and prognosis of MS. The preliminary results show a developed image-based classifier to differentiate between normal and abnormal MRI scans using publicly available datasets of healthy individuals and MS patients. This AI tool can accurately distinguish MS patients from normal by analyzing brain MRI scans. The team also developed a novel MS (Information Field-Enhanced Spatiotemporal Graph-Based UNet for new To w lesion detection in multiple sclerosis, an automated method for detecting new lesions in MS patients using UNet (Information Field-Enhanced Spatiotemporal Graph Neural Network (GNN).

INSTITUTION
 MOHAMED BEN ZAYED
 UNIVERSITY OF
 ARTIFICIAL
 INTELLIGENCE (MBZUAI)

PRIMARY INVESTIGATORS
 Dr. Muhammad Saqib

RESEARCH TITLE
 EARLY PREDICTION, TIMELY
 DIAGNOSIS AND ACCURATE
 PROGNOSIS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS
 FROM MULTI-MODAL DATA USING
 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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Research Grant
Cycles: Accelerating
Discovery



46
Applications

06
Funded studies

~4x
Growth in applications

Second Grant Cycle (2024–2025)



This year marked a defining moment in NMSS's journey to advance MS research with AED 4 million in grants awarded to six pioneering projects across the UAE. Announced in partnership with strategic stakeholders, including the Department of Health – Abu Dhabi, these projects span the understanding, diagnosis and treatment of MS, reflecting a national commitment to accelerating progress in MS research and advocacy.

Since its inception in 2023, the Research Grant Program has witnessed remarkable growth, receiving 48 submission forms in the second cycle. From this competitive field, six outstanding studies were selected for scientific merit, innovation and potential to transform patient outcomes.

The success of this second cycle reflects not only NMSS's steadfast dedication to advancing MS research but also the UAE's growing role as a hub for scientific excellence.

—
Allocated to MS
Research:

₹ 4M

15

International & regional
collaborations

Each grant awarded brings us closer to earlier and more accurate diagnoses, improved treatments, and pathways leading us closer to a cure.



Dr. Halima Alnaqbi

Khalifa University

Investigating Genetic & Epigenetic Association with Familial MS

The study aims to investigate the genetic and epigenetic associations of familial multiple sclerosis (FMS) in the UAE population, focusing on identifying biomarkers related to susceptibility, clinical phenotypes, severity, and progression of MS.



Prof. Immanuel Moonesar

Mohammed bin Rashid School of Government

Assessing Geographic and Socioeconomic Disparities in Access to Disease-Modifying Therapies for Multiple Sclerosis Patients in the UAE

The study aims to evaluate the differences in access to these therapies across the UAE. It focuses on mapping the availability of these therapies, analyzing the impact of socioeconomic factors such as income, education, and health insurance, and identifying disparities between urban and rural areas.



Dr. Mohammad Yaqub

Mohamed Bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence

NMSS-LLM: The World's First Large Language Model for Multiple Sclerosis

The NMSS-LLM project aims to develop the world's first Large Language Model (LLM) specifically designed for MS. This AI initiative will use advanced natural language processing (NLP) to create a centralised, bilingual platform for consolidating and analysing MS-related knowledge. By integrating fragmented data from diverse sources, NMSS-LLM will provide clinicians, researchers, and patients with a powerful tool to enhance understanding, support diagnosis, and personalise treatment.

Expected outcomes include improved clinical decision-making, accelerated MS research, and a collaborative ecosystem for knowledge sharing, marking a significant innovation in AI-driven healthcare solutions for complex neurological conditions like MS.

Funded Studies



Dr. Shadi Hasan

Khalifa University

Enhancing Myelination in Multiple Sclerosis Through Targeted Electric Field Simulation

The study investigates the potential of electric field stimulation (EFS) to enhance remyelination in MS patients. This translational research has both in vitro and in vivo phases and aims to determine the optimal EFS parameters and understand the cellular mechanisms influencing oligodendrocyte precursor cell (OPC) differentiation and myelin synthesis.



Dr. Alham Jehad Ali Al-Sharman

University of Sharjah

Development and Evaluation of Augmented Reality-Based Dual-Task Training to Enhance Cognitive and Motor Function in People with Multiple Sclerosis.

This study aims to develop and evaluate an Augmented Reality (AR) based dual-task training program to improve cognitive and motor functions in people with MS. The research will assess the feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary efficacy of AR scenarios designed for MS rehabilitation.



Dr. Charalampos Pitsalidis

Khalifa University

Self-Energy Harvesting Sensors for Enhanced Monitoring of MS (SENSE)

The study aims to develop a wearable, self-powered monitoring system using triboelectric nanogenerator (TENG) technology to continuously track gait abnormalities in MS patients which can facilitate early prediction of disease progression. The study integrates these sensors into comfortable wearables, such as shoe insoles, which transmit data in real-time.

NMSS Research Grant Award Ceremony

NMSS hosted its inaugural Research Grant Award Ceremony, celebrating the growing impact of its national research program, announcing the six winning projects from its second grant cycle. The event brought together 65 attendees, including representatives from the Ministry of Health & Prevention, Department of Health – Abu Dhabi, Dubai Health Authority, Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre.

The awarded projects covered a diverse range of focus areas, including genetics, artificial intelligence, myelination through electric field stimulation, and socioeconomic studies. The event reflected the UAE's expanding MS research ecosystem and is a testament to the country's expanding scientific capabilities and its vision to become a global hub for healthcare and research.





The ceremony underscored NMSS's long-term vision to improve quality of life for people living with MS in the UAE and beyond, driving transformative research that turns hope into tangible progress.



Third Grant Cycle (2025–2026)

Following the success of two grant cycles, we launched our third research grant cycle under the theme Advancing MS Treatments. This theme reflects our mission to accelerate scientific discoveries and improve patient outcomes. Aligned with the 'Stopping Disease' and 'Restoring Function' pathways of the global Pathways to Cures roadmap, this cycle supports research that advances the development, optimization, and evaluation of treatment strategies to slow, halt, or reverse the impact of MS.

This cycle's focus areas include disease-modifying therapies, remyelination, neuroprotection, precision medicine, regenerative approaches, and clinical strategies for rehabilitation, wellness, or symptom management.

The cycle invited local and international researchers at the forefront of treatment innovation to submit projects that drive therapeutic development, optimizing existing interventions, and explore new strategies to improve outcomes for people with MS. Grant awardees for this cycle to be announced in Q1 of 2026.





Research in Action

This inaugural cycle laid the foundation for a structured, evidence-driven approach to supporting studies that address clinical needs, deepen understanding of MS in the UAE, and enhance quality of life for people living with MS. It also established new collaborations with academic, clinical, and research institutions across the country.

The following section outlines a few projects supported in this first cycle and highlights their contributions to the growing MS research landscape in the UAE.

Cycle 1 marked the launch of the Society's first research grant – an important milestone in advancing MS research priorities.



Beginning with Dr. Baseem Yamout of Harley Medical Street, an NMSS-funded study titled “MS in Children: Epidemiology, Clinical Characteristics, and Treatment Patterns in the MENA Region” was presented at the European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (ECTRIMS) Congress in Barcelona, Spain.

This landmark research represents the largest global study on pediatric-onset MS. It analyzed clinical, MRI, and treatment data from 1,260 children and adolescents living with MS, drawn from MENACTRIMS and national registries across 11 countries in the MENA region, establishing the world’s largest pediatric MS cohort.



Dr. Osama Abdullah from New York University Abu Dhabi, whose funded research titled “LAMINATE: Longitudinal AI-based MS Lesion and Atrophy Segmentation Tool” was used in partnership with Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, Yas Clinic-Khalifa City and Abu Dhabi Stem Cells Center to develop an AI-powered tool that makes MRI scans smarter by detecting the “central vein sign” (CVS), a highly specific biomarker for MS. This breakthrough helps neurologists and radiologists distinguish true MS lesions from look-alikes caused by other conditions such as migraines or vascular disease.

The project expanded its clinical and community outreach by welcoming Sheikh Shakhbout Medical City (SSMC) as a new hospital partner, engaging the MS community through an Open Research Day, and receiving recognition through awards at Abu Dhabi Global Health Week and the 10th MENACTRIMS Congress.



ADOPTED BY REGULATORS

Recognizing a clear need from both our Medical Committee and the MS community, NMSS developed the National MS Treatment Guidelines, customized to the UAE healthcare system.

These guidelines translate global best practices into locally relevant standards, bridging the gap between international research and patient-centered care and were officially adopted by the Department of Health-Abu Dhabi (DOH) in 2025.

The impact of these guidelines is multifaceted: they standardize and improve care, promote evidence-based treatments, including advanced therapies like stem cell transplantation, and ensure equitable access for all people living with MS. They also foster aligned clinical and payer decision-making, support ongoing medical updates, and directly inform healthcare policy.

Through our research, NMSS continues to collaborate with health authorities to encourage best practices in MS care, emphasizing patient preference and shared decision-making as central to treatment:

Customized to the UAE healthcare system

Translate global best practices into locally relevant standards

Align clinical decision-making and payer policies

MS Treatment Guidelines Workshops

To support the implementation of the MS Treatment Guidelines, DoH and NMSS convened two multidisciplinary workshops with over 50 neurologists, insurers, and representatives from the MS community to align on the practical application of the guidelines across diagnosis, treatment decisions, and coverage processes.

The sessions provided an overview of the guidelines and underscored the importance of early diagnosis and timely treatment, while also addressing how clinical and reimbursement considerations should be coordinated. By bringing neurologists and insurers together to clarify interpretations and expectations, the workshops aimed to improve communication, reduce delays in accessing treatment, and ensure that people living with MS experience consistent and efficient pathways of care.

For the first time, people living with MS were empowered to advocate directly for their own cases, engaging in meaningful dialogue with insurers, an experience some insurers described as their first direct interaction with a patient. This milestone reflects NMSS's commitment to amplifying patient voices and driving systemic improvements in access to care.



Engaging the Community in Research



135

Registered participants





Empower MS

Building on its commitment to advocacy, NMSS strengthened the connection between its mission and research through a special research-focused edition of Empower MS, held alongside the Middle East North African Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (MENACTRIMS) 2025.

As an annual event, Empower MS offers theme-based learning and support that reinforce the community's ability to advocate for their needs. This year's edition created an inclusive platform where people living with MS, their families, and primary carers explored the power of research – not only as science, but as a shared journey of understanding, contribution, and change.

By demystifying MS research and clinical trials, the program aimed to build curiosity, confidence, and trust in the research process, ensuring that the voices of people living with MS are meaningfully reflected in research priorities and advocacy efforts.

The program featured interactive researcher talks, and a “Research Ready” workshop where participants gained practical knowledge about clinical research, their rights, and opportunities to engage, while fostering dialogue between researchers and the community.

National Advocacy



National advocacy at NMSS focuses on strengthening the systems that shape everyday experiences for people living with MS in the UAE. By working closely with public and private sector partners, NMSS helps translate research, policy, and lived experience into practical action that improves access, quality of care, and long-term outcomes.

This national focus is complemented by regional and global engagement under the leadership and patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Hassa bint Mohamed bin Hamad Al Nahyan, Chairperson of NMSS, reinforcing the UAE's contribution to advancing MS care, research, and collaboration beyond its borders.

10th MENACTRIMS Congress

Under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Hassa bint Mohamed bin Hamad Al Nahyan, the UAE hosted the 10th Middle East North Africa Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (MENACTRIMS) Congress on 5–6 December 2025 in Dubai. The congress convened leading clinicians, researchers, and policymakers from across the region and internationally, reinforcing the UAE's role as a regional hub for scientific exchange and collaboration in MS care.

The patronage of Her Highness reflects a sustained commitment to improving the lives of people living with MS through advancing research, strengthening clinical practice, and promoting the adoption of best practices. Through MENACTRIMS, NMSS contributed to elevating standards of care, fostering cross-border collaboration, and supporting knowledge-sharing across the Middle East and North Africa.

This leadership is further reflected in NMSS's growing scientific and service contributions, including the launch of the UAE's first National MS Treatment Guidelines, later published in the peer-reviewed journal Multiple Sclerosis and Related Disorders (MSARD) and adopted by UAE health authorities, and the introduction of the MS Helpline, the country's first phone-based support service for people living with MS.

By the end of 2025, NMSS will have allocated AED 9 million to research grants, supporting innovation and progress toward improved outcomes.



Global Advocacy

NMSS actively champions the rights and needs of people living with MS, working to shape policies, enhance access to services, and promote public awareness.

Through collaboration with healthcare authorities, community stakeholders, and decision-makers, these efforts ensure that the perspectives of those affected by MS are recognized and prioritized across the UAE.



At COSP

MS Ambassador Mariam Alqubaisi represented the MS community on the world stage at the COSP18 side event, Empowering Inclusive Development through Disability-Inclusive Action and Partnership, held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Invited by the Zayed Authority for People of Determination, Mariam shared her powerful story of living with MS in a talk titled “A Story of Self-Driven Empowerment”, advocating for inclusion, accessibility and the strength of lived experience.

Organized in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of the UAE to the UN – New York and Rehabilitation International, the event was also webcast globally through the UN website.

At ECTRIMS

This year at ECTRIMS 2025 marked a noticeable shift in our global positioning, from being participants in international MS dialogue with other MS societies to being recognized as contributors shaping global health and regional research agendas.

The UAE National Multiple Sclerosis Society was acknowledged on the main stage for its leadership in advancing equitable access to care and strengthening regional evidence generation.

In one of the high-level sessions on access to diagnosis and treatment, NMSS was showcased as a global case study for how national treatment guidelines can drive policy change and improve access to MS therapies through leveraging the WHO Essential Medicines List, where NMSS was highlighted as a model of how global efforts can translate into national advocacy to achieve tangible national impact. This recognition underscores the UAE's growing voice in translating global recommendations into real-world outcomes for people with MS.

Global Engagement on Disability & Inclusion

NMSS participated in the International Labour Organization's (ILO) 2nd Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific, Catalyst for Change: Disability-Inclusive Business in APAC, joining a global forum to exchange lessons and practical case studies on disability inclusion.

The conference reinforced that inclusion is not optional but a strategic imperative, with organizations tapping into the diverse talent of People of Determination and the wider workforce to strengthen competitiveness, resilience, and growth. During the event, NMSS also met with the Singapore MS Society to share resources and explore avenues for strengthened collaboration, further advancing regional partnerships and knowledge exchange in MS care and advocacy.

MENA Congress for Rare Diseases 2025

NMSS participated in the MENA Congress for Rare Diseases to share findings from “Rethinking the future of workplace inclusion for People living with MS” on the barriers for employment and policy recommendations for inclusive workplaces that can benefit the wider POD community.

Policy Shaping

Ensuring patient voices shape research agendas and policies.

NMSS participated in two national and Dubai-level research agenda-setting workshops, ensuring the perspectives of patient organizations were meaningfully represented.

NMSS included people living with MS in more than four policy-setting workshops in Abu Dhabi, including the POD Strategy led by the Department of Community Development and guideline implementation workshops with insurers convened by the Department of Health.



PwMS PERSPECTIVE: PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH



Viktor Jirault
Researcher

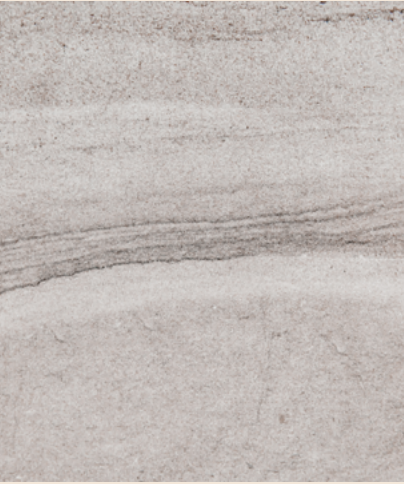
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RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT | 10



Providing support and resources to people living with MS





PORTFOLIOS

MS Connections
MS Living
MS Care

Support for people living with MS has grown significantly since inception. What began with a few essential services has evolved into a comprehensive support network, now strengthened by innovative digital tools and the launch of the UAE's first national MS Helpline.

These resources ensure that the MS community and their families have access to reliable guidance, practical information, and emotional support whenever needed.

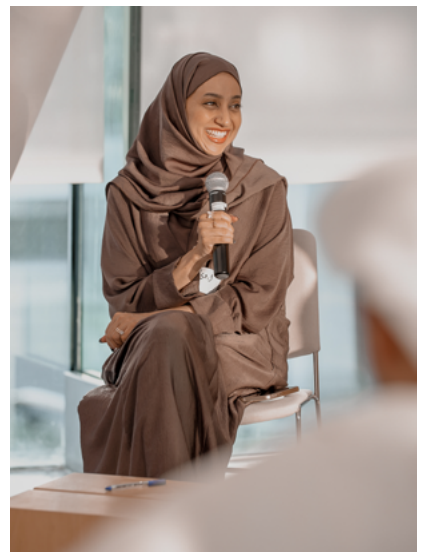
A community support portfolio, aiming to address pressing issues that arise from the MS community by delivering trusted information and connecting people with MS to different platforms.

MS Connections



Talks

Talks facilitates discussions across different platforms and formats, both physically and virtually.





Themed discussions for and by the people living with MS, with the presence and support of experts and professionals in various fields.

The program provides guidance, support, and MS-related education within community settings, while enabling decision-makers and the wider public to hear directly from people living with MS about their needs, challenges, and lived experiences. In 2025, NMSS hosted seven Talks covering a range of topics important to the MS community.



74

Registered participants

SPEAKERS:

Razan Shwayhat

Clinical Dietitian at Eldersquare
Healthcare Center

Marwan Eisa

MS Ambassador

Nutrition Webinar

This session highlighted practical insights from the Nutrition Guide for MS & Autoimmune Conditions, including regional recipes, anti-inflammatory tips, and mindful eating aimed at raising awareness about how diet and gut health impact MS symptoms and wellbeing.

66

Registered participants

SPEAKERS:

Dr. Ash Shishodia

Medical Director and Consultant
Psychiatrist at Thrive Wellbeing Center

Christi Gadd

Clinical Psychologist at Thrive Wellbeing
Center

Rayan Daboul

MS Ambassador

Mental Wellness Webinar

Coinciding with World Mental Health Day, the first of a series of sessions highlighting NMSS's digital guides, spotlighting the Mental Wellness Handbook and Reflection Journal.

Through expert insights, interactive discussions, and community stories, participants gained strategies to support everyday mental wellness and guided mindfulness exercises to use on a day-to-day basis.

47

Registered participants

SPEAKERS:

Marilena di Coste

CEO and Founder, The Butterfly

Omar Al Nokhatha

Research & Advocacy Coordinator, NMSS

Inclusive Employment Webinar

The webinar featured expert insights, exploring workplace challenges, sharing experiences, and offering advocacy strategies to empower people with MS in their careers.

160

Registered participants

SPEAKERS:

Dr. Suzan Noori

Senior Consultant Neurologist at University
Hospital Sharjah

Dr. Mohammad Ghatali

Consultant Neurologist at Mubadala Health Dubai

Dr. Halprashanth D.S.

Consultant Neurologist at Burjeel Hospital
Abu Dhabi

Dr. Mohamed Salah Ahmed Gamea

Specialist Neurology at Burjeel Hospital Abu Dhabi

New to MS Webinars

NMSS hosted 4 New to MS webinar sessions in 2025. These sessions offer practical guidance from a medical expert on understanding MS, including its symptoms, ways to manage the condition, and strategies for living well and will feature personal insights from one of our MS Ambassadors. It also provides a chance to connect with others who are also new to MS.

While the session is intended primarily for those recently diagnosed, it may also be helpful for individuals who have been living with MS for some time and is open to family members and loved ones.

MS AMBASSADORS:

Deborah Dunne, Huda Alghaithi, Muna Al
Harbi, Rayan Daboul

Community Engagement: Strengthening Connection Across the UAE

NMSS's community engagement efforts focus on building meaningful connections, elevating MS voices, and ensuring people living with MS feel supported and heard. Through initiatives like the MS Ambassadors program, NMSS continues to foster a sense of community and create opportunities for collaboration and advocacy.

MS Ambassadors serve as the public face of NMSS, leading conversations, speaking at events, creating content, and representing the MS community across the UAE.



Honouring NMSS's Inaugural MS Ambassadors

To honour the commitment and achievements of its inaugural cohort, NMSS hosted an MS Ambassador Dinner, marking the end of their two-year term.

The event celebrated the exceptional contributions of volunteers who have championed awareness, advocacy, and support since NMSS's founding in 2023, while also highlighting the transformative impact of their work.

Beyond recognition, the evening reinforced the growing sense of community, solidarity, and shared purpose that continues to drive NMSS's mission and strengthen the MS ecosystem across the UAE.

MS Ambassador Program Cycle II

NMSS launched the second season of its MS Ambassador Program aiming to welcome a second cohort to raise awareness, challenge stigma, and inspire hope through storytelling and community engagement. A record number of applications were received, reflecting growing confidence and visibility of people living with MS.

The new cohort of ambassadors, to be announced in 2026, will act as community activators, further amplifying voices, fostering dialogue, and demonstrating that stigma is being steadily reduced through media engagement, public speaking, and increased participation in advocacy initiatives.

Testimonial

“When I was first diagnosed with MS, I felt overwhelmed and uncertain about what life would look like moving forward. Discovering NMSS gave me hope. I found stories, support, and strength in others who had walked this path before me.

Now, I want to be that source of encouragement for someone else. Becoming an MS Ambassador is a way for me to give back, share my journey authentically, and help newly diagnosed individuals feel seen, supported, and empowered from the very beginning.”

RAYAN DABOUL
MS Ambassador

A portfolio that addresses the different elements of day-to-day life, offering physical, emotional, and mental guidance through integrated lifestyle techniques including tailored nutrition, movement, and wellness programs designed to support people living with MS.

MS Living





02

Sessions held





120

Registered participants

ORGANIZER:
Focus Gulf

SPEAKERS:

Dr Ahmed Shatila
Consultant Neurologist

Muna Al Harbi
Person living with MS

FACILITATORS:

Farah Al Dana
Art Colony

SPONSORS:



Designed for people living with MS, the initiative offers an avenue to manage stress and enhance emotional well-being through creative expression.

Guided by art studios and medical professionals, the sessions blend hands-on art activities with practical stress management techniques.



Physical Wellness

The Physical Wellness Program is a hybrid initiative designed for people living with MS and autoimmune conditions, underscoring the vital role that physical activity, nutrition, mental health, and holistic wellness play in comprehensive MS care.

The program will continue to broaden its offerings to provide credible, evidence-based support that helps individuals integrate these pillars of well-being into their everyday lives. Through accessible sessions, expert guidance, and a focus on empowering healthier habits, the program aims to enhance overall wellness while strengthening community connection.

Nourish+: Nutrition & Wellness Program

NMSS launched Nourish+, Nutrition and Wellness Program in collaboration with Bodytree Studios, a six-week initiative designed to equip 9 people living with MS and other chronic conditions with practical tools and evidence-based strategies for healthier, more fulfilling lives.

Rooted in NMSS's wellness resources and tailored to the regional context, the program combined expert-led education on nutrition, gut health, and holistic wellness with practical skills such as meal planning and grocery guidance. Participants engaged in interactive group sessions, one-on-one virtual consultations at the start and conclusion of the program, and ongoing discussions within a dedicated, expert-moderated WhatsApp community.

“In just six weeks, I experienced real change. Not only in terms of nutrition or healthy eating, but on a much deeper level emotionally...

Being part of a community that truly understands your struggles, that knows what you're going through, and supports you in living a more normal, healthier, and more balanced life, that kind of support is priceless.”

NOURISH+ PARTICIPANT LIVING WITH MS

09

Registered participants

06

Week program



Evidence-Based
Digital Guides Empowering
the MS Journey

In line with its ongoing commitment to equipping people living with MS and other chronic conditions, NMSS has launched three digital guides designed to provide practical strategies, reliable information, and actionable tools to support everyday life.

2,927

Views and downloads of the NMSS
Resources & Guides

These guides focus on enhancing mental wellbeing, maintaining balanced nutrition, and effectively communicating an MS diagnosis to children across different age groups.

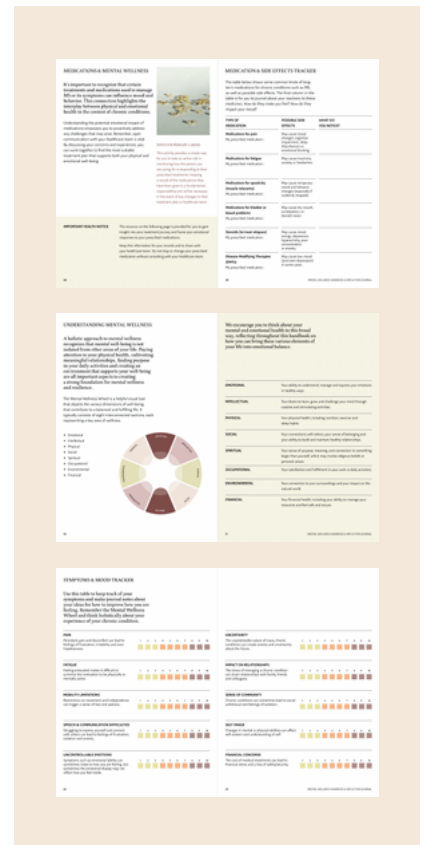
The Mental Wellness Handbook & Reflection Journal

Read Guide

Living with a chronic condition can present unique challenges, affecting both physical and mental wellbeing. This guide offers practical tools and strategies to help individuals navigate these challenges and care for their mental health.

Designed for daily use, the guide combines informational content with interactive elements that support ongoing engagement with mental wellbeing. It can be used as a reference to better understand the emotional impact of chronic conditions, or as a tool for regular check-ins and self-reflection.

It covers topics such as stress management, emotional awareness, and the role of self-care and community support, with practical techniques that can be incorporated into everyday routines. It also features guided activities such as journaling prompts, breathing exercises, and reflection practices, offering simple ways to process experiences and build habits that support overall mental wellbeing.



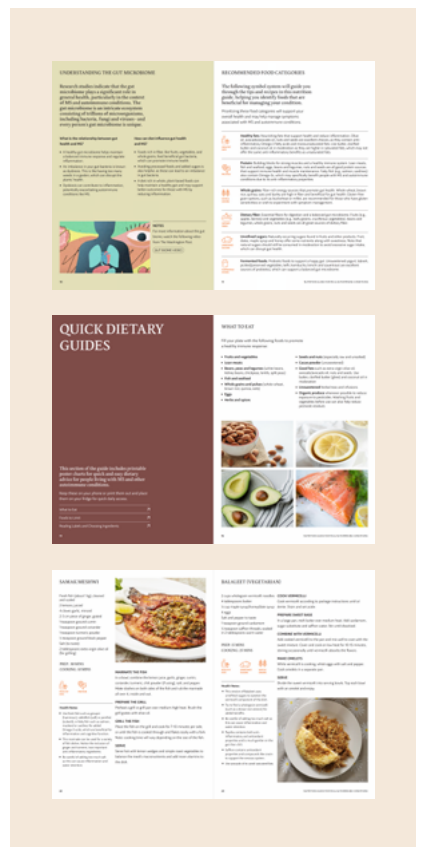
Nutrition Guide for MS & Autoimmune Conditions

Read Guide

Diet can play an important role in managing the symptoms of MS and other autoimmune conditions, and having the right guidance can help make everyday choices feel more manageable.

This guide was developed to support individuals in making informed, practical dietary choices that align with their needs and daily routines. It takes a gradual and realistic approach to nutrition, focusing on building habits that can be maintained over time, prioritizing consistency and flexibility rather than restrictive one-size-fits-all approaches.

The guide is structured to be clear and practical, covering key topics such as the role of diet in autoimmune conditions, along with easy-to-follow tips and culturally relevant examples. A dedicated Ramadan section provides guidance on maintaining balanced routines while fasting. It also includes simple tools such as meal planning templates, checklists, and suggested meal ideas to support everyday use.



Explaining MS to Your Children Guide

Read Guide

Learning that you have MS can be challenging, and for many parents, talking to their children about the condition can feel overwhelming. Endorsed by the Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority (ECA), this guide was developed to support families in navigating these sensitive conversations with clarity and confidence.

Designed for use at home, the guide helps parents and caregivers approach these discussions in a gradual and age-appropriate. It encourages open dialogue, allowing children to ask questions, express emotions, and build understanding over time.

The guide is structured to be practical and easy to use, covering key considerations such as choosing the right time and setting, and adapting language based on a child's age. It includes conversation prompts, clear dos and don'ts, and guidance on responding to commonly asked questions. It also features simple, age-appropriate activities that help children better understand the condition, while giving them space to process information in a way that feels comfortable and accessible.



Azm: MS Trainer Development Program

This year, NMSS continued its commitment to improving physical wellness support for people living with MS through the launch of a first-of-its-kind certification program for UAE-based fitness professionals. Developed in partnership with Diversified Integrated Sports Clinic (DISC), the program raises awareness among personal trainers and strength coaches about the importance of specialized, evidence-informed training for MS.

Delivered across four sessions in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, the intensive 16-hour program combined science-based education with hands-on coaching to strengthen the fitness sector's capacity to support the MS community.

The training covered a comprehensive curriculum, including the clinical foundations of MS, adaptive exercise design, energy management, motivation strategies, and neuroplasticity-based training techniques. Participants engaged in functional assessments, mobility and balance exercises, and real-time coaching scenarios, culminating in case study evaluations and teaching demonstrations.

Upon completion, trainers received official REP certification alongside professional development points toward their training permits and inclusion in the NMSS Directory, enabling people with MS to easily connect with qualified professionals.



20

PERSONAL TRAINERS

Ready to advance the physical wellness and recovery of the MS community across the UAE



A portfolio that addresses MS community needs by providing tailored guidance, improving access to care and resources, and building capacity through education and training.

MS Care



First dedicated National MS helpline





The UAE's first dedicated MS helpline offers people living with MS and their primary carers reliable information, referrals, and emotional support, integrating healthcare navigation, active listening, mental health assessments, and guidance on rights and resources.

The MS Helpline has:

Provided confidential, accessible support to the MS community

Reduced misinformation

Connected people with MS to specialized care

Offered vital emotional reassurance

527+

Calls received to date

Beyond immediate support, it also functions as a data-gathering tool, enabling NMSS to identify unmet needs, inform advocacy efforts, and refine programs to better serve the evolving needs of people living with MS in the UAE.

SUPPORTED BY e& CAMPAIGN

NMSS partnered with e& to expand MS helpline campaign reach across the UAE. Through a nationwide presence on more than 11 digital screens and billboards and the distribution of three million SMS messages, the campaign strengthened awareness and drove increased engagement with the helpline.



Training & Development: Building a Network of Support

The Training and Development Program aims to enhance knowledge and awareness of MS among specialists by facilitating educational sessions on MS management and diagnosis.

Fatima College of Health Sciences
& University of Sharjah

Under the theme “Inspiring the Next Generation of MS Specialists,” NMSS highlighted the critical role of research in advancing MS care, emphasized the importance of specialization in MS for emerging healthcare professionals, and fostered empathy and understanding among the next generation of clinicians.

Through candid storytelling and engagement, NMSS helped bridge lived experience with professional practice, motivating students to embrace innovative and compassionate approaches in their future careers.

Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation
Therapy Training

In collaboration with the Italian Multiple Sclerosis Society (AISM) and Zayed Higher Organization (ZHO), NMSS facilitated an intensive, one-week, in-person training program for two physiotherapy and rehabilitation therapists from ZHO. The program enabled participants to shadow MS rehabilitation specialists at AISM and receive hands-on, specialized training in MS care, strengthening local rehabilitation capacity.

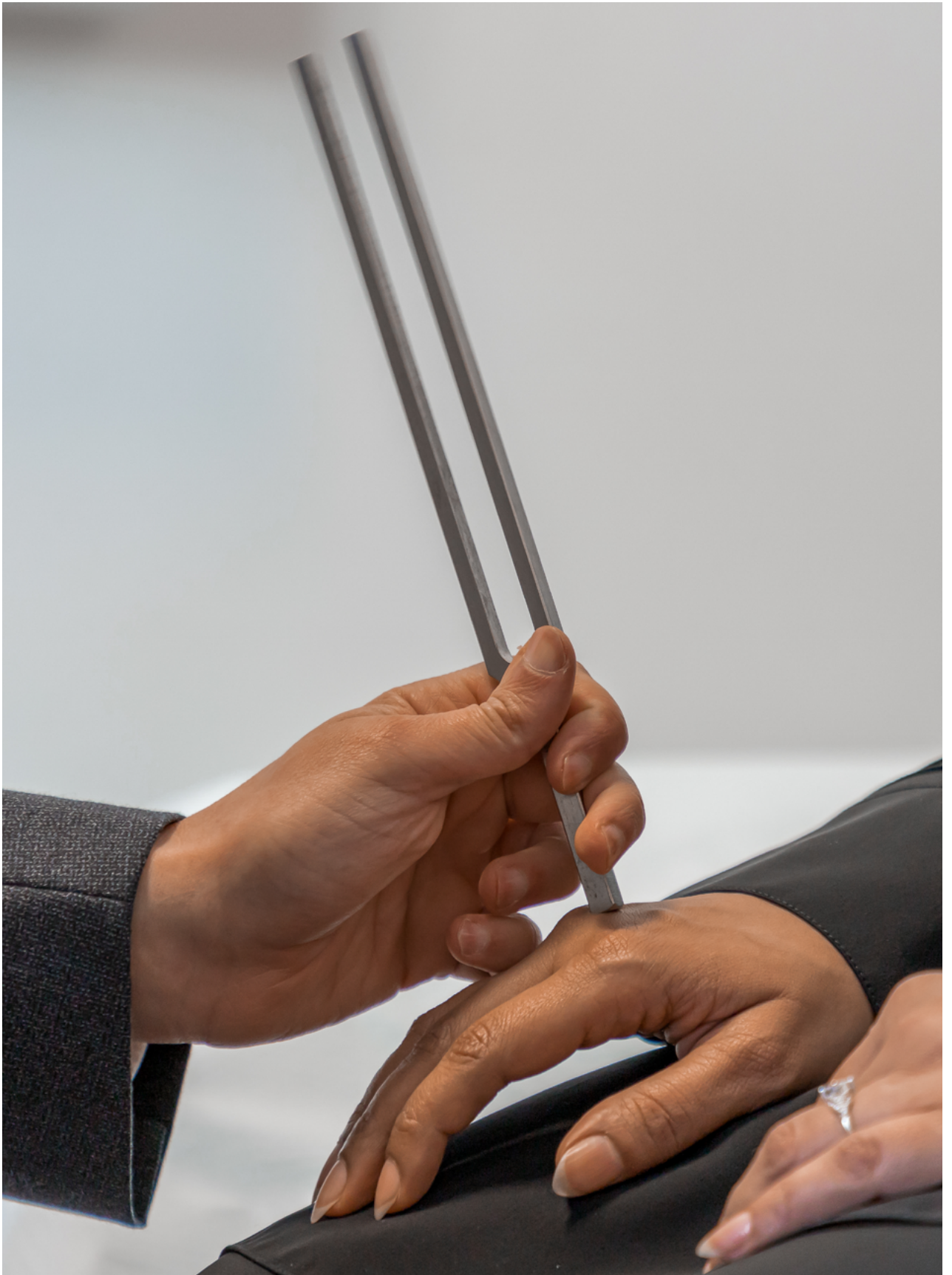
MS Treatment Guidelines
Regional Webinar

1,100 medical professionals participated in a dedicated webinar to explore and raise awareness of the UAE's MS Treatment Guidelines, with active engagement from NMSS's Medical Advisory Committee. The session provided a platform for knowledge exchange, reinforced best practices in MS care, and underscored NMSS's commitment to advancing standardized, evidence-based treatment across the region.

Access to Care

The Access to Care Program provides healthcare support to people living with MS who may be underinsured or experiencing financial hardship. Delivered through partnership with patient support programs Axios and Manzil Healthcare Services who oversee the majority of patient support programs that support people living with MS.

By helping cover essential services and providing medication for individuals who have limited coverage, the program reduces financial pressures and supports improved quality of life for those most in need.



Raising Awareness and reducing stigma associated with MS.





PORTFOLIOS

MS Engage
MS Educate

NMSS's engagement extends beyond local communities, encompassing key stakeholders both nationally and internationally.

Through targeted education across multiple sectors and advocacy initiatives, NMSS promotes awareness, improves quality of life, and supports policy development for people living with MS, while cultivating informed, inclusive workplaces and youth communities.

Our targeted awareness campaigns continue to reach diverse segments of the UAE's population, connecting with communities in meaningful and innovative ways.

A portfolio of initiatives centered on NMSS's engagement with key stakeholders locally and globally, building strategic partnerships that expand the society's reach, strengthen fundraising efforts, and advance its mission.

MS Engage





Move for MS Season II

March is recognized globally as MS Awareness Month, a period dedicated to increasing understanding of MS, supporting those affected, and advocating for enhanced resources and care. This year, MS Awareness Month coincided with the holy month of Ramadan, creating a unique opportunity to unite purpose and community spirit and inspiring the launch of Move for MS Season II.

The campaign engaged over 2,000 participants and raised more than AED 500,000, featuring a nationwide challenge with STEPPI, a Snapchat AR experience, and interactive awareness sessions in partnership with ADQ and Aldar. By promoting movement as an expression of solidarity, the initiative helped reduce stigma, elevate public understanding of MS, and strengthen connections across the MS community in the UAE, demonstrating the power of collective action to drive awareness and inclusion.

172,000+

KM moved

294 M+

Steps taken

Awareness sessions with leading UAE companies Aldar & ADQ

STEPPI Step Challenge

At the heart of this year's campaign was a nationwide step challenge designed to transform movement into meaningful action. In partnership with STEPPI, the second edition of the challenge encouraged participants to raise awareness and make pledges in support of the MS community.

Teams of participants tracked their daily steps through the STEPPI app, turning friendly competition into tangible impact. The initiative united corporate partners, including Aldar and ADQ, alongside members of the public, with every step taken serving as a visible demonstration of solidarity and support for people living with MS across the UAE.

Snapchat Lens Turns Movement Into MS Awareness

NMSS expanded the Move for MS campaign with an innovative digital component through a partnership with Snap Inc., launching an interactive AR step challenge via Snapchat's first-ever regional step counter Lens. The initiative leveraged a global platform to extend the campaign's reach both regionally and beyond the UAE, engaging users in an interactive and educational experience. As participants reached step milestones, they unlocked facts about MS and competed on a dynamic leaderboard, introducing the MS conversation to a younger, digitally native audience.

With over 80% of Snapchatters in the UAE engaging with AR daily, the Lens successfully amplified awareness and understanding. Snap Inc.'s in-kind contribution, valued at approximately AED 256,000, reflected a shared commitment to harnessing technology for social impact. The Lens was further promoted through a complimentary video featuring five of the UAE's top creators: Taim Al Falasi, Khaled Al Khaledi, Ghaith Marwan, Sara Al Warri, and Eisa Al Habib—who voluntarily lent their support to the cause.

2,000+

Participants across the UAE

04

Trips around the world

₪ 500,000+

Raised in support of the MS community



Providing education on MS across different industries and advocating for improved quality of life and policies for people with MS by developing awareness programs for workplaces and the youth.

Building awareness through innovation, empathy, and creativity.

MS Educate

Causes and Risks

Combination of environmental and genetic factors

- Most commonly diagnosed between 20 and 40 years of age
- 2:1 female to male ratio

- Genetic susceptibility:

~15% genetic susceptibility (linkage on Chromosome 6p21, associated with type 1 diabetes)

~30% risk if a family member has it: 30%

- Environmental triggers:

Infection exposure

Smoking and obesity in adolescence

Youth Awareness

The Youth Awareness program is an educational, interactive initiative aimed at raising awareness about MS among university youth and providing support to community members affected by the condition.



06

Leading universities

500+

Students

15+

Immersive workshops

11

Campuses

45+

Faculty members, experts
& inclusive innovators



Universal Design for Inclusion Program

CYCLE 1

The inaugural Universal Design for Inclusion Program concluded this year, transforming university campuses across the UAE into vibrant hubs of creativity, empathy, and accessibility-driven innovation.

Delivered through a memorandum of understanding with six leading universities: Abu Dhabi University, University of Sharjah, Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation (DIDI), Khalifa University, Al Ain University, and six branches of the Higher Colleges of Technology – the program engaged over 500 students and 45 faculty members across 11 campuses. Through 15 interactive sessions featuring empathy workshops, industry mentorship, and innovation challenges led by accessibility advocates and NMSS MS Ambassadors, participants explored the intersection of design, inclusion, and lived experience.

Students gained valuable insight into the realities faced by People of Determination, redefining accessibility as a catalyst for creativity rather than a constraint.

Culminating in a national design competition, the program celebrated outstanding student projects that addressed cognitive, mobility, and communication challenges through culturally relevant, universally accessible design solutions. The winning designs not only demonstrated innovation and compassion but also underscored the potential of the UAE's youth to lead the region in advancing inclusive design for people with MS and other disabilities.

CYCLE 2

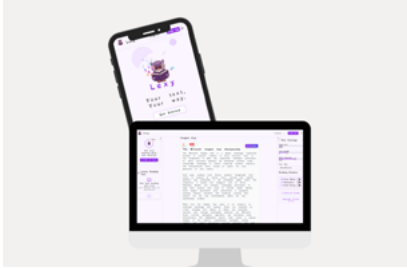
Building on the success of Cycle I, NMSS expanded the program's scope and launched a more specialized second cycle in Q4 2025, deepening its impact and reach.

Student testimonials

“The activities we took part in helped highlight the experiences, emotions and challenges people with MS faced daily and how directly they should influence what we will be designing.”

HEBA MAHER

COGNITIVE CATEGORY



Winner Lexy

AI-powered tool developed by students at the Higher Colleges of Technology Sharjah that simplifies complex text and tracks clarity in real time. With Arabic language support, the tool offers valuable assistance to people living with conditions that affect memory and concentration.

MOBILITY CATEGORY



Winner VersaGrip

Developed by students at the Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation (DIDI), the AI-powered assistive grip device draws inspiration from Emirati jewelry, blending cultural identity with functionality and reducing stigma around assistive technology.

COMMUNICATION CATEGORY



Winner Ni'mah Smart Bracelet

A discreet smart bracelet developed by students at the University of Sharjah. The bracelet translates emergency sounds into light and vibration alerts, helping individuals with hearing impairments respond quickly in critical situations.



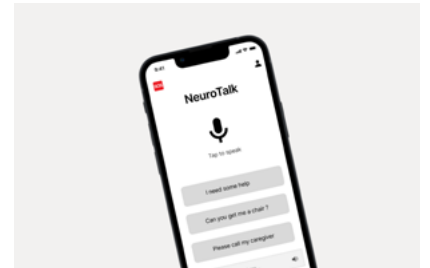
Runner-Up Neurocognitive Decline Assessment

An affordable and accessible tool, developed by student at Khalifa University, that uses regular cameras to measure pupil response and help detect early signs of cognitive decline.



Runner-Up Stand Ease

A standing wheelchair concept, developed by students at the Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation, that can be self-built with local materials, offering a customizable and more cost-effective option.



Runner-Up NeuroTalk Inclusive

An AI-powered voice-assisted mobile app, developed by students at the Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation, that transforms short or unclear speech into full sentences, helping people communicate more smoothly and confidently in daily interactions.

MS Awareness Across Multiple Mediums

NMSS raises public awareness of MS, amplifies lived experiences, and promotes empathy across communities.

From amplifying patient stories across high-visibility platforms to engaging students, healthcare professionals, and the wider public, these efforts are contributing to better understanding and inspiring action toward a better-informed society in the UAE.



Broadcast Television

As part of its outreach initiatives, NMSS partnered with the Authority of Social Contribution (Ma'an) to feature a dedicated MS segment on Abu Dhabi TV's Ahel Al Attaa program during the Holy Month of Ramadan.

The segment highlighted the inspiring journeys of Dr. Ahmed Shatila and Sultan Al Hosani, sharing their experiences with MS and raising public awareness through a compelling, relatable narrative that reached audiences across the UAE.

At Healthcare Facilities

NMSS engaged directly with the community during Patient Happiness Day at the Rehabilitation Hospital at Sheikh Tahnoon bin Mohammed Medical City in Al Ain, offering resources, guidance, and support within a compassionate healthcare environment.

This initiative fostered meaningful interactions, strengthened connections between people living with MS and healthcare professionals, and reinforced NMSS's commitment to enhancing patient experience and wellbeing across clinical settings.

Across Campuses: Sorbonne University

Continuing its focus on engaging younger audiences, NMSS participated in Sorbonne University's Wellbeing Day, hosting an MS Awareness booth, an empathy-building activity, and an interactive Instagram Live Q&A with Dr. Ahmed Shatila.

The initiative provided students with a unique opportunity to learn about MS, ask questions, and connect directly with experts, fostering understanding, empathy, and awareness among the next generation of informed citizens. The booth welcomed over 150 visitors, reflecting strong engagement and interest in NMSS's educational efforts.

At Corporate Entities

NMSS highlighted the importance of movement, mental health, and emotional well-being at Miral. The initiative underscored the value of holistic wellness and reinforced NMSS's commitment to supporting people living with MS in leading healthier, more fulfilling lives.

World MS Day: May 30



World MS Day 2025 continued the two-year global theme, “My MS Diagnosis,” under the tagline “Navigating MS Together”. This year’s campaign shed light on the interconnected ecosystem that shapes the journey to an MS diagnosis. From early symptoms to timely referrals, clear communication, and equitable access to care – diagnosis is not a single moment; it is a process shaped by intricate systems and the dedicated people that drive and support it.

To spotlight this important theme, NMSS brought together key stakeholders across healthcare, policy, the private sector, and the wider community to translate this theme into tangible action. This effort resulted in the launch of the UAE’s first National Coalition for MS, an action-oriented partnership marking a pivotal step toward coordinated, long-term impact.

At the inaugural NMSS Research Grant Award Ceremony, under the theme ‘Accelerating Discovery,’ we recognized six new awardees whose projects are expanding the boundaries of MS research and care in the UAE.

Finally, as a tribute to those who helped lay the foundation for this movement, NMSS hosted a special dinner honoring our first cohort of MS Ambassadors, whose lived experiences enrich and guide our work.

All these events, held in May, demonstrated the power of connection, showing how shared purpose can spark ideas, strengthen systems, and spearhead lasting change.

Raising MS Awareness Nationwide and Internationally

GLOBAL WEBCAST

On World MS Day, Dr. Anu Jacob, member of NMSS's Medical Advisory Committee, joined global experts and advocates in a webcast hosted by the Multiple Sclerosis International Federation (MSIF), titled "Improving MS Diagnosis Globally." As part of an international panel, he shared the UAE's experience in developing the UAE's MS treatment guidelines through expert consensus and peer review. Dr. Jacob emphasized the importance of aligning local practices with global standards like the 2024 McDonald Criteria, and highlighted NMSS's collaboration with health authorities to improve access and consistency in MS care across the country.

HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS CAMPAIGN

HCPs and institutions across the country collaborated with NMSS, using their digital platforms and public displays to amplify World MS Day messaging. Clinic screens and social media channels featured posts in support of the MS community and promoted NMSS's available resources. Participating institutions included: Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, Healthpoint, Amana Healthcare, Mubadala Health, Harley Street Medical Center, and Burjeel Medical City.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

NMSS hosted awareness booths at Dubai International Airport and The Galleria Al Maryah Island. These activations provided educational materials, shared real-life stories, and facilitated personal conversations about MS. At Galleria Mall, Dr. Ahmed Shatila answered questions about MS and shared his experience with the condition, reinforcing the power of personal narrative.



300+

Visitors at the booths

Light Up Campaign Engagement

In a powerful show of support, 11 iconic landmarks across the UAE lit up in orange, the global color of MS awareness. These illuminations served as beacons of solidarity with the MS community and a call to action for the broader public.

Participating landmarks included: Al Ain Municipality, Al Jazeerah Al Hamra, Al Qana, Dubai Festival City, Dubai Frame, House of Wisdom, Mubadala Tower, Mohammed Bin Rashid Library, ADGM, ADNOC HQ, and Hazza Bin Zayed Stadium.

Power of Storytelling

Two interactive series were launched on social media to foster storytelling and community participation:

A Letter to My MS Challenge:

Participants were invited to personify MS or their chronic condition by writing a letter to it, expressing confrontation, acceptance, or strength.

Meet My Rock Series:

People living with MS were encouraged to share stories about the person who supported them through diagnosis.



₪ 25 Million Grant

NMSS and Erth Zayed Philanthropies signed a landmark agreement to advance strategic initiatives.

Founding members included Erth Zayed Philanthropies, PureHealth, Manzil Healthcare Services, Sanofi, and Axios International.

National Coalition for MS Launched

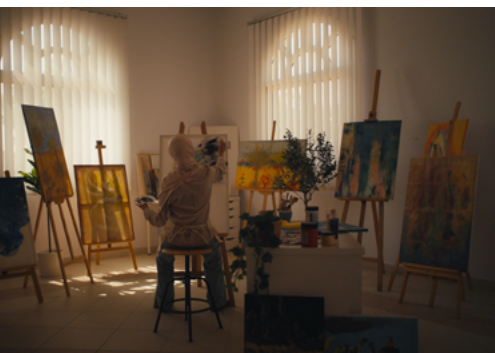
Amplifying Awareness

NMSS distributed social media toolkits to healthcare professionals and partners nationwide, in addition to digital campaigns and awareness activities.

ZHO and Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi showcased personal MS journeys, generating 1 million+ views.

MS Ambassadors' Stories





Art is more than a form of expression; it is a powerful tool for care, connection, and presence. Art also provides a means for the public to encounter the lived experiences of people with MS, particularly the invisible aspects of the condition.

From 19–23 November, NMSS participated in Abu Dhabi Art at Manarat Al Saadiyat, presenting *Evident Presence: A Community of Care in the Community Partners Space*. This participation was made possible with the generous grant of the Authority of Social Contribution – Ma’an. Curated by Dirwaza Curatorial Lab and produced by Triplets on Set, the two-part installation combines video and live performances to highlight the lived realities of people with (MS and the shared role of community care.

The video installation features five short films following participants Betoul AlAbsi, Arifa Thawer, Afra AlNuaimi, Abdulrahman AlBalooshi, and Hajar Essahyaoui as they reflect on key moments in their journeys, using spoken narrative and symbolic environments to express identity, coping, and connection. Complementing the films, live performances by UAE-based artists Maitha Al Omaira, Shahad AlSaqqaf, and Carlos Paez incorporate poetry, movement, and sound, creating an immersive experience that encourages reflection and engagement.

Through this initiative, NMSS demonstrates how art can reveal the often-invisible aspects of MS, emphasizing adaptation, strength, creativity, connection, and hope, while showing that MS is one part of a person’s life, not its defining feature.

“Ma’an’s support for NMSS’s video installation at Abu Dhabi Art reflects the power of collaboration in driving innovative, community-focused initiatives. Together, we are enabling creative projects that inspire engagement and foster meaningful connections within society.”

HIS EXCELLENCY FAISAL ALHMOUDI

Executive Director of the Social Investment Fund at the Authority of Social Contribution Ma’an

Ecosystem of Support





National Coalition for MS

At the heart of NMSS's work is a commitment to building sustainable, long-term models of impact. Every initiative is designed to create meaningful value for people living with MS, partners, and stakeholders, delivering results today while laying the foundation for the future.

This principle continues to guide our strategy and shape our approach across all areas of work. A defining milestone this year was the signing of a strategic AED 25 million grant agreement between NMSS and Erth Zayed Philanthropies, announced on World MS Day.

This landmark partnership positions Erth Zayed Philanthropies as a founding partner of the UAE's first National Coalition for MS, a multi-sector platform bringing together government entities, healthcare providers, insurers, pharmaceutical companies, and educational institutions around a shared vision for equitable MS care and inclusion.



Coalition's 2025–2026 Themes

ACCESSIBLE CARE

Streamline access to patient support resources by identifying service gaps and helping people living with MS connect to the care they need.

EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Promote inclusive policies and secure employment commitments for people living with MS.

CAPABLE PROFESSIONALS

Deliver targeted training and education programs to equip healthcare professionals with specialized MS knowledge and skills.

AWARE CITIZENS

Launch national awareness campaigns to increase understanding of MS, reduce stigma, and promote early diagnosis and community support.

DIVERSE RESOURCE POOL

Champion fundraising efforts to support MS programs, research and innovation.

Coalition members contribute to care advancement, awareness campaigns, and system-wide impact.

As the Coalition moves into its implementation phase, NMSS will continue to engage policymakers, healthcare institutions, academic organizations, private sector leaders, and philanthropic partners to join this pivotal movement.

National Coalition for MS
at a Glance

FOUNDING PARTNER

مؤسسة إرث زايد الإنساني
ERTH ZAYED PHILANTHROPIES

COALITION FOUNDING MEMBERS

sanofi

axios
TRANSFORMING ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

PUREHEALTH⁺

manzil
Healthcare Services

Grant Value

₪ 25M

Expand patient support resources 01

Promote inclusive workplace policies 02

Enhance healthcare professional expertise 03

Increase public awareness and early diagnosis 04

Ensure sustainability through fundraising and research investment 05

Coalitions are not partnerships of convenience but are drivers of foundational change.

Our Partners and Donors

NMSS's work is strengthened by the generosity of our partners, whose financial and in-kind contributions enable us to expand programs, enhance services, and reach more individuals across the UAE. This section provides an overview of the support received throughout the year and highlights the collective impact of working together toward a shared mission.

Collaborative partnerships remain essential to achieving meaningful progress for people living with MS.

Special Thank you

ERTH ZAYED PHILANTHROPIES

A landmark contribution of AED 25 million enabled the National Coalition for MS and accelerated NMSS's mission to improve the lives of people living with MS through sustained, collaborative impact.



مؤسسة إرث زايد الإنساني
ERTH ZAYED PHILANTHROPIES

MUBADALA

A valued long-term partner, Mubadala contributed **AED 1,886,000** to advance MS research efforts and strengthen the MS Helpline, bringing scientific progress closer to breakthroughs while ensuring essential, person-centered support for the MS community.



 MUBADALA

₪ 2,448,226

Raised in-cash donations to fund MS research, care and awareness initiatives.

Major Donors

Individuals or organizations that have contributed AED 100,000 or more in cash.

مؤسسة إرث زايد الإنساني
ERTH ZAYED PHILANTHROPIES

 MUBADALA



 ADQ



Value In-kind Supporters



BAIN & COMPANY 



 CONCORDIA

2025 Partners

Office of Developmental Affairs	Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation
Erth Zayed Philanthropies	e&
Ministry of Community Empowerment	Focus Gulf
Ministry of Health and Prevention	Galleria
Department of Community Development	Higher Colleges of Technology
Department of Health	Italian MS Society (AISM)
Dubai Health Authority	Khalifa University
Behavioral Science Group	Manzil Healthcare
Authority of Social Contribution – Ma’an	MENACTRIMS
Zayed Authority for People of Determination	Multiple Sclerosis International Federation (MSIF)
Emirates Foundation	Mubadala
Al Ain University	Onefit
ADQ	PureHealth
Abu Dhabi University	Reform
Aldar	Sandbox
Axios	Sanofi
Bain & Company	STEPPI
The Butterfly	University of Sharjah
Concordia	National MS Society (USA)



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Shaping the Future of MS Together







Ways You Can Support

The progress highlighted in these pages is made possible by the dedication and generosity of our community. Through partnership, volunteering, supporting initiatives, or lending your voice to advocacy, every contribution strengthens a movement that empowers people living with MS and other autoimmune conditions.

Each action, whether large or small, drives forward research, fosters a more inclusive society, and ensures that no one faces MS alone.

Event Sponsorship

Help bring NMSS events to life. By sponsoring events you support programs that raise MS awareness, foster community engagement, and provide vital platforms that give visibility to people living with MS.

Knowledge Partner

Collaborate with NMSS to share expertise, resources and insights. Knowledge Partners contribute to awareness initiatives, education programs and support services so that people living with MS and their communities are better informed and empowered.

Coalition Partner

Join a network of organizations committed to improving MS care in the UAE. Coalition Partners collaborate with NMSS and other stakeholders to drive advocacy, inclusion, research, and long-term impact across the MS community.

Research Partner

Join NMSS in advancing MS research. As a Research Partner, you help fund and enable important studies aimed at improving diagnosis, care, and potential treatments for MS in the UAE.

Grant Partner

Support NMSS initiatives through financial or in-kind grants. Grant Partners provide essential resources that allow NMSS to expand programs, fund research, and deliver services that make a meaningful difference in the lives of people living with MS.

Volunteering

Make a direct impact by giving your time and skills. Volunteers support NMSS events, program, and community initiatives, helping to create meaningful connections and enhance the lives of people living with MS.

[Donate to NMSS](#)

Learn More

To find out how you can partner with, support, or volunteer for the NMSS, email us at info@nationalmssociety.ae for detailed information on Event Sponsorship, Research and Knowledge Partnerships, Grants, Coalition initiatives, and volunteer opportunities or follow us on all social media platforms [@nmssocietyuae](#)

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We sincerely apologize for any inadvertent errors or omissions and would appreciate being informed of any corrections for future editions or reprints of this publication.

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