



COMMUNITY VISITORS SCHEME
Friends for Older People

OVERVIEW OF MS AUSTRALIA -ACT/NSW/VIC

Mission statement – “To minimise the impact of multiple sclerosis on individuals, their families and the community while working to improve treatments for the disease and accelerating research to ultimately develop a cure.”

Multiple Sclerosis MS as it is usually known, is a disease of the central nervous system – the nerves of the brain and spinal cord. While scientists still have much to learn about MS, some patterns have already become clear: it is the most common chronic, neurological condition among young adults, affecting thousands of Australians in the prime of life.

MS Australia - ACT/NSW/VIC has a philosophy to support and recognise the 2000 volunteers who work in their opportunity shops, fundraising auxiliaries, resource centres, Community Visitors Scheme, peer support and other programs. MS Australia - ACT/NSW/VIC informs people with multiple sclerosis how best to achieve as full and healthy a lifestyle as possible while managing the symptoms of MS, raises funds for the provision of services, programs and research, educates the community, and liaises with government and other bodies on MS-related issues

In 1992 MS Australia received funding to support the Community Visitors Scheme (CVS). CVS is linked to MS Australia’s mission and strategic plan through their commitment to “involving people from all parts of the community”. This commitment is seen as fundamental to volunteering in all of its activities.

MS Australia – ACT/NSW/VIC, as an auspice body of the CVS is committed to providing quality service and outcomes for potentially socially isolated and lonely residents of Aged Care Homes (ACH), through the provision and support of one-to-one volunteer friends. The CVS is free of charge to both the person being visited and the Aged Care Home which that person resides. It is a service provided to all residents who are referred as needing a visitor and are not necessarily people with multiple sclerosis.

MS Australia - ACT/NSW/VIC is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing to support 469 community visitors in over 180 aged care homes (nursing homes and hostels) across Victoria and parts of NSW.