

About MS Brain Health

Our vision

To create a better future for people with multiple sclerosis (MS) and their families.

Our mission

We are calling for major policy changes aimed at achieving the best possible outcomes for people with MS and those who care for them. Our core recommendation is that the goal of treating MS should be to preserve tissue in the central nervous system and maximize lifelong brain health by reducing disease activity.

Our challenge

MS is an incurable chronic disease affecting 2.8 million people worldwide and is the leading cause of non-traumatic neurological disability in young adults in many countries. Every year, around 107 000 people receive a diagnosis of MS.

Delayed diagnosis and treatment, and suboptimal treatment, can result in irreversible accumulation of disability and reduced quality of life.

- Time to a diagnosis of MS is often protracted and the latest accepted diagnostic criteria are not always adopted.

- Disease-modifying therapy (DMT) is often started late, with restricted choice. In many countries, access to therapies is limited by licensing stipulations, prescribing guidelines or reimbursement decisions; these typically lag behind recent clinical trial data and real-world evidence.
- Regular clinical and radiological monitoring of disease activity is not commonplace.
- If monitoring reveals a suboptimal treatment response, the traditional approach towards switching therapy has been to try another DMT with the same mechanism of action.

Unhealthy lifestyle choices and comorbidities can worsen MS outcomes. However, prior to MS Brain Health, there was a lack of guidance on the positive actions individuals can take to maximize their lifelong brain health. It is important that people with MS are empowered to be involved proactively in decision-making and in managing their disease.

Better outcomes for people with MS can be achieved through the widespread adoption of a comprehensive therapeutic strategy with a focus on prompt diagnosis, timely intervention, lifestyle optimization, proactive monitoring of disease activity and informed, shared decision-making.

MS care differs among and within countries, and before MS Brain Health, there were no internationally applicable quality standards for timely MS care. Shared benchmarks were required to reduce global service provision disparities.

- Other disease areas have proven that quality standards and improvement programmes can help to improve patient outcomes and experiences.

About MS Brain Health

MS Brain Health is a widely endorsed, global policy initiative from the not-for-profit company [Oxford Health Policy Forum](#).

The initiative was established following the publication of the evidence-based international consensus report, [*Brain health: time matters in multiple sclerosis*](#), to call for major policy changes to maximize the lifelong brain health of people with MS and support the care pathway. Building on the recommendations of the report, internationally applicable [consensus standards](#) for MS care were developed by a multidisciplinary group of MS experts.

To enable these benchmarks to be measured in clinical practice and to support MS centres in achieving them, we have developed a novel, globally applicable, digital, quality improvement tool. A global pilot study of the tool showed that it can promote changes to clinical services.

A 2020 survey and reports from local champions illustrate how MS Brain Health has changed the global MS landscape, including promoting clinical practice changes in 16 countries. Through local action, our champions have affected local health policy, increasing the momentum of the global initiative. MS Brain Health has also helped equip people with MS and their carers to live a better life with the disease.

MS Brain Health continues to be a catalyst for improvements in MS care globally.