

ANNUAL REPORT 06



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Providing Inspiration, Information & Support for People with MS & Their Families

Introduction From Chairman

Ian Langrish

The aim of the MS Therapy Centre is to support all those affected by Multiple Sclerosis – this includes families and carers as much as the person with MS. To this end, the last year has seen further increases in capacity and capabilities at the Centre. We have increased the level of physiotherapy support, acquired specialist equipment, introduced new therapies such as Indian head massage and spinal reflexology and improved the social side of the Centre.



Looking ahead, as a result of a strategic review that involved staff, trustees and outside experts, we intend to increase the reach of the Centre. In particular, this means providing appropriate support to people with MS at an earlier stage of the disease and of finding ways to better assist MS patients in the east of the county. We are currently exploring ways that this can be done – be it by ourselves or through working in partnership with other institutions. We continue to explore opportunities to advance our purpose and, with this in mind, were pleased to welcome Dr. Andrew Weir, a local neurologist, and Simon Gillespie, the new CEO of the MS Society.

Though our results show that we are well placed for the future and our reputation continues to grow, threats remain.

To an extent, we are even the victims of our success. NHS activities are under constant pressure and the incidence of MS diagnosis is on the increase – especially locally. This means that we are receiving an average of two new referrals a week. The pressure is on to assist both existing and new clients.

We are extremely grateful to the assistance provided by our members and their friends, by patrons, local companies and charitable trusts but especially to the commitment of all of the volunteers without whom the Centre could not function properly and would lose its special character. However, last year we received the ultimate “thank you” for the work of the Centre: three legacies that totalled in excess of £70,000. This special income will go towards helping us to meet the new demands being made on us and to increase our reach amongst the MS community in Berkshire.

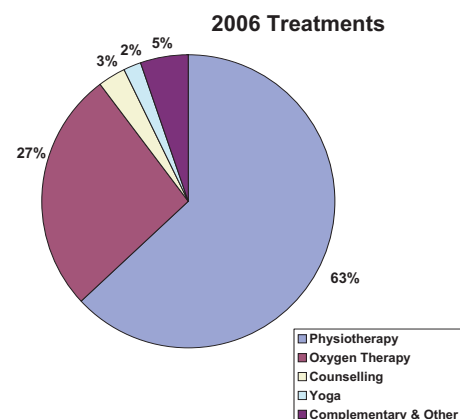
Centre Manager's Report

Over the year we provided support to over 750 people with MS, and 7397 treatments (see pie chart below). Our client survey also revealed a very high level of satisfaction with an overall rating of 89%. It has also been an exciting year of development strengthening the foundation of the organisation and improving efficiency. Some key highlights have been:

- Successful installation of our new database system and migration of data from the old system.
- Customisation of the software giving powerful reporting and communication tools.
- Improved client & finance record keeping.
- Maximised income from Gift Aid and recovered £8,000 of back tax to the year 2000.
- Converted 1/3 of our regular communication to email.
- Changed bank account to CAF bank providing savings of approximately £1,000 per year in bank charges and free internet banking facilities speeding up accounts processing.

It is reassuring to see how the operation and efficiency of the Centre has improved but ultimately our performance can only be judged by the services that we deliver and how our members feel about them.

Pippa Vincent-Cooke
Centre Manager



Physical



Physiotherapy

"The exercise class and camaraderie of other Centre members is what keeps me physically fit, positive about the future and able to help and support others with MS."

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) produced guidelines November 2003 on MS in Primary and Secondary Care. It highlighted the gap in the government provisions for personal support and particularly vital long-term neurological physiotherapy. Consequently, this is what BMSTC has been successful in solving to date.

The neurological approach taken by the Centre helps participants to control and co-ordinate movement patterns, encourages more normal movements and helps to regain functional abilities. Treatments are tailored and then monitored to the individual needs of each MS person. Physiotherapy is provided one-to-one and through group sessions – the latter providing social support and therapy as well as the physical benefits of the treatment.

Physiotherapy accounts for two thirds of all the treatments and support that we provide. The Centre's team of dedicated physiotherapists consequently represents our largest single operating cost.

Oxygen Therapy

"The Centre has been a life-line for me. I've been coming to the Centre for seven years for oxygen therapy and physiotherapy. I firmly believe that this has enabled me to contain my MS and to maintain some mobility to enable a more independent life."

Many members find that oxygen therapy provides relief from some of the symptoms of MS – especially chronic fatigue – and limits some of the physical damage that the disease causes.

Oxygen Therapy in our special pressurized chamber is in high demand. It represents 27% of our activity. We provided 1976 sessions during the year – all of which were run by trained volunteers.

Yoga & Relaxation

"I live for the day and, with the help of treatments at the MS Therapy Centre, I manage to do quite a lot!"

Yoga is uniquely able to assist people with MS. Its combination of gentle holistic activities helps to maintain fitness, suppleness and muscle tone as well as maintaining energy flow with minimal physical effort. Fitness and clarity of the mind are improved, whilst further degeneration can in many cases be slowed down.

We provide 2 Yoga classes each week and during the year provided 145 sessions.

Complementary Therapies

"I live for the day and, with the help of treatments at the MS Therapy Centre, I manage to do quite a lot!"

During 2006 we introduced Spinal Reflexology to the existing complementary therapies already available at the Centre such as Massage, Reiki, Chiropody, Acupuncture and Acupressure.

Apart from enjoying the therapy, some members have also experienced some very positive results including improved mobility, increased energy and stamina and improvements in speech and vision.



Well Being

Counselling

"Counselling has helped me cope with my MS. I would have been in despair without the Centre."

The Centre provides a professional, confidential, counselling service in a supportive environment for anyone who is experiencing difficulties concerning MS – be they a patient or a relative.

"When people are finally diagnosed with MS, they have often been through a long period of baffling and uncomfortable symptoms. These symptoms are then given a name – Multiple Sclerosis, but it seems that many people are then left and not given anything very helpful or hopeful to be getting on with. This situation can very often lead to depression, which will affect not only the person with MS, but their families and partners as well."

Alison Tucker, BMSTC Counsellor.

Counselling is often the first point of contact with the Centre for people newly diagnosed with MS. With the Centre receiving an average of two new referrals a week, this is a vital part of the Centre's activity and often sets the tone for a long-term member relationship. In 2006 we provided 230 counselling sessions.

Social

"Having supportive friends and family and also a Centre where people just understand without the need for explanation is priceless"

At the Centre we believe that mind and body are inseparable, what affects one invariably affects the other. Hence it is equally as important to provide help and support for the emotional aspects of MS as for the physical effects and the symptoms. This is both through formal support and creating the environment for informal exchanges of advice and experience.

The Centre provides a friendly, relaxed and comfortable

environment for people with MS and their family and friends in which to relax and exchange ideas and solutions to day-to-day problems related to living with MS.

"It's a very social place where you can meet and talk to people with the same problems. But, if you just want to come to the Centre for advice and information, you can...there's no pressure!"

This comes through in a variety of different ways:

Partners' & Carers' Club

(Combined project with The Reading & Wokingham MS Society.)

"A smashing, wonderful group of people who are helping and learning from each other. There is a sharing of difficult and good times and each month we experience together a variety of activities and invariably enjoy lots of fun."

Positive Thinking Group

The group has been meeting regularly for seven years and discusses both positive achievements and reviews and shares problems in order to identify solutions. In particular it focuses upon themes and seeing them in a positive light.

Life-Long Learning

The Centre also provides a full information service to members and their families. This is provided both directly and via other healthcare and social care professionals.



Fundraising

The Centre is a self-help group entirely dependent upon voluntary income for its funding. It receives no money from either the Government or the NHS. Rather it is dependent upon the continuing goodwill of its members, their families and the local community. It also receives support from local companies and charitable trusts. In 2006, some of our larger and consistent supporters that we would like to publicly thank included:

Albert Hunt Trust
Anton Jurgens Charitable Trust
Berkshire Community Foundation
Berkshire Masonic Charity
Berkshire Nurses and Relief in Sickness
BP Castrol
Cardy Beaver Foundation
Childwick Trust
Colefax Trust
Debenhams, Reading
Dixie Rose Findlay Charitable Trust
Englefield Charitable Trust
Florian Charitable Trust
Gerald Palmer Trust

Gilbert & Edgar Eileen Foundation
Hammerson UK Properties Plc
Hazeley Lea Clay Club
Henley & District MS Branch
Louis Baylis Charitable Trust
Lloyds TSB Foundation
Madeline Mabey Trust
Mobbs Memorial Trust
NEC (UK) Ltd
Prince Philip Charitable Trust
Reading Dispensary Trust
Reading St. Laurence Church Lands
Vodafone
W. O. Street Charitable Foundation

We were touched to be remembered in the wills of three supporters. Not only did this represent a final and sincere commitment back to the Centre but also provides us with the means to expand our support beyond our normal activity in the coming years.

Public collections continue to also provide vital income for us. 22 collections took place across the county raising some £29,400. Collections from boxes in local shops, petrol stations and private houses also raised £4,000. Finally, to increase the value of the voluntary donations received, we were able to collect a further £27,500 of Gift Aid from the Government on many donations received.

The Centre wishes to particularly recognise its huge army of individual supporters in the community who have worked

incredibly hard to raise funds. Event activity alone raised over £60,100 for the Centre. So, to all those who have run, collected, baked, splashed, cycled, written, wrapped, knitted, walked, volunteered, been quizzed, got cold, sponsored and just given, thank you very much. We could not have done it without you.

However, it is essential that our fundraising income continues to grow to allow us to support even more local people with MS and their families and carers in 2007 and beyond.



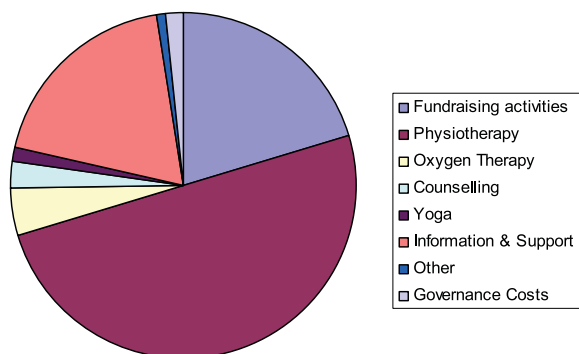
Financial Results

| | 2006 £ | 2005 £ |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Incoming resources | | |
| Incoming resource generated from funds | | |
| Voluntary income | | |
| Donations & Subscriptions | 290,506 | 194,568 |
| Grants receivable | 3,200 | 9,338 |
| Activities for generating funds | | |
| Fundraising activities | 97,167 | 148,875 |
| Shop activities | 2,331 | 4,258 |
| Room hire | 2,735 | 3,529 |
| Investment income | 11,125 | 8,087 |
| Total Incoming resources | 407,064 | 368,655 |
| Resources expended | | |
| Cost of generating funds | | |
| Fundraising activities | 66,030 | 79,049 |
| Shop activities | 2,557 | 5,060 |
| Room hire | 108 | - |
| Charitable activities | | |
| Cost of activities in furtherance of the charity's objects | 250,651 | 245,121 |
| Governance costs | 5,705 | 4,460 |
| Total resources expended | 325,051 | 333,960 |
| Net Income | 82,013 | 34,965 |
| Realised investment gain/(loss) | 2795 | - |
| Unrealised investment gain/(loss) | (1,429) | 317 |
| NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS FOR THE YEAR | 83,379 | 35,282 |
| Funds at the start of the year | 992,462 | 957,180 |
| Funds at the end of the year | 1,075,841 | 992,462 |

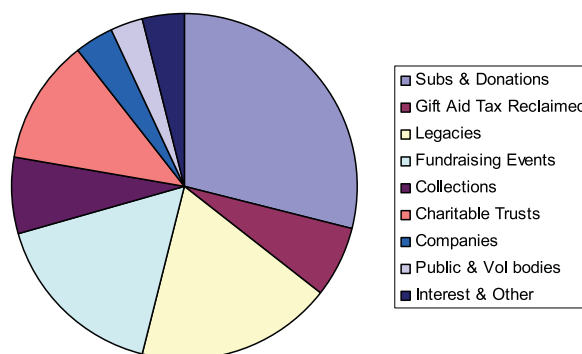
The above statement is a summary of the information which appears in the full accounts. These are available for download from our website at www.bmstc.org or on request from the Centre Manager.

"While our total funds look strong, £779,226 is tied up in fixed assets, which is mainly the Therapy Centre building. The £294,981 in free reserves represents 9 months running costs. The Trustees reserve policy is to hold 6 – 12 months in free reserves."

Where the money went



Where the money came from



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