

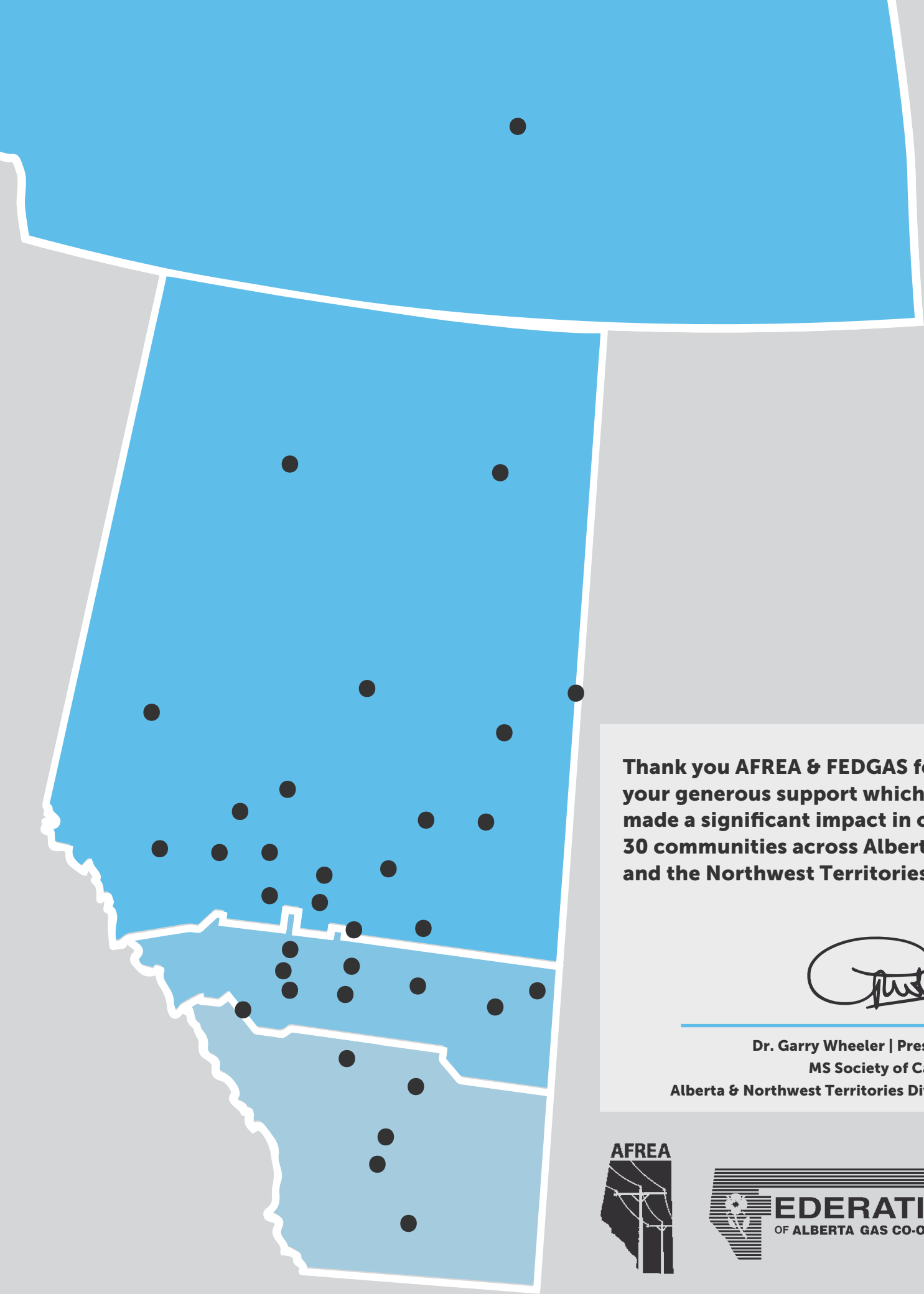


RURAL IMPACT REPORT

Alberta & Northwest
Territories Division

2016





Thank you AFREA & FEDGAS for your generous support which has made a significant impact in over 30 communities across Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

**Dr. Garry Wheeler | President
MS Society of Canada
Alberta & Northwest Territories Division**



Barrhead

- Friendly Visiting
- Interagency Presentation & Meetings
- FCSS Partnership
- Monthly Community Groups & Office Hours

Bonnyville

- Weekly Adapted Yoga Class

Camrose

- Health Professional & Community Presentations – September 2015
- Monthly Community Groups & Office Hours
- Volunteer Engagement with A&W and Johnson MS Bike Tour
- Advocacy Support
- Community Partnerships with Alberta Health Services & Camrose Public Library

Cold Lake

- Monthly Community Support Group

Fort McMurray

- Advocacy & Support services offered to individuals affected by MS during fire evacuation in May 2016
- Monthly support groups and wellness programs
- Successful new programs launched, including 8-week yoga programs, MS Mobile Clinic & Health Professional Luncheon and MS Christmas Party

Lloydminster

- Interagency Round Table has integrated with The Network, which provides monthly access to more agencies in the community.
- 3rd Annual MS Symposium & Mobile Clinic – April 2016
- MS Young People's Group
- Monthly MS Soup & Sandwich Information Sessions
- Advocacy Support
- Annual MS Kids Kamp
- Adapted Yoga & Aqualite Classes

North Peace

- Successful 32nd Annual Trail Ride – June 2016
- Monthly Support Group Meeting
- Community Engagement in High Level
- Joint Social BBQ with South Peace – June 2016
- MS Nurse & Neurologist Community Presentation

Slave Lake

- Interagency Meetings
- Focus Group & Public Presentation – Fall 2015
- Continued partnership with Public Library for meeting space

South Peace (Grande Prairie)

- Weekly Support Group & Caregiver Support Group
- Client Christmas Party
- MS Fashion Show – April 2016
- Mobile Clinic – May 2016
- A&W Burgers to Beat MS – highest fundraising location in country & hosted President's Tour

St. Paul

- First region to begin Group Medical Visits for MS – Late 2015
- 5th Annual Fall Mobile Clinic - scheduled for September 2016
- Ongoing Partnership with Primary Care Network, including shared office space
- MS Staff Chairs Regional Abilities Awareness Committee
- Regular Interagency Meeting Participation
- Year-round awareness events across the Lakeland Region
- Quality of Life Grant funding, including Equipment
- Advocacy Support

Swan Hills

- Health Fair Presence
- Interagency Presentation & Meetings

Vegreville

- MS Society Open Houses (Public & Health Professionals) – September 2015
- Ongoing Advocacy Support
- Wellness Programming Collaboration with Adapted MS Yoga & Swimming Instructors from Lloydminster – potential Vegreville Wellness Classes in Fall of 2016

Wainwright

- Annual Mobile Clinic & Health Professional Education Session – July 2016
- Advocacy Support
- Handivan Transportation Support for people with MS

Westlock

- Caregiver Presentation - Fall 2015
- Friendly Visiting
- Community Partnerships with Alberta Health Services & Westlock Public Library
- Monthly Community Groups & Office Hours throughout 2015
- Interagency Meetings
- Presence at Westlock Women's Health Fair

West Yellowhead

- Support groups in Jasper and Hinton
- Caregiver supports in Hinton
- Weekly trips to the mall and bi-weekly trips to the library with clients (some from long-term care facilities)
- Friendly visits across the region
- Educating family members of clients diagnosed with MS
- MS Awareness through attending interagencies in 5 towns, booth set up at Jasper Fair, involvement with mental health awareness week in Jasper
- Hinton MS Mountain Bike Tour in September

Yellowknife (Northwest Territories)

- 2nd Annual Car Show 4 MS – July 2016
- Advocacy Support
- Community Engagement
- Interagency Meetings
- MS Adaptive Yoga
- Monthly Community Group Meetings
- MS Neurologist & MS Nurse Presentations to Public & Health Professionals – Fall 2015

CENTRAL REGIONAL IMPACT

Red Deer / Drayton Valley / Drumheller / Lacombe / Olds / Rimbey / Stettler / Sylvan Lake

- Education Support Groups in Red Deer, Lacombe, Drayton Valley, Sylvan Lake, and Drumheller
- Lunch & Learns
- Coffee Table Talks in Red Deer, Stettler, Olds and Rimbey
- William Watson Lodge Retreat
- Young Moms Group
- Teen Escape

SOUTHERN REGIONAL IMPACT

Airdrie

- Quality of Life Grant Funding - Equipment (2 requests)
- In Person Understanding MS education session
- Relationship building with Airdrie Public Library
- Advocacy Support

Black Diamond/Turner Valley

- Information & Support (2 clients)

Canmore

- Relationship building with Public Library
- Relationship building with local fitness/recreation centres
- On-going relationship with FCSS
- 2016 Family Caregiver Retreat
- Quality of Life Grant funding

Carstairs

- Advocacy Support

Cochrane

- Relationship building with Family & Community Social Services
- Information & Support

High River

- Relationship building with Family & Community Social Services
- Quality of Life Grant Funding - Equipment
- Information & Support

Lethbridge

- Monthly Brown Bag Lunch and Living Well With MS Support Group Meetings in Lethbridge
- Monthly Support Group Meeting in the Crowsnest Pass (Alternating Between Blairmore and Pincher Creek)
- Annual Christmas Supper for Clients, Members and Volunteers in Lethbridge
- Annual Fall Dinner for Clients, Members and Volunteers in the Crowsnest Pass
- Annual Summer BBQ for Clients, Members and Volunteers in Lethbridge
- Quality of Life Funding
- Advocacy Support
- Friendly Visiting
- Research Updates (Presentations in Lethbridge)

Medicine Hat / Brooks

- Advocacy Support & Monthly Group Meetings in Brooks
- Monthly Lunch & Thursday Evening Support Groups in Medicine Hat
- 2-3 Annual Lunch & Learns in Medicine Hat
- Involved with Caregiver Coalition of Southeastern Alberta (4-6 Caregiver events per year)
- Member and Volunteer Christmas Party – Medicine Hat

Strathmore

- Relationship building with Family & Community Social Services



**Together, we
will find a
cure for MS**

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS FAQs

WHAT IS MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS?

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord). The disease attacks the protective myelin covering of the central nervous system and at times the nerve fibres (axons) themselves. When this happens, the usual flow of nerve impulses along nerve fibres (axons) is interrupted or distorted.

WHO GETS MS?

Multiple sclerosis can occur at any age. It is usually diagnosed between the ages of 15 to 40, when people are finishing school and starting careers and families. It can make its first appearance in young children and in older adults. Women are more than three times as likely as men to get MS.

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON MS SYMPTOMS?

MS symptoms are unpredictable and vary greatly from person to person. Symptoms may include: vision disturbances such as double or blurred vision; extreme fatigue; loss of balance; problems with coordination; pain; depression; stiffness of muscles; speech problems; bladder and bowel problems; short-term memory problems, and even partial or complete paralysis.

WHAT CAUSES MS?

As of yet, we don't know what causes MS. Most researchers believe that MS is an autoimmune disease. For reasons that are still unclear, the body's immune system malfunctions and starts attacking the myelin which protects the central nervous system.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF MS:

MS has been grouped into several main types. These include:

- **relapsing-remitting MS** - characterized by clearly defined attacks (relapses) followed by complete or partial recovery (remissions); most common form (75% at the time of diagnosis).
- **primary-progressive MS** - less common (10 to 15% at time of diagnosis), people with this type of MS have nearly continuous worsening of MS from the beginning with no clear relapses or remissions.
- **secondary-progressive MS** - about half of people with relapsing-remitting MS start to worsen within 10 years of diagnosis, with possibility of increasing levels of disability.
- **progressive-relapsing MS** - relatively rare, combines attacks with steady worsening from the onset of the disease.
- **benign MS** - few attacks with long periods of remission and little disability after 15 years; about 20-25% of people who were diagnosed originally with relapsing-remitting MS have this type.
- **malignant MS** - rapidly progressive disability within five years of diagnosis; rare.

IS MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS FATAL?

MS is not a fatal disease for the vast majority of people with MS. Most people who have MS can expect to live a normal or near normal life span, thanks to improvements in the treatment of symptoms and in other therapies for people with MS.



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