



Kent MS Therapy Centre

Strategic Plan 2019

Our Mission

Improving the lives of those living with MS in Kent

The Centre aims to radically improve the lives of those with Multiple Sclerosis, their families and those who care for them.

We aim to:

- Provide a range of complementary therapies and specialist clinics
- Give advice, support and information to those living with MS, their carers and families, in an environment which encourages mutual support and friendship
- Be a Centre of Excellence which enables self-management of the condition

The Centre welcomes people from across all of Kent.

Introduction

This strategic plan sets goals for the 3-year period 2019 to 2022. The plan is revised annually.

Background

Established in 1984, the Kent MS Therapy Centre (KMSTC) was set up to provide a range of therapies and support services to all those affected by MS. Following a very successful fundraising programme, the new purpose-built Centre opened its doors on 5th January 2015.

With help from existing members and supporters from the local community, we have been able to create a modern building with a warm and welcoming environment. The centre delivers a wide range of excellent services to help members manage their condition and improve their quality of life.

Perhaps most importantly, KMSTC is a social hub that allows members the opportunity to share experiences, problems or ideas – or just to relax and have fun with friends.

Current Situation

The scope of the charity's operations has changed considerably in the past four years. The new building has increased our ability to meet members' needs but also increased the level of our responsibility and risk. The structures and processes required to manage the Centre are constantly evolving from their community self-help background to a more business-like structure that will support growth.

- A first Chief Executive has been appointed to provide greater leadership of the Charity and its operational team. Her impact has been considerable, achieving a 50% reduction in cancellation rates and overall income growth.
- The range of therapies continues to expand as new options become available. A total of 18,632 therapy sessions were delivered in 2018. However, Physiotherapy and Oxygen Therapy remain the most popular.
- Membership categories have been changed and fees have been increased to ensure we can efficiently manage the increasing non-MS population that attend for Oxygen Therapy.
- The biennial Membership survey¹ indicates a high level of satisfaction with the Centre, the therapies, the staff and volunteers: 74% are very or extremely satisfied with the services and 85% would recommend the Centre to others.
- There are an estimated 1,800 visits to the Centre each month, however the building remains under-utilised, with therapy appointments available throughout the day and most people choosing to leave by 4pm. Overall utilisation on existing session availability is 56%.
- Research into lapsed Members indicated that cost and availability of appropriate means of travel to the Centre is a potential barrier to attendance.
- We work to a balanced budget to ensure running costs are covered. However, it is recognised that:
 - we will require increasing provision for maintenance as the building ages and utilisation increases
 - in order to offer more services to more of the MS community we must grow the income (each non-oxygen therapy session is subsidised by £10 on average).
- Additional income generation resources are being added in 2019, with a view to building greater sustainability in the coming years.
- We are starting to build links with our local community including the local MP, Mayor, Rotary Clubs and related health organisations

More details on the Centre, including current membership numbers and targets, utilisation and services offered, can be found at Appendix 1.

A summary of the current financial position is included at Appendix 2.

Income Generation

We are a self-supporting charity and funding for the Centre comes from donations (including therapies such as Oxygen Therapy), from members of the public, businesses, Trusts and Foundations.

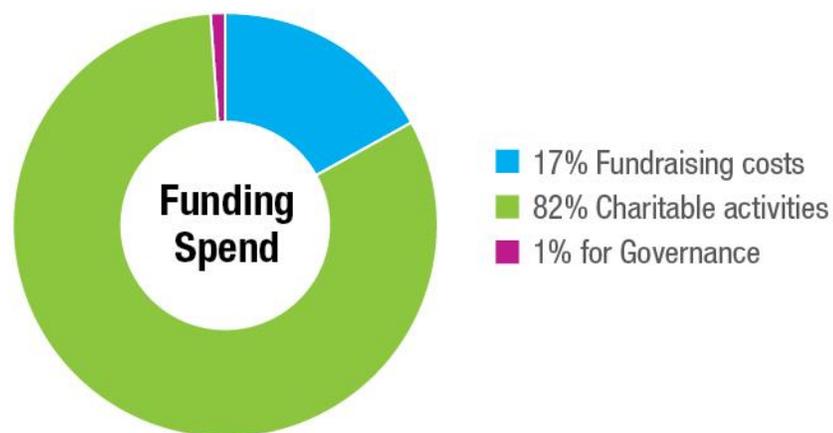
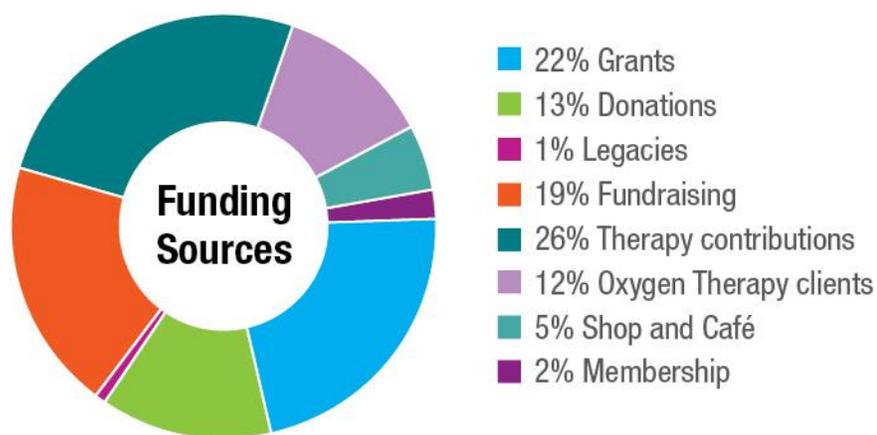
¹ 2017 Membership Survey available on request. Next survey Oct 2019.

Income for 2018 grew by 7% over 2017 and is forecast to grow by 9% in 2019 over 2018. We have had considerable success in the past year in expanding the Oxygen Therapy operating hours and opening up bookings to people with other conditions: raising £62,634 in 2018 (an increase of 69% on 2017).

60% of our income comes from fundraising, grants and donations. While money raised from fundraising is targeted to continue to grow in order to deliver our mission, our aim is to reduce the ratio to below 50% in 2020, and lower it further in subsequent years, to become a more sustainable and self-sufficient organisation.

Feedback from potential donors has indicated that sustainability is an important factor in their decision to award funds.

Where the money comes from and how it is used – 2018 data



Outlook

The latest study available to us shows a decreasing trend in the number of people being diagnosed with MS². Notwithstanding this, due to increases in life expectancy, the overall numbers of those with MS are growing by about 2.4% per year. Improved treatments mean that people with MS can expect to maintain a better quality of life for longer. One implication for the Centre is that people who are newly diagnosed are able to stay in work for longer, may have less interest in the therapies of the Centre, and may instead come to us when they are older with more complex needs.

If this assumption proves to be correct, meeting this challenge may require additional income to fund more expert and professional therapeutic services and facilities. We will test this assumption by targeting the working population with MS, to attract people before their condition becomes more severe.

Our most significant asset is the building that is currently under-used owing to the uneven pattern of demand from MS Members. The Board has recognised that one way to increase income is to maximise the utilisation of the building. The CEO has been tasked with producing a feasibility study to investigate options to generate additional income, for example by opening the building for longer periods and offering a wider range of services (not just Oxygen Therapy) to people with other neurological conditions.

Strategic Aims & Objectives 2019-2022

To deliver the Centre mission through:

1. **Financial sustainability and efficiency:** to ensure continuity of service to our Members we need to run at a surplus with respect to day-to-day running costs
2. **Improved access to membership:** supporting more people in Kent with MS, including providing more options for carers and the working MS population
3. **Centre of Excellence:** recognised as supporting the self-management of MS and able to meet changing (potentially more complex) needs of Members

Key Projects 2019

We are building a strong, stable basis on which to plan for the long-term security of the Centre. A list of key projects to deliver against the strategic aims is detailed at Appendix 3.

Contact Details

The Kent MS Therapy Centre

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² “MS in the UK 2018”, MS Society citing Mackenzie et al 2014

APPENDIX 1: About the Centre

What is Multiple Sclerosis?

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a disease of the central nervous system, which is often progressive. At present, it remains incurable. Evidence and progress of the condition is very varied, some people with MS lead relatively normal lives with occasional acute episodes; at the other extreme, constant pain, loss of faculties and rapid progression via stages of disability to death can occur.

Varying progression rates mean that our members have differing degrees of mobility and many are wheelchair users. The progress of the disease frequently leads to severely reduced independence and employment prospects, with consequent financial hardship and/or personal or relationship problems.

It is most commonly diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 40 but can be earlier or later. Women are almost four times as likely as men to develop MS and in rare cases it affects children. Once diagnosed MS stays with the person for life, but treatments and specialist care can help people to manage symptoms well.

Centre Members

Membership numbers year on year

	Actual							Forecast		
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
MS Members	250	294	389	393	476	577	602	662	728	801
Non-MS Members: Associate	108	137	195	143	296	328	263	210	168	135
Oxygen Therapy							85	102	122	146
TOTAL	358	431	584	536	772	905	950	974	1,018	1,082

Membership classifications at KMSTC have varied over time, and Associate membership is no longer required to access Oxygen Therapy for non-MS individuals. However, the overall number of people with MS using the Centre is continuing to increase.

Potentially over 3,000* people living with MS could potentially benefit from the Centre services. The nearest alternative centre is in Swanley.

We conclude therefore that circa 80% of people with MS in Kent are:

- choosing not to use the services of the Centre
- unaware of the facility and therapies on offer
- aware but unable to access the facility

Increasing membership through improved awareness and accessibility is a key strategic aim of KMSTC, in order that more of the target population who would like to use the Centre can do so.

**There is currently no accurate data on the exact number of people with MS in England or in Kent. Mackenzie et al (2013) found that while there was a decreasing trend in the number of people being newly diagnosed with MS over time, the total number of people with MS was growing at 2.4% per year and that the prevalence rates in England are estimated to be 90,500. Without accurate data, taking the Kent (incl. Medway) population as 3.3% of England's population we can estimate that there are 3,000 people living with MS in Kent. If we use the same estimation basis for incidence it is likely that there is an incidence of c135 per year.*

Therapies & Services

Members are asked to make an annual membership contribution of £24 which is reviewed each year. They are not directly charged for services, recognising that some people are unable to work owing to their condition. Instead recommended donations towards the running costs for most of the therapies on offer are advised. In addition, each member may enrol a carer or family member as an associate member for an annual fee of £34. The same charge applies to people who have life limiting or lifelong conditions such as fibromyalgia, cancer or chronic fatigue. A scale of charges for associate membership is applied and reviewed annually.

We currently offer members the following therapies and services:

- Acupuncture
- Action Potential Simulation (APS)
- Aqua Yoga
- Bowel & Bladder Clinic
- Counselling
- Chiropody
- Exercise class
- Gym session
- Hydrotherapy
- Hypnotherapy
- Indian Head Massage/facial
- Manual lymphatic drainage
- Massage
- Nutritional Consultations
- Oxygen Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Pilates
- Reflexology
- Reflexology Lymphatic Drainage
- Singing Group
- Specialist Nurse Clinics
- Swimming (family)
- Swimming (supported)
- Water Reiki
- Yoga

A strict cancellation policy is applied to maximise utilisation and minimise inefficiencies for therapists and therapy space.

Centre capacity & utilisation

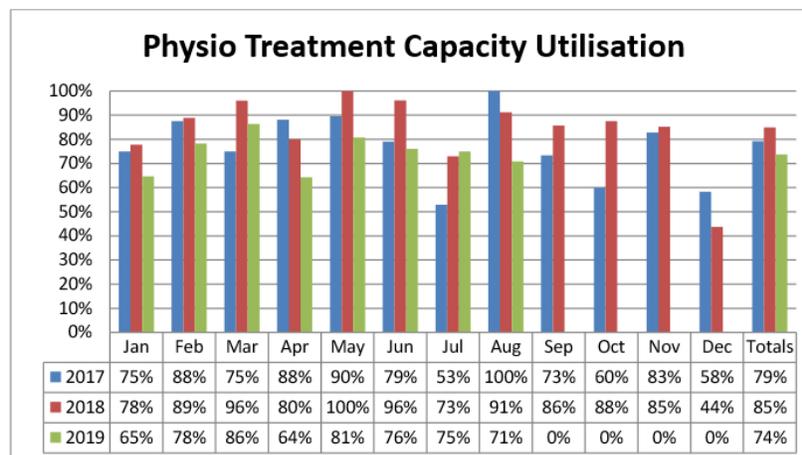
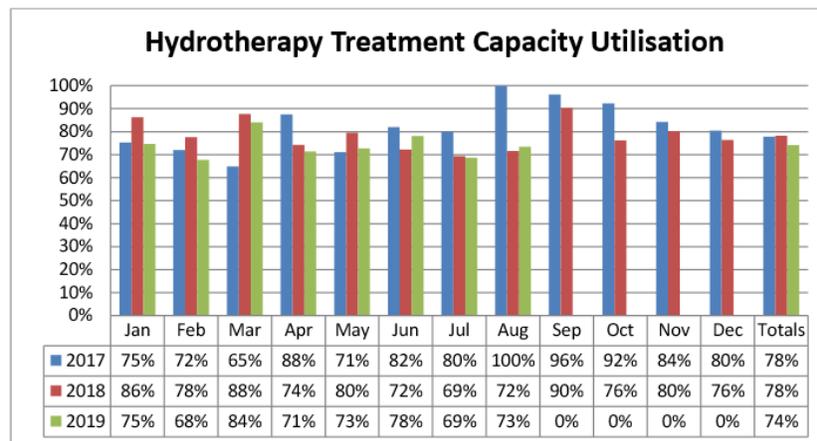
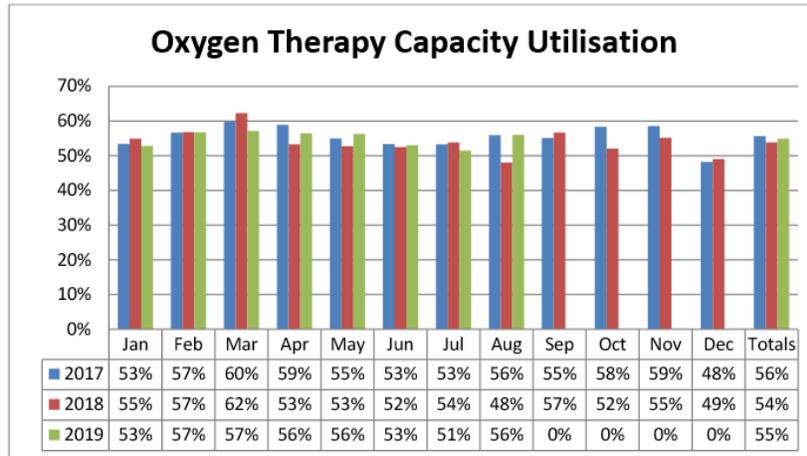
The maximum capacity for the Centre is dependent on take-up of therapies and available resources. There is scope to extend the availability of treatments further with extended opening and making full use of all therapy rooms for longer hours. It is estimated that we could accommodate an additional 600 members on the 2019 total: effectively doubling membership before capacity is reached.

The following graphs show utilisation of 3 key therapies over the past 3 years:

- Oxygen Therapy take-up remains fairly constant over time. This therapy is already promoted to non-MS clients and an important income generator. It demonstrates a very significant revenue opportunity if more clients can be engaged.
- Hydrotherapy treatment utilisation remains broadly static. 2018 capacity and attendance was increased by approx. one third over 2018 but 2019 is tracking lower. This therapy is the most expensive to deliver and better utilisation of the allocated resources would be desirable for Members. Access to Hydrotherapy is restricted as

the pool is not accessible for people with more severe disabilities. Nevertheless, the pool suite is a highly marketable resource and more can be done to realise this opportunity.

- Physiotherapy treatment capacity and attendance has reduced year on year since 2017. This reflects difficulties in staffing the facility rather than lack of demand. The Physio Review project (5) is designed to address this.



Centre Staff & Trustees

The Chief Executive is Keziah Cunningham (joined 2018), assisted by 15 members of staff, some working part-time, covering the following functions: Member Support, Fundraising, Physiotherapy, Reception & Administration, Oxygen Therapy Operators and Bookkeeping. Full Time Equivalent of 10.6 Staff.

In addition, the Centre benefits from the energetic and enthusiastic support of a team of 49 regular volunteers and a further 40 volunteers on an ad hoc basis.

The Board of Trustees comprises 9 people with individual responsibility to oversee specific functional areas:

ROLE	TRUSTEE NAME
Chair/Marketing	Sharon Wilding
Secretary/Vice-Chair/IT	David Bailey
Treasurer	Ian Bryant
Legal	Vacancy
Data Analysis	Ian Howells
Operations/Facilities	Gavin Davis
Members/Ambassador	Caroline Macdonald Bryant
Members	Richard Curzon
Community	Mary Cox

APPENDIX 2: Key Financials

Published accounts

Income	2015	2016	2017	2018
General donations & legacies	50,372	57,193	64,900	75,552
Grants	103,791	88,617	73,738	116,961
Treatment donations from members	95,330	175,080	173,347	202,695
Fundraising	124,457	130,298	171,301	122,742
Other	9,565	14,433	15,633	15,396
Total income	383,515	465,621	498,919	533,346
Expenditure				
Direct costs	172,735	194,011	242,468	260,030
General support costs	76,713	89,131	97,143	86,778
Wages and salary costs	152,415	205,226	186,477	222,151
Governance costs	11,249	4,776	6,463	3,103
Total expenditure	413,112	493,144	532,551	572,062
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	(26,597)	(27,523)	(33,632)	(38,716)
Unrestricted funds- general	95,493	83,345	104,836	124,011
Unrestricted funds- Centre	1,646,644	1,627,450	1,599,672	1,549,147
Restricted funds	39,085	43,618	16,273	8,907
Total funds	1,781,222	1,754,413	1,720,781	1,682,065

Please note:

1. Kent MS Therapy Centre income is entirely self-generating from the following sources:
 - a. Therapy income – principally Oxygen
 - b. Fundraising events and activities
 - c. Grant applications
 - d. General donations
2. We aim to maintain a reserve account equal to 6 months running costs.
3. Unrestricted funds (Centre) – refers to the value of the building.

Future plans aligned to Strategic Aims & Objectives

Going forward the plan for finance is to:

1. Model the financial impact of the plans in appendix 3 to assist in decision-making
2. Improve operational efficiency through consistent data input and analysis and respond swiftly to opportunities around session capacity vs utilisation
3. Review the Physiotherapy (land & pool) offering, including equipment, to ensure we meet the needs of Members.

Historically budgets have been set with the objective of maintaining the Centre functions to service the estimated membership numbers in appendix 1. The forecasts for 2020 onwards reflect our commitment to our strategic objectives of sustainability, membership growth and excellence.

We are targeting to achieve increased income from:

- Expanded client base, e.g. additional neurological conditions
- Further growth in Oxygen Therapy
- Grants & trusts

The planned increases in expenditure are expected to be required to cover:

- Increases in subsidised services to growing Membership
- Additional clinical expertise to facilitate delivery of services
- Investment in repair and maintenance of the building and facilities

£	Budget 2019	Actuals 2019	Forecast 2020	Forecast 2021	Forecast 2022
Income	586,788	619,000	698,000	771,000	811,000
Expenditure	577,336	605,000	694,000	712,000	731,000
Total Surplus	9,482	14,000	4,000	59,000	80,000

APPENDIX 3: Action Plan to Deliver Against Strategic Objectives

NO.	ACTION	BOARD FUNCTION SPONSORING	PRIORITY
1	INCOME GENERATION – Analysis of the opportunities for generating additional revenue from the Centre facilities, without adversely affecting member services. Timeframe for implementation 2020 onwards.	TREASURER	1
2	OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY – Develop a 2-3-year strategic plan for improving operations at the Centre, e.g. IT systems, online booking, automated sign-in.	OPERATIONS	2
3	MEMBER ACCESS – Consider the options for increasing access to the Centre and therapies for members/Potential members with transport difficulties. To include consideration of satellite or online services.	MEMBERS	2
4	MEMBERSHIP ATTRACTION – Create a plan to increase awareness and attract members from all MS communities across Kent. To include identifying additional services and options to meet the needs of working people with MS.	AMBASSADOR	1
5	PHYSIO REVIEW – Agree clinical parameters for land and hydrotherapy pool sessions, analysing how to maximise space/time/resource within the set clinical parameters and programme in Northwood appointment booking database.	DATA ANALYSIS	2
6	STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS – Seek to build stronger relationships with key communities, to include: MS Society, doctors, funding institutions, past donors	AMBASSADOR	1
7	COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS – Build relationships with local community, e.g. schools, universities, churches, clubs and associations, to build recognition and improve attendance at events, and to increase pool of volunteers	COMMUNITY	2