



Supporting and working with community groups and clubs to promote a deeper understanding of local health and care needs and experiences

Spotlight on Multiple Sclerosis Society

The Multiple Sclerosis Society ([MS Society](#)), are a community of people living with MS, researchers, fundraisers, campaigners and volunteers. The MS Society community is for everyone effected by MS - to provide practical help today and hope for a cure tomorrow. They understand what life's like with MS and know that 'together we are stronger'.

The MS Society is the largest UK charity, with around

- 29,000 members, who have a say in how the society is run
- 5,500 volunteers, who are the backbone of everything they do
- 300 employees working in the 4 nations of the UK
- and over 270 local groups supporting people with MS locally.

The MS Society local groups are on hand to provide friendship, support and information. There are social meetings, exercise classes, advice services and fundraising events. [Find your nearest group](#) or check out courses and other services on their website <https://www.mssociety.org.uk/>

Information and support are also available from their Helpline 0808 800 8000.

In West Sussex, the MS Society are working with Healthwatch West Sussex to find out more about the experiences of people affected by MS and represent their voices to help influence improvements in Health and Social Care in our County.

The key topics people chose to speak to Healthwatch were:

- Difficulties in accessing Consultant and Specialist Nurse appointments in Crawley area and wider within West Sussex
- Unclear communication by health care professionals
- Local transport issues to access services

The insight from each person was collated and anonymised and forms part of the insight and evidence that Healthwatch gather to identify common themes around what works and doesn't work for local people. **This insight is used to influence services development and feeds into:**

- West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board
- HASC - Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee
- WSCC Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Safeguarding Adult Board
- NHS Sustainability Transformation Partnership workstreams (Sussex & East Surrey).

The MS Society South East Coast Regional External Relations Officer, Amanda Brace, is working with health professionals to improve services for people affected by MS. Contact Amanda at amanda.brace@mssociety.org.uk. Other useful contacts are:

Local MS Society Group contacts:

Brighton & Worthing Group
Group contact number: 07827 706 449
Group email:
brightonworthing@mssociety.org.uk
[Brighton and Worthing group on Facebook](#)

Horsham, Crawley & District Group

Group contact number: 07810604097
Group email:
horshamcrawley@mssociety.org.uk

Mid Sussex Group

Group contact number: 07870 788 917
Group email:
MidSussexSupport@mssociety.org.uk

Chichester & Bognor Regis Group

Group contact number: 07761 692 828
Group email:
chichesterbognorregis@mssociety.org.uk

Not only do we collect the experiences of local people, but we can also provide free information and guidance just call: **0300 012 0122**.

Email helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk,
Website www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk.

healthwatch
West Sussex

You can also follow our social media channels:

Facebook [@healthwatchwestsussex](https://www.facebook.com/healthwatchwestsussex)

Twitter [@healthwatchws](https://twitter.com/healthwatchws)

If you are setting up or would like to share news of a similar project we would be interested to hear from you. Please contact Cheryl Berry, Partnership Co-ordinator, email: cheryl.berry@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk