

# RURAL IMPACT REPORT

ALBERTA 2021



ALBERTA  
POOL  
ELEVATORS LTD  
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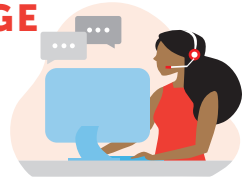
ALBERTA  
GRAIN  
COMPANY

*Thanks to your support, we are able to fund innovative support programs and promising research initiatives that make a meaningful difference in the lives of people affected by MS in rural communities across Alberta.*

# INFORMATION & SUPPORT

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## MS KNOWLEDGE NETWORK



The MS Knowledge Network is the MS Society of Canada's hub of knowledge and navigators, providing consistent, quality MS information and support for anyone in Canada. Our team of MS Navigators provide trusted information on all aspects of life with MS. Whether you're living with the disease, working with or caring for someone with MS, being able to tap into current, reliable information will enable you to make informed choices.

## QUALITY OF LIFE EQUIPMENT PROGRAM



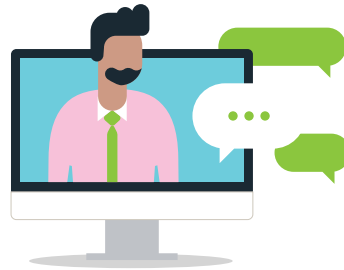
The MS Society offers individuals living with MS a wide variety of programs that promote personal independence and contribute to an enhanced quality of life. The Quality of Life Equipment Program is designed to provide financial assistance to individuals requiring support with the purchase of mobility equipment and safety devices.

## PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMS



Peer Support Groups and 1:1 Peer Support bring together individuals affected by MS through either a group or one-to-one format to share common concerns and experiences in an informal safe environment. Whether you have a specific question, you are experiencing MS related issues, or you are looking for social connection, a peer support group or one-to-one connection can help.

## EDUCATION



The MS Society regularly offers free webinars featuring experts on a variety of topics related to MS. Additionally, our MS Connect Conference brings the MS community together to hear about ground-breaking discoveries and the progress made in MS research. You can attend our education opportunities from anywhere: online from your computer or call in via phone. All education is recorded and available through our website.

## WELLNESS



The MS Society has developed partnerships to promote wellness virtually, as well as several resources and guidelines to support individuals becoming active in their community. MS Navigators can also connect you to wellness opportunities available in your local community when it is safe to do so.

# MS KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

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## TOP 5 AREAS OF SUPPORT IN ALBERTA:

Within Alberta, the top five areas individuals requested information, support, and referral from MS Navigators included:

1. **Quality of Life Support**
2. **Drugs/Medications**
3. **Quality of Life Application**
4. **Professional Health Services**
5. **Income & Financial Support**



*"This is an amazing resource, being able to ask someone for information and links was so helpful. Before I connected with a navigator I felt like I just kept returning to the same generic articles."*

## TOP 5 AREAS OF COVID-19 SUPPORT:

The MS Knowledge Network began tracking COVID-19 related inquiries on March 5, 2020. 9% of inquiries to the MS Knowledge Network were COVID-19 related.

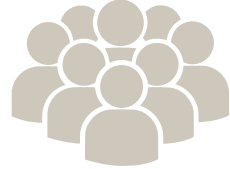
The top five areas individuals requested information, support, and referral from MS Navigators included:

1. **Drugs/medication specific risk factors**
2. **Income support (CERB, EI, Disability Assistance)**
3. **General information about risk factors and precautions**
4. **Vaccine information (eligibility, risk factors)**
5. **Employment (COVID-19 risk in the workplace, returning to work)**

To support MS Navigators fielding the influx of COVID-19 related inquiries, multiple resources were developed to ensure that MS Navigators and MS Society staff were providing consistent and up-to-date information. For access to these resources and more information, please visit: [mssociety.ca/resources/what-you-need-to-know-about-coronavirus](https://mssociety.ca/resources/what-you-need-to-know-about-coronavirus)

*"Very impressed with insight & compassion shown. Support that demonstrated a loving person. Gave me reason to stay strong, not give into despair & find resources that could help with my quality of life."*

# HIGHLIGHTS



**798** rural Albertans affected by MS were provided information and referral support.

**12**

self-help and support groups met virtually throughout 2021. In addition, an Alberta-wide virtual self-help group was created.

**30**

rural Albertans living with MS received equipment funding support towards improving their quality of life and aiding in the management of their MS and MS symptoms.

**21**

rural Albertans received advocacy support on issues related to employment, income supports, housing, human rights, healthcare and medication access, and disability insurance.

Community wellness programming was offered virtually in partnership with the NeuroSask and TIME™, and Yoga for Everybody programs, supporting over 156 rural Albertans.



Direct one-on-one peer support was provided to 13 people living with MS in rural Alberta.

The MS Society launched its second virtual MS Connect and first ever MS Can Be Summit, bringing together the MS community from across Canada, including over 160 Albertans, to learn about the latest developments in MS research, treatments, and symptom management.



Four “Hear from the Experts” MS education sessions were delivered by webinar in 2021 featuring popular topics such as COVID-19, mental health, and physical activity. Webinars can be accessed 24/7 online at [mssociety.ca/resources/what-you-need-to-know-about-coronavirus/hear-from-the-experts](https://mssociety.ca/resources/what-you-need-to-know-about-coronavirus/hear-from-the-experts)

Our MS Navigators are available to provide MS information and support from 6am to 6pm MT, Monday to Friday.

Phone: 1-844-859-6789

Email: [mnnavigators@mssociety.ca](mailto:mnnavigators@mssociety.ca)

Live Web Chat: visit the [MS Information](#) or [Support & Services](#) sections of our website

