

EMSP Networking Dinner: 25 years as the voice of people with MS in Europe

EMSP's leading figures joined by representatives of our partners and sponsors gathered together on 11 March, at the Dominican Hotel in Brussels, for the annual Networking Dinner.

2014 is a very special year for EMSP, marking our 25th anniversary. This provides the occasion to look back on some of the highlights of EMSP's organisational history. Under the slogan "*25 years as the voice of people with multiple sclerosis in Europe*", **President John Golding** (pictured below) gave a presentation speech briefly emphasising EMSP's main achievements throughout the years.

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Promoting a patient/carer perspective at BRAI.NS 2014

The European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP) was a leading participant in a two-day conference focusing on brain-related issues - **BRAI.NS 2014** - organised on 14-15 February, in Barcelona, Spain.

EMSP's President John Golding and **Deputy CEO Christoph Thalheim** gave keynote speeches in front of a specialised audience of more than 500 stakeholders.

[Read more.](#)

Special feature at the EMSP Spring Conference: expertise from the Melsbroek MS Centre

The [National MS Center in Melsbroek](#), Belgium will participate in [EMSP's Spring Conference](#) in Dublin, where **Medical Director Tom Meurrens** will be involved in a 'wellbeing marketplace' and in a workshop session on exchange of good practice.

[Read more.](#)



The Melsbroek MS Center has been operating for more than 50 years and plans to expand its capabilities by building a new hospital between 2016 and 2019. With a capacity of **134 beds and 70 ambulant places**, the centre is able to offer holistic care that includes physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, logotherapy and ergotherapy as well as psychological and social support.

The centre admitted **800 MS patients last year**, the number continually growing since 2009; some 200 of them were new patients; the average stay for a patient in Melsbroek is 42 days per year.

MEMBER NEWS

Poland: Progress in access to vital MS treatment

On 20 February, the Polish MS Society ([PTSR](#)) met with representatives of the Polish Ministry of Health in a bid to convince the health authorities to solve the problem of multiple sclerosis patients losing their entitlement to state-funded treatment with **disease-modifying drugs (DMDs)**. The meeting produced a temporary solution involving the pharmaceutical industry, with PTSR vowing to keep this matter on the public agenda as "it concerns real people and their health, not so-called diseases qualifications".

[Read more.](#)

Germany: Former EMSP President receives high recognition from the state

On 22 March, The Secretary General of the German MS Society ([DMSG](#)) and former president of EMSP, Dorothea Pitschnau-Michel (pictured), was awarded with the 1st class of the **Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany**, in a ceremony organised in Hannover and presided over by the Regional President, Hauke Jagau (also pictured). The official praised in high terms Mrs Pitschnau-Michel's contribution to the wellbeing of people with multiple sclerosis in Germany during her ongoing **30-year career** in this field.

[Read more.](#)



Belgium: Gala Concert organised by the Belgian MS Society

On 12 March, the [Belgian National Multiple Sclerosis League](#) staged its annual Gala Concert, at the Palais de Beaux Arts in Bruxelles.

The event drew a crowd of **around 1,000 people**, who witnessed the Belgian bass-baryton Wilfried Van den Bran deliver a selection of songs created by American composer Cole Porter.

[Read more.](#)

Spain: Princess of Asturias supports research in MS



Princess of Asturias (left) and EME's President, Anna Torredemer

On 14 March, Her Royal Highness the Princess of Asturias Letizia Ortiz received a delegation from the Spanish MS Society ([EME](#)) at the La Zarzuela Palace in Madrid.

During this official reception, the Princess of Asturias showed a great interest in the area of MS research. She expressed her support especially for **research into progressive MS**, which cannot be managed with any drugs at present.

[Read more.](#)

STAKEHOLDER NEWS

EPF campaign for EU Elections supported in the European Parliament

The European Patients' Forum ([EPF](#)) campaign built around the message "*Patients + Participation = Our Vote for a Healthier Europe*" reached an important landmark by organising a special exhibition in the European Parliament, between 17 and 20 March. Around **30 Members of the European Parliament** signed the campaign [Manifesto](#).

Click [here](#) to read more and on the picture below to watch the official campaign video:



EPF 2014 EU Elections Campaign - The Official Video!

Save the date: Unity Walk for Parkinson's in September

The [European Unity Walk](#) is a unique initiative by the European Parkinson's Disease Association (EPDA), to be held this year in Luxembourg, on 20 September 2014.

By bringing together various sections of our society - namely, people with Parkinson's and their families, healthcare professionals and patient organisations, European policymakers, the treatment industry, the general public, and the media – the event aims to raise the awareness of Parkinson's disease across Europe and highlight its effects.

[Read more.](#)

PEOPLE WITH MS

Spanish 'Iron Man': Ramón Arroyo



Ramón Arroyo (pictured above, on the right, speaking on Spanish TV) is 42 years old and was diagnosed with MS 10 years ago. He is married and has two children. He works as Industrial Cooperation Manager for a multinational company. And he is an athlete.

When Ramón was diagnosed, his doctor told him he wouldn't be able to run 200 metres. But, last autumn, **he finished an Ironman endurance race**. He keeps training for similar challenges even though he suffered from a relapse about one month ago, after three years of remission. Find part of his story by clicking on the picture below:



Ramón Arroyo's Challenge - IM4EM

Ramón takes treatment for multiple sclerosis but is reluctant to talk about it because he says that every person with MS should seek personalised care. He knows full well that this is a very complex condition.

"I am very respectful to those disabled by MS, but if just one person with multiple sclerosis takes up any kind of exercise after hearing my story, I will be the happiest man on earth", concludes Ramón.



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