

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

First pan-European MS Nurse *PROfessional* CME Accredited e-Learning Programme Supports Landmark MS Nurse-focused Scientific Sessions at ECTRIMS 2013

- Consensus paper step closer to unifying MS Nurses -

COPENHAGEN, FRIDAY 4 OCTOBER 2013. The first ever scientific sessions for MS Nurses are to take place at the 29th annual congress of the European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (ECTRIMS) in Copenhagen. The landmark nurse-focused plenary session will be dedicated to a ground-breaking new online educational tool, MS Nurse *PROfessional*. The highly accredited programme is a first and important step towards consolidating standards of MS nursing care across Europe and is the result of collaboration between leading patient groups and professional organisations.

Before this, the definition and recognition of the MS Nurse role has been inconsistent with no recognised clinical competencies or core skill set reflecting what an MS Nurse does. Many MS Nurses have been fulfilling the role without formal accreditation.

The programme, available at www.ms nursepro.org, was established through the European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP) in collaboration with the Rehabilitation in MS (RIMS) and the International Organization of Multiple Sclerosis Nurses (IOMSN). MS Nurse *PROfessional* has been launched in the UK, Spain and Czech Republic, and is available in five languages with more local language launches planned for later this year.

Vicki Matthews, MS Specialist Nurse Advisor, Rehabilitation in MS (RIMS) and a member of the MS Nurse *PROfessional* Steering Committee, is one of the nurses presenting at a scientific session at ECTRIMS. Commenting on the ECTRIMS nurse sessions, Ms Matthews said, "MS Nurses play such a central and influential role in the care of people with MS and to have our contribution recognised in this way by the ECTRIMS Committee is immensely gratifying. The continued development of the MS Nurse's skill set through the MS Nurse *PROfessional* platform is so important to improving standards of care. We're looking forward to building on what's been achieved so far."

MS Nurse *PROfessional* aims to support MS nurses in developing the right knowledge and skills to be an MS Nurse and sets out an agreed set of core competencies that will promote consistency of practice and nursing care across the whole of Europe. It has been accredited by the Royal College of Nursing and International Council of Nursing and endorsed by a multitude of MS patient advocacy groups.

A consensus paper, *Moving towards the pan-European unification of Multiple Sclerosis Nurses*, has also been published in the October 2013 issue of the *Multiple Sclerosis Journal* to coincide with this landmark occasion at ECTRIMS. The paper defines and articulates the role of the MS Nurse for the first time. It consolidates learnings to empower MS Nurses across Europe, to demonstrate how far they've come and give them a recognised role in which to believe and represent. One of the key aims of the paper is to bring the unification and recognition of the MS Nurse population closer and trigger the formation of national organisations to work together and share best practice.

Anne Winslow, Vice President of EMSP said, "These inaugural nurse-led scientific sessions at ECTRIMS are testament to the catalysing effects of MS Nurse *PROfessional*. The EMSP is proud to be a part of this process. By defining the new, evolved role of MS Nurses and equipping them with the skills and knowledge they need and the recognition they deserve, we hope to see a step change in the effectiveness of MS care that extends across the entire multi-disciplinary team which will affect the most important beneficiaries of all – people with MS."

- Ends -

Key presentation at ECTRIMS 2013

Session: RIMS: Progress in rehabilitation

Vicki Matthews presenting on MS Nurse *PROfessional* in Hall C

Date: Friday, 4th of October

Time: 10.45am – 12.15pm

About MS Nurse *PROfessional*

MS Nurse *PROfessional* was developed by the European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP). They identified an educational need through the MS-NEED survey which highlighted the disparity of access, availability and standards of specialised MS nursing care across Europe for people with MS and their families. The tool itself consists of interactive online modules that aim to provide nurses

with consistent, accredited knowledge. MS Nurse *PROfessional* is now being made available across Europe, having already launched in countries such as the UK, Spain and the Czech Republic.

To try out the platform visit www.msnursepro.org and use password **MSPROUK0603**

MS Nurse *PROfessional* is supported by an unrestricted educational grant by Novartis.

What is MS?

MS is a complex, chronic, disabling disease. It affects twice as many women as men, and is usually first diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 40, at a critical stage in adult life. To date, no cure exists. It is estimated that there are more than 600,000 persons with MS in Europe.

About the EMSP

The *European MS Platform* (EMSP) represents the interests of people with MS at the European level, working with the European bodies on behalf of its 38 societies in 34 European countries to achieve its goals of high quality & equitable treatment and support for all citizens suffering from MS.

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