

Fast Facts



Removing uncertainty.
Predicting your FutureMS.

About MS

MS is a chronic, incurable and disabling disorder of the brain and spinal cord. It is caused by inflammation followed by nerve degeneration.

- MS causes a wide range of symptoms including problems with movement, balance and vision.
- Scotland has one of the highest rates of MS, with an estimated 10,000 affected people in this country. MS is the leading non-traumatic cause of neurological disability in young adults.
- The cause of MS is unknown. It is likely to be caused by a combination of both genetic (inherited) and environmental factors.

What do patients, families and doctors need?

At diagnosis, most people with MS do not know what type of disease they will experience: how often and how severe their relapses will be.

- Patients need a tool to predict – as early as possible – how severe their MS is likely to be. This would help them make informed decisions about their lifestyle, work and family.
- There are 11 licensed drugs to reduce the relapse rate in MS. Doctors need the tool to help them choose which drug to recommend, to which person and at what time. This is sometimes called ‘personalised medicine’.

What is FutureMS?

FutureMS is a research study for people with MS.

- Beginning in early 2016, FutureMS aims to recruit 500 adults from across Scotland who have been newly diagnosed with relapsing-onset MS.
- Eligible participants will attend two clinic visits, 12 months apart (in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen or Dundee). They will undergo clinical examinations, MRI brain scans and donate a blood sample.
- Study participation is entirely voluntary and will not affect MS care or treatment. Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed.

What are the study's goals?

FutureMS aims to develop tools that will allow individualised prediction of MS severity.

- The project will develop and test powerful new platforms for research in Scotland that combine NHS and research data, including pioneering the use of direct patient input of health information into a tablet computer.
- Secondly, the study aims to find out more about how genes influence MS severity.
- FutureMS will begin to position Scotland as a world-leader for research in personalised medicine.

Who are the project partners?

- FutureMS is led by Professor Siddharthan Chandran and Dr Pete Connick at the Anne Rowling Regenerative Neurology Clinic, a University of Edinburgh Clinical Research Facility.
- FutureMS is a collaboration between NHS Scotland, the Universities of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, and industry partners.
- FutureMS is funded by the Stratified Medicine Scotland Innovation Centre (SMS-IC) and by industry partners.

Where can I find out more?

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