

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada Endorsement of Multiple Sclerosis International Federation Principles to Promote the Quality of Life of People with Multiple Sclerosis

Endorsed February 27, 2009, National Board of Directors, Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada

In 2005, Multiple Sclerosis International Federation (MSIF) launched the *Principles to Promote the Quality of Life of People with Multiple Sclerosis*. The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada is pleased to acknowledge and affirm the *Principles*.

In our own work, the MS Society strives to put the person with MS and others affected by MS at the centre of our programs and activities. The Principles provide additional measures by which the MS Society can expand its work in promoting the quality of life of persons affected by MS in Canada through improvements to our own programs and services and through increased advocacy to governments and other service providers for better policies and programs.

The Principles are unique in the way in which they have been developed and presented. They are positive and action oriented and are meant to reflect the state of the world for persons with MS when the Principles are fulfilled. In addition, they are specifically designed to put the needs of persons with MS in the centre of all actions undertaken to carry out the Principles.

MSIF developed the Principles with input from persons with MS, their families and caregivers, health care providers and volunteers and staff with MSIF member organizations. A literature review of relevant MS articles, textbooks and other publications was also used to inform the development of the Principles.

Principles of Quality of Life Themes¹

- 1.0 **Independence and Empowerment** - Persons with MS are empowered as full participants in their communities and in decision-making about the management and treatment of the disease.
- 2.0 **Medical Care** - Persons with MS have access to medical care, treatments and therapies appropriate to their needs.
- 3.0 **Continuing (Long-Term or Social) Care** - Persons with MS have access to a wide range of age-appropriate care services that enable them to function as independently as possible.
- 4.0 **Health Promotion and Disease Prevention** - Persons with MS have the information and services they need to maintain positive health practices and a healthy lifestyle.
- 5.0 **Support of Family Members** - Family members and caregivers receive information and support to mitigate the effects of MS.
- 6.0 **Transportation** - Persons with MS have access to their communities through accessible public transportation and assistive technology for personal automobiles.
- 7.0 **Employment and Volunteer Activities** - Support systems and services are available to enable persons with MS to continue employment as long as they are productive and desire to work.

- 8.0 **Disability Benefits and Financial Assistance** - Disability entitlements and services are available to those in need, provide an adequate standard of living and have flexibility to allow for the disease variability that is characteristic of multiple sclerosis.
- 9.0 **Education** - Persons with MS, their families or caregivers have access to education.
- 10.0 **Housing and Accessibility of Buildings in the Community** - Accessibility, both of public buildings and in the availability of accessible homes and apartments, is essential to independence for persons with MS.

¹ All Principles under each themed area are available on the MSIF website at Principles to Promote the Quality of Life of Persons with Multiple Sclerosis:
www.msif.org/en/resources/msif_resources/msif_publications/quality_of_life_principles/index.html