



PROUDLY SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH  
ALL NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS

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## MSWA an 'angel service'

When Anita Gamba was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1989, she says virtually nothing was known about the neurological condition. She had put her deteriorating health down to her recent pregnancy when within the space of a year, she was experiencing paralysis in her arms, hands, legs and feet, had little feeling in her stomach and back, was declared legally blind, her speech was slurred and she'd lost some of her cognitive skills.

"In December 1989, I collapsed and spent three days in Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. An MRI revealed I had multiple sclerosis but the prognosis wasn't good, one doctor told me all they could do was prepare me for life in a wheelchair," Anita said.

"With no internet, the local library was my best source of information and when I couldn't see any care or support services in Western Australia, the family moved to the United States."

While it was a culture shock, Anita said she lived in a very supportive and progressive community. She stopped eating red meat and dairy, chiropractors realigned her body to improve blood flow and she meditated for three hours a day.

"After about five years I had very few ailments my health returned to normal and I was back working full-time as a chartered accountant. Then, the GFC hit and by 2010 the company I worked for was bankrupt, I'd lost my investments, my house was worthless," added Anita.

At the urging of her Mum, Anita moved to Perth in 2012. By 2013, her health was again deteriorating.

"I was heading down the rabbit hole, then MSWA jumped in and put me on the right track. They provided me with occupational therapy, physiotherapy and aqua therapy," Anita said.

"In June last year, I collapsed and I've been in a wheelchair since then. But I receive funding for the MSWA services I need and receive support from carers to help me shower, clean the house and drive me where I need to go. I don't know what I'd do without MSWA. They're an angel service."

Determined not to give up, Anita has set herself the goal of walking again by the end of the year. In the meantime, she wants to help other people with disabilities connect with the services they need.

Anita is telling her story on World MS Day to help raise awareness about multiple sclerosis and the treatment, support and education services offered by MSWA to its more than 2,000 Members.

"It's fair to say we've come a long way since 1989 when Anita was diagnosed, when it comes to understanding and treating MS. We're currently funding some very interesting local research which we're hoping will help us to find another piece in puzzle," said MSWA Member Services General Manager, Sue Shapland



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“This year, MSWA is investing a record \$2.5 million into MS research in Australia, which is more than twice the amount of all the other states’ contributions added together. And I’d like to thank the people of Western Australia for their support and generosity which has allowed us to year on year, grow the support and services we provide to people with MS and other neurological conditions.”

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