

RARE VIEWS

Multiple Sclerosis

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Q. What inspired you to get involved with the Multiple Sclerosis Association of America?

A. I was inspired to join the MSAA team in 2015 because a dear friend of mine had been newly diagnosed earlier that same year and needed support and guidance through his MS journey. As a social worker, I wanted to help. I started to learn about what programs were available and soon realized I loved the mission of MSAA. I found it to be educational and the organization provided valuable programs and services to clients who were in the same situation as my friend. The more I learned about MSAA, the more I wanted to be part of such an impactful organization. I decided to apply for a job to help improve the lives of others just like my friend.

Q. What is the biggest unmet need for MS clients? For caregivers?

A. One of the biggest unmet needs for both clients and caregivers is mental health wellness. MS clients and caregivers experience a variety of mental health needs throughout their MS journey and caring for those with MS. I hear often on our helpline how they cannot find mental health services in their area, have difficulty paying for services, do not have transportation to get to appointments and cannot find a therapist that specifically deals with MS. Clients and caregivers often feel overwhelmed, anxious, and alone. It is so important to encourage clients and caregivers to join MSAA's online peer to peer support forum called My MS Community and to look for local support groups in their area. Counseling services are vital as well but sadly some clients and caregivers cannot find suitable therapists to meet their individual needs.

Q. Are there any new resources that you'd like MS patients to know about?

A. There are many different resources for MS patients. One that MSAA has developed is a valuable e-tool called the MS Ultimate Treatment Guide. The MSAA's Ultimate MS Treatment Guide compares 20 different FDA-approved MS treatments. This powerful tool includes medical experts and patient advocates discussing their first-hand experience, so MS clients can make an informed choice that is right for them.

Rare Views is an ongoing spotlight series brought to you by Mallinckrodt's Patient Engagement & Advocacy Team.