



Interim results of Multiple Sclerosis study suggest much larger incidence of MS exists than first thought.

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Preliminary results from the National Multiple Sclerosis Prevalence Study indicate there are likely to be many more people living with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) than previously thought.

The National MS Prevalence Study is a project undertaken by the Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences and jointly funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRC) and the Multiple Sclerosis Society of New Zealand. The study's key aim is to accurately measure the number of people living with MS in New Zealand. It will be the first project in the world to measure the incidence of MS within an entire country.

With enrolments in the study almost completed in the upper North and lower South Islands, 4000 possible candidates have been identified. Although researchers are working through the data to remove any duplicates, this interim figure already suggests the number of people found to be living with MS will be much higher than the Ministry of Health's estimate of 2000 New Zealanders.

This, and other interesting aspects of the Study, will be discussed at a Parliamentary function on 7 August hosted by Hon. Ruth Dyson, Minister of Disability issues.

The HRC and Multiple Sclerosis Society of New Zealand are hoping the event will also increase awareness of the project in those areas of the country yet to be visited by the research team.

Further information on the study is available from Multiple Sclerosis Society of New Zealand National Office:

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