

TOPIC: PROMOTING AWARENESS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SYMPTOMS AND DIAGNOSIS

SUBMITTED BY: Salisbury University Student Nurses' Association, Salisbury, MD

WHEREAS, Multiple Sclerosis (MS) affects 2.5 million people globally; and
WHEREAS, as one of the most disabling neurologic diseases among young people, symptoms include fatigue, vision problems, difficulty walking, muscle weakness, stiffness, as well as bladder and bowel problems; and
WHEREAS, initial symptoms may present between ages 20 to 50, in the form of a mild episode called "clinical isolated episode", which the individual typically does not recognize as a reason to seek medical attention; and
WHEREAS, there is no one specific laboratory test or symptom to diagnose MS; multiple criteria include evidence of damage to at least two separate areas of the CNS, damage that occurred at least one month apart, and various analyses including blood tests, Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), and Visual Evoked Potential (VEP) to rule out any other possible diagnoses; and
WHEREAS, though there are no definitive causes confirmed, there are no known preventative measures; known risk factors include being between 20 to 50 years old, female, Caucasian, and possibly a positive family history; and
WHEREAS, a study in Spain showed the mean time lapse between symptom onset and MS diagnosis was 24.9 months (2.08 years); and
WHEREAS, a prospective study on the effect of diagnosis on anxiety, mood, and quality of life found that 30 days after diagnosis disclosure, regardless of the diagnosis, all quality of life and anxiety and depression questionnaires rated better than pre-disclosure; and
WHEREAS, a recent study that compared MS patients treated with placebo, early treatment and delayed treatment found that patients with initial clinical indications of MS treated early scored higher in cognitive performance than those with delayed treatment; therefore be it
RESOLVED, that the National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA) encourage its constituent members to support this resolution by advocating for awareness of Multiple Sclerosis (MS) symptoms and diagnosis; and be it further
RESOLVED, that the NSNA publish an article in *Imprint* pertaining to MS symptom awareness, if feasible; and be it further
RESOLVED, that the NSNA provide a link to a credible website providing information regarding MS symptoms and diagnosis and encourage its constituents to promote awareness within their communities, if feasible; and be it further
RESOLVED, that the NSNA send a copy of this resolution to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the American Association of Neuroscience Nurses, the American Nurses Association, the American Public Health Association, the *American Journal of Public Health*, the National League for Nursing, the National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International, and all others deemed appropriate by the NSNA Board of Directors.