



# MS in Italy



## WHAT IS MS?

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a complex neurodegenerative disease affecting approximately 126,000 of the 60.4 million<sup>1</sup> people in Italy.

Each person will experience this unpredictable disease differently, but common symptoms include mobility and sensitivity disorders, cognitive dysfunction, fatigue, pain.

There is currently no cure for MS; however, optimal treatment and support have a significant effect on disease progression and quality of life for people with MS.



PAIN



FATIGUE



REDUCED  
MOBILITY



COGNITIVE  
DYSFUNCTION

## COUNTRY CONTEXT

Italy's national health service is decentralised, with each region delivering healthcare through a combination of health units and public and private hospitals.<sup>2</sup>

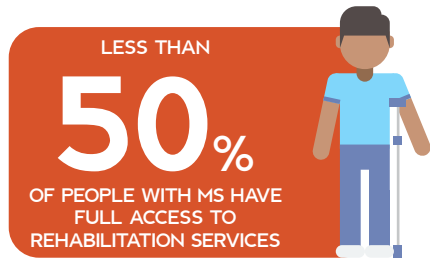
Italy has universal health coverage for a package of services; however, residual payments are made for diagnostic procedures, private specialist consultations, non-urgent visits to emergency departments and some pharmaceuticals, accounting for significant spending.



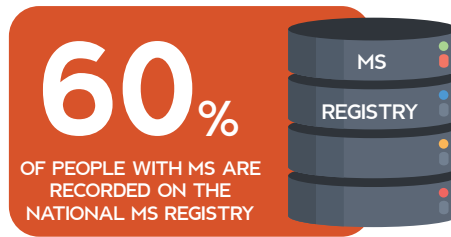


# WHAT DID THE BAROMETER FIND?

Italy offers a network of more than 200 specialist MS centres and has made significant progress developing since 1996 a dedicated national care pathway to secure an integrated diagnostic, therapeutic and care pathway across all regions. The Italian MS Society Foundation (Fondazione Italiana Sclerosi Multipla; FISM) is a significant supporter of MS research, investing between €5 million and €6 million annually. However, there remains room for improvement:



Under 50% of people with MS have full access to rehabilitation services.

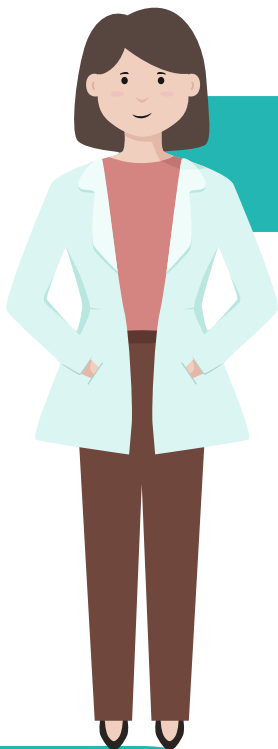


60% of people with MS are recorded on the national MS registry established by FISM.



Symptomatic therapy to help with walking is not reimbursed.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



Approve national rehabilitation guidelines to secure access to personalised rehabilitation in every region.



Integrate clinical data from the national MS register with administrative data from regional health services to improve public health services.

Ensure all symptomatic treatments are fully reimbursed and available to every person with MS.



More information can be found at [www.emsp.org](http://www.emsp.org) or contact [presidenza@aism.it](mailto:presidenza@aism.it)  
 Agenda della Sclerosi Multipla ([aism.it](http://aism.it))  
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1. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. 2019. World Population Prospects 2019, Online Edition. Rev. 1. Available from: <https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/Population/>  
 2. OECD/European Observatory on Health Systems Policies. 2019. Italy: Country Health Profile 2019. State of Health in the EU, OECD Publishing, Paris/European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, Brussels