



**National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society**

**We Are All Activists:
Raise Your Voice In the MS Movement**

**Abby Carter Emanuelson
Vice President, Public Policy
Greater Carolinas**

**Jenna Labadie Paladino
Director of Public Policy, Florida**

OVERVIEW OF TRAINING

- Southeast Regional Advocacy
- Success Stories
- Unified State Policy Agenda
- Becoming an Activist



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

What Is MS Activism?

Activism consists of intentional efforts to promote, impede or direct social, political, economic, or environmental change.

MS Activism drives change in public policies to bring positive impact for people affected by MS.



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

Activism Success Stories: Florida

- **Sponsored legislation during the 2012 legislative session to modify the renewal process for disabled parking permits to curb the fraud and abuse.**
 - Changed the renewal process, increased enforcement mechanisms and removed the fraudulent on-line renewal system
- **During the 2011 session, advocated for Medicaid Reform and increased funding for the Nursing Home Diversion Program**
 - Increased funding for persons who wish to stay in their homes instead of going into a nursing home
- **Other recent actions have included: improving access to vehicle window tinting to improve the driving experience for all persons with disability and Medicaid Buy-In to allow more persons to return to work.**



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

Activism Success Stories: South Carolina

- **Identified and supported legislation “Exempting MS Biologics from State Sales Tax”**
 - SC GRC organized and developed a SC Advocacy & Awareness Day. Following a Chapter Town Hall, MS Activists made visit on supporting legislation.
 - MS Activists in the Senate Finance Chair’s district sent personal emails to move legislation.
- **Other successes include:**
 - \$5 million for Community Long-Term Care Programs and Services
 - Partner to promoting accessible voting
 - Actively engaging in #acceptMEsc, a consumer-driven movement to expand Medicaid.



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

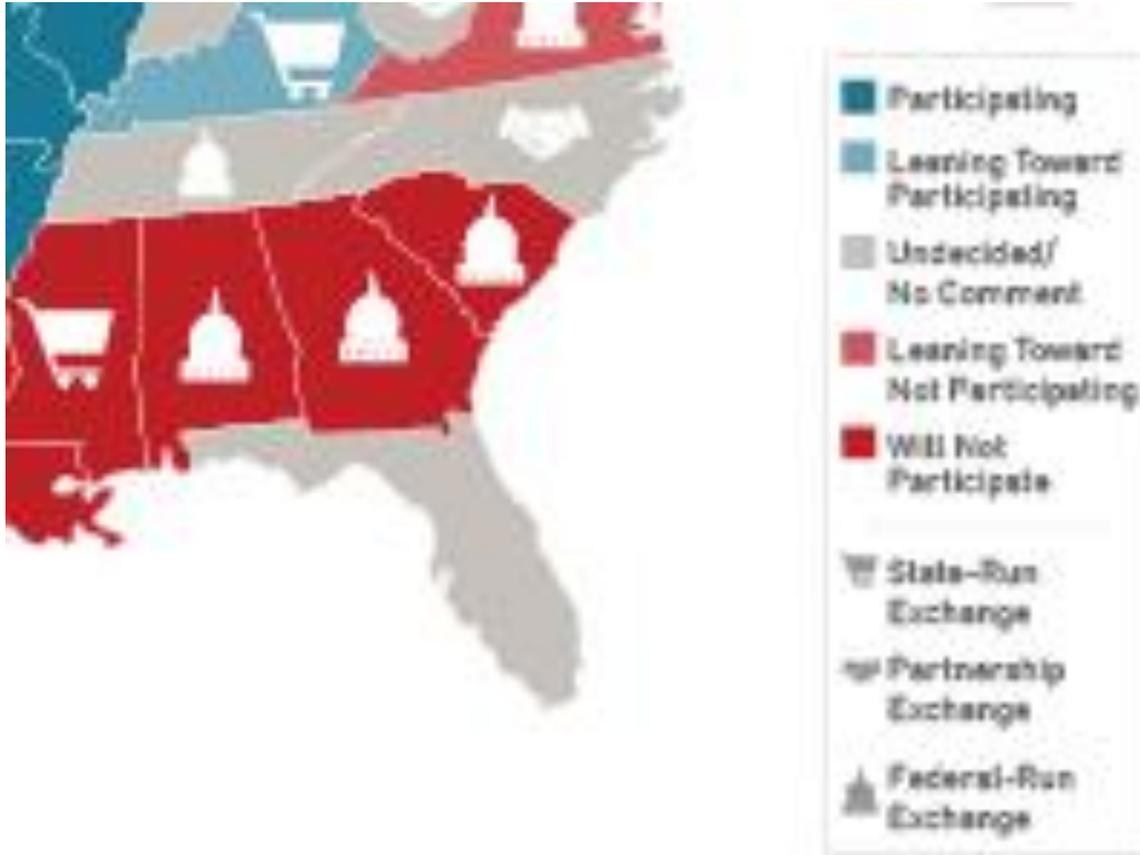
NEW Unified State Legislative Policy Agenda

Cost Sharing and Co-Insurance	Exploring caps on out of pocket expenses, transparency and notification during contract year and possible ban on specialty tiers
Expansion of Medicaid	The expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which is to be determined within each state
Partnership on MS Awareness, Education Initiatives & Addressing the Unmet Needs of People with MS	Create opportunities to partner with a state agency to raise awareness and education of MS and potentially partner on long-term solutions



**National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society**

Expansion of Medicaid / Health Benefit Exchanges in the Southeast Region



Source: <http://www.advisory.com/Daily-Briefing/2012/11/09/MedicaidMap#lightbox/1/>



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

Expanding your Volunteer Leadership for MS Activism

***Embrace “We Are Activist” as an
important part of what the Society is.***



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

Expanding your Volunteer Leadership for MS Activism

Become fluent in MS Activism:

- See what issues are hot and take action.
- Send an email to legislators asking for change. Send a copy of it to friends, family, and members of the media.
- Call your public official about an MS issue.
- Share your story with others.
- Ask your friends or family to get involved.



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

Expanding your Volunteer Leadership for MS Activism

Be a MS Activist:

- Write a letter to the editor of [your local newspaper](#). Ask for increased funding for MS research or other issues.
- Visit your legislator's district office. [Use these tips and tools](#) (pdf).
- Post MS issues on your web site, blog, or social networking page.
- Check out our blog at www.msactivist.blogspot.com.
- Call [your local talk radio](#) show and raise awareness for disability rights.



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

Expanding your Volunteer Leadership for MS Activism

Be a MS Activist Ambassador

- Invite your elected officials to your local MS events.
- Volunteer to recruit new MS activists at your next local [BikeMS](#) or [WalkMS](#).
- Become a subject matter expert on an MS issue and serve on a state or community task force.
- Organize an event to meet other MS activists in your community.
- Volunteer with your chapter's government relations committee.
- Sponsor an MS activist's trip to Washington, DC. Email us at msactivist@nmss.org.



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society