

INTRODUCTION

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a condition that most people have heard about but few properly understand. It is the most common neurological condition in working-aged adults. It is usually diagnosed between the ages of twenty and forty-five, which is the time when many people are making life-changing decisions about things like careers, marriage, children and mortgages. It is a time of life when you don't expect to be told you have a condition that will impact you for the rest of your life.

A diagnosis of MS usually comes as a shock, even if you have been expecting it, and this will be a worrying and upsetting time for you and everyone close to you. The good news is that there is much that can be done that will help make life easier and more enjoyable for everyone, both now and in the future. In the past fifteen years many new treatments have become available to prevent relapses and treat symptoms,

and there are thousands of people living active and meaningful lives despite MS.

I am writing this booklet as a Christian but also as someone who works as a neuropsychologist. My job involves supporting individuals and their families as they try to come to terms with a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis and helping people manage the difficult thoughts and feelings that frequently accompany the diagnosis of a long-term condition.

This booklet has five aims:

- To give a brief overview of the facts about multiple sclerosis
- To give you practical tips that will make living with MS easier for everyone
- To help you get the support you need from your church
- To signpost you to further reliable information and support
- To remind and encourage you that God knows and understands your distress, and will give you the wisdom you need without finding fault (James 1:5).