



Walk to D'feet 2026



The 2026 **Walk to D'feet**, our biggest fund raising event of the year, will take place on **Sunday 10th May 10 a.m.** and will cover 10 miles from the car park behind Leigh-on-sea station to Southend sea front and back.

This year we wanted to dedicate our walk to Sandy Lambert 1947-2026, who initiated it to raise money for our branch 20 years ago and who sadly passed away at the end of last year.



Scan these QR codes for registration form, information sheet and sponsorship forms

Email Sophie for all required info
sophie.bell@mndassociation.org

JustGiving page

We have created a **JustGiving**™ page you can use for all your fundraising endeavours (walk to D'feet or others) to make sure the monies collected will go directly to our branch.
QR code link to this page



Scafell Pike



On 25th July **Mike Latham**, along with his young son **Harvey**, are heading up another mountain to raise funds for the branch. Last year was Snowdon this year it's Scafell Pike in the Lake District. It's not easy! Do please encourage them with sponsorship if you can.



WhatsApp group

There is a branch **WhatsApp group**, run by local people living with MND. It is open to anyone living with MND in South Essex, and their close family. It is a fun, friendly, social place to chat and keep in touch with others. If interested in joining, please contact **Sean Newton** on 07814 225155.

Meet Up?

Meeting Dates

Drop in meetings 2-4pm

The hospices kindly let us use their lovely rooms for our get togethers. Chat and make friends. We will supply the food and drinks.

Friday - Fair Havens 10th April

Saturday St Luke's 2nd May

Friday - Fair Havens 5th June

Saturday St Luke's 4th July

Friday - Fair Havens 7th August

Saturday St Luke's 5th September

Please contact Pat for more information

patricia.ahlquist@mndassociation.org



Recently Diagnosed Group

3rd Friday of the month via Zoom 2pm.

Allows all affected people to ask any question and find out about available support.

17th April / 21st May / 8th June

17th July / 21st August / 18th September

Please contact Pat or MND Connect



South East Region

Carers' Coffee and Chat

Evenings: Last Wednesday of the month via Zoom 6.30pm.
29th April / 27th May / 24th June

29th July / 26th August / 30th September

Daytime: 1st Tuesday of the month via Zoom 11am

7th April / 5th May / 2nd June

7th July / 4th August / 1st September

Please contact Pat or MND Connect

South East Region

Peer Support Group

3rd Tuesday of the month via Zoom 11am.

21st April / 19th May / 16th June

21st July / 18th August / 15th September

Please contact Pat or MND Connect

Veteran's Group

4th Wednesday of the month via Zoom 2.30pm.

22nd April / 27th May / 24th June

22nd July / 26th August / 23rd September

Please contact Dawn Pond for details
dawn.pond@mndassociation.org

Other groups available on MND website.
Please scan above QR code.

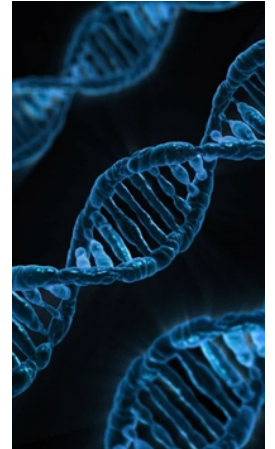
Research Update

First participant dosed in Phase 1/2 trial of VTx-002 for MND

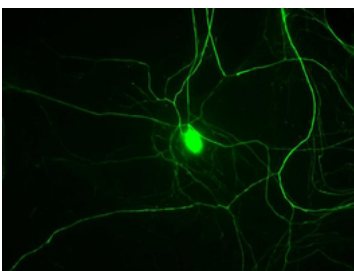
VectorY Therapeutics have announced that they have dosed their first participant in the Phase 1/2 PIONEER-ALS trial. This is a first in-human, randomised study investigating the safety and tolerability of VTx-002 in people living with MND.

VTx-002 is a gene therapy that is designed to target clumps of TDP-43 protein, which form in about 97% of people with MND, and kick start the body's immune system to remove them from the neurones. The gene therapy delivers the instructions for our cells to make an antibody which sticks to the toxic clumps of TDP-43 and marks them for removal by the immune system. It is thought that a single treatment of this gene therapy could mean that the body produces this antibody for years.

The study will test two doses of VTx-002 in 12 people with MND, with participants being randomly assigned to a dose when they are enrolled into the study. Participants will be given a single injection of the gene therapy into a large fluid-filled space at the base of the brain. They will then be followed up through clinic visits, remote monitoring through calls, tests and assessments to monitor the ongoing effects of the drug. PIONEER-ALS is currently recruiting in the US and Europe.



CervoMed announce Neflamapimod to be tested in the EXPERTS-ALS platform



QurAlis have announced interim results from their proof-of-concept Phase 1/2 trial of QRL-201. In the trial, participants were given either the drug in one of two doses, or a placebo (dummy drug). The interim results suggest that QRL-201 was safe and well tolerated. The press release also suggests that the ALSFRS-R score declined at a slower rate after six months of treatment for some of the participants, who were those who had a slower baseline rate of disease progression.

QRL-201 aims to restore STATHMIN-2 levels in people living with MND. STATHMIN-2 is a protein that is important for neurone repair and stability. In almost all people living with MND, STATHMIN-2 is significantly decreased.

Following these results, QurAlis are looking to extend the trial in an open label extension, meaning that everyone who was part of the trial will receive QRL-201, whether they were receiving the drug or the placebo in the original trial. This has been approved in Canada, and is under review in the UK and the EU. The press release states that QurAlis are preparing to take the drug forward into a key phase 3 clinical trial. This will provide further evidence as to whether QRL-201 could be an effective treatment for MND.

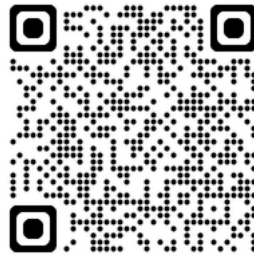


Serial Fundraiser Club

After so many fundraiser events for our branch, **Essex County Bowling Club** had another one, this time for someone who is running the London Marathon for the MNDA and they raised just over **£2,500** for our branch.

Ed Morris also said that they are already nearly fully booked for this year's **Mark Wilson Pairs** on 2nd/3rd May but there is still time to enter.

Scan QR code above for details



Young Leaders

At **St Helen's Catholic Junior School Academy**, the house captains of John House (both in year 6) organised a "Beat the January Blues" fundraising day for our branch and have raised in excess of **£960**.



30 years!



Shout out to our committee member Kevin Watts who has been volunteering and helping to raise money for our branch for the last 30 years!
Thanks Kevin!

Pat Ahlquist

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WHO'S WHO

in your BRANCH

Stevan Wing: President

Philippe Udrzal: Chair/committee

Pat Ahlquist : Vice Chair/committee

Rowan Harvey : Treasurer/committee

Debbie Darke : Secretary/committee

Marianne Morgan: committee

Kevin Watts : X/committee

Gill Gibson : committee

Barry Mizen : web master/committee

Sophie Bell: Walk to D'feet

Association Visitors

Pat Ahlquist : branch contact

Gill Gibson

Barry Mizen

Community Support Coordinator

Chloe Rich