

Becky Smith,
Team Leader at Hanson's
Customer Service Centre was
diagnosed with MS in 2016.

Multiple Sclerosis

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is an autoimmune disease that affects the central nervous system.

An estimated 130,000 people in the UK have MS and more than 2.8 million people worldwide, meaning every five minutes, someone in the world is diagnosed. It is almost three times more common in women and can be a very noticeable or invisible disability depending on the symptoms a person has.

Symptoms

There are numerous symptoms, not everyone with MS will have the same ones. Examples are:

- Difficulty walking
- Balance issues
- Optic Neuritis
- Spasticity/pain
- Fatigue
- Insomnia
- Speech problems
- Problems with memory
- Bladder/bowel issues
- Depression and anxiety

Support

MS sufferers may require help to cope with their diagnosis, someone to talk to, a counsellor, or a friend. They are still the same person, just with a diagnosis. If you know someone with MS, they may appreciate you learning about the condition and how it affects them.

Both the MS Trust and MS Society have very helpful information on their websites:
mstrust.org.uk and mssociety.org.uk

Find out about Becky's experience of MS and working at Hanson: hanson-careers.co.uk/meet-becky

Considerations

Someone's symptoms may be worse some days than others, this could be due to a flare up or relapse.

Those who have bladder and bowel issues may require extra comfort breaks and access to a disabled toilet.

An assessment from occupational health would assist in advising any adjustments that may be needed to help someone with MS's life easier at work.

If you didn't know someone had MS it would be easy to make prejudgements; for someone with balance/gait issues people may wrongly think they are drunk.

Uninformed advice, like 'just exercise more', or 'just do X and you'll be fine' can be quite upsetting.



MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS
AWARENESS