



Short Professional Biography:

Dr. Therese Burke has been an MS and Neuroimmunology nurse and researcher for two decades, with a deep love for connection with her patients, and more recently attained her PhD by exploring the lived experience of MS. This was followed by post-doctoral work in defining the role of the MS Nurse and identifying the skillsets and educational needs of MS Nurses in the Australia/New Zealand region. After serving as the President of the MS Nurses International Certification Board, Therese has focused on raising awareness of MS nursing as a fulfilling and rewarding career, educating and supporting new and emerging MS Nurses as they commence their nursing story, and supporting and mentoring MS Nurses as they explore research.

Brief Description of Your Project:

Creation, development and delivery of a "Foundations of MS" course for new and emerging MS nurses in Australia and New Zealand

The "Foundations of MS" (ForMS) course is for nurses new to MS nursing and for emerging MS nurses from neurological, or infusion backgrounds, who would like to delve more deeply into the world of MS nursing. The half day course will take place at the annual MS Nurses Australasia conference in Auckland, NZ in October 2025. Therese will inform, write and develop the curriculum, and organise delivery of the live session by experienced senior MS Nurses. Additionally, if resources allow, it is hoped to record the sessions at a later date for online viewing.

The goals of ForMS are:

Foster mentorship and collegiality amongst new MS Nurses and nursing working close to MS

Learn more about the history and the role of the MS Nurse

Explore fundamentals of MS nursing including

- I. Overview of MS
- II. MS diagnosis
- III. Symptoms of MS
- IV. Disease modifying therapies (DMTs) used in MS
- V. Modifiable lifestyle factors and MS Brain Health
- VI. Key areas of impact for the MS Nurse

Identify resources for practice, including tips about explaining complex concepts to patients and families.

Networks, support, mentoring and connections with other MS Nurses.

To do all of this in an interactive, informal and nurturing environment, supported by group discussions.