




# Special Interest Group /Psychology and Neuropsychology



# SIG / Psychology and Neuropsychology

## ◆ Chair:

- Päivi Hämäläinen, neuropsychologist, Masku Neurological Rehabilitation Centre, Finland

## ◆ Co-Chair:

- Agnete Jønsson, neuropsychologist, Rigshospitalet in Copenhagen, Denmark

## ◆ E-mail key person:

- Michelle Pirard, Psychologist, Melsbroek, Belgium



# Core group

- ◆ n=13, actively working members
  - Belgium 4
  - UK 3
  - Denmark 2
  - Estonia 1
  - Finland 1
  - Italy 1
  - Spain 1



# Other members

◆ n=13

- from Belgium, Germany, Italy, UK,  
Australia

- NEW MEMBERS ARE WELCOME!

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# SIG meetings

- ◆ during RIMS congresses
- ◆ in-between meetings (2 days)
  - 1997: Belgium
  - 1998: -
  - 1999: London
  - 2000: Belgium
  - 2001: Barcelona
  - 2002: Copenhagen
  - 2003: London
  - 2004: Tallinn
  - 2005: Genova
    - presentations, discussions, delegating tasks, circulating e-mails...



# Aims of our SIG

- ◆ share ideas about how to work with MS patients, how to organise:
  - psychological support for patients and significant others as well as for staff members
  - neuropsychological evaluations
  - neuropsychological rehabilitation



# Activities and projects: booklets

- ◆ Booklet 1: MS, memory & thinking  
(published by the National MS  
Society, UK)
  - translated in Spanish, Danish, Finnish,  
German etc.

# 02

# MS Essentials\*

For people living with MS

## MS, memory & thinking

**Not everyone who has MS will experience problems with memory and thinking but mild difficulties are common.** For example, many people with MS can find it harder to recall information, follow conversations or think things through. These are examples of cognitive skills – and there are many ways to cope if you are having problems.

### What is cognition?

As a shortcut, you can picture cognition as something that refers to memory and thinking. More accurately, cognition describes the way we:

- focus, maintain and divide attention
- learn and remember new things
- think, reason and solve problems
- plan, carry out and monitor our own activities
- understand and use language
- recognise objects, assemble things together and judge distances.

These skills vary naturally in different people – we all have different strengths and weaknesses. Our cognitive powers are considered to be normal if our skills allow us to cope adequately with everyday life.

### Summary

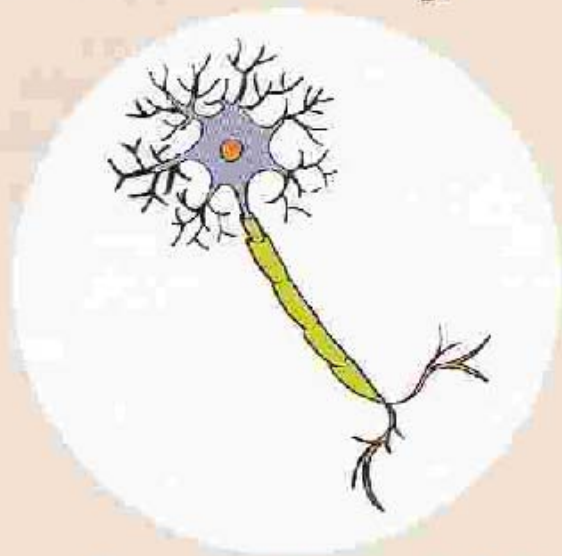
- 01 What is cognition?
- 02 Does MS affect memory and thinking?
- 03 Are it the only ones?
- 04 What kinds of problems might there be?
- 05 Can cognitive problems be predicted?
- 06 What should I do if I suspect cognitive problems?
- 07 Self-help or professional help?
- 08 What is 'neuropsychological rehabilitation'?
- 09 Tips for coping
- 10 Further tips

Published by the  
National MS  
Society, London



Esta publicación recoge información sobre las dificultades cognitivas que pueden aparecer en el curso de la esclerosis múltiple. Se ofrecen además algunas pautas para afrontar y compensar estas dificultades.

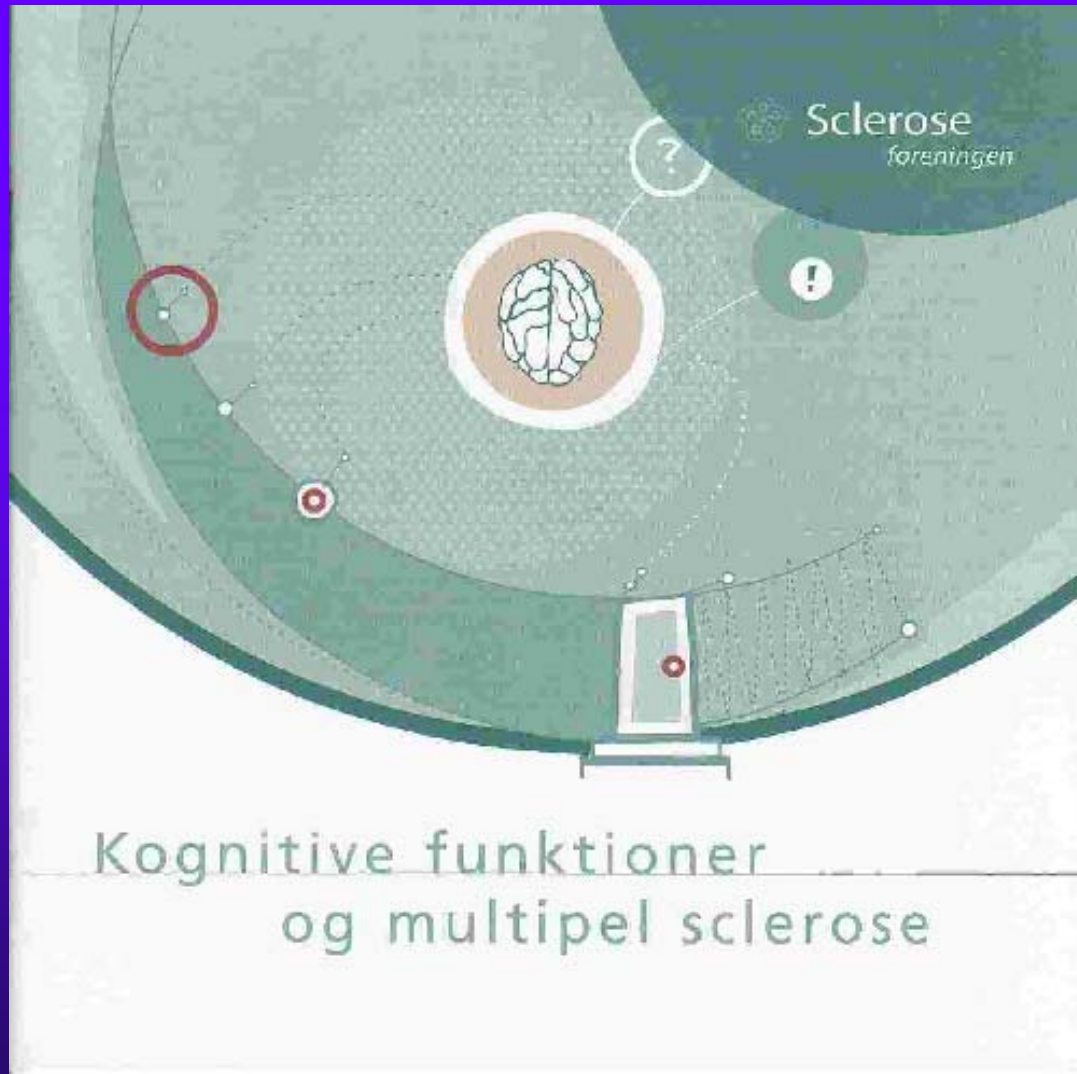
# Dificultades cognitivas



# y esclerosis múltiple

Hospital  
de Día  
FUNDACION  
ESCLEROSIS  
MÚLTIPLE

Published by



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# KOGNITIO

**Muisti pätkii, sanat hakusessa  
- kognitiiviset oireet MS-taudissa**

Päivi Hämäläinen

Published by the  
Finnish MS  
Society



- ◆ Booklet 2: MS, personality and behaviour (under evaluation)
- ◆ Booklet 3: Emotional reactions to MS (under preparation)



# Activities and projects: topics under discussion

- ◆ Neuropsychological guidelines - how to work with cognitive problems related to MS (under preparation)
- ◆ Models of psychological support for newly diagnosed MS patients
- ◆ Cognitive fatigue
- ◆ Driving and MS
- ◆ Reducing the fear of MS
- ◆ E-mail counselling