

Transforming Lives:

Evaluation of the CAN DO PROGRAM



The Need to Live Fully with MS:

The CAN DO Program offers the industry's most comprehensive view of multiple sclerosis, taking participants on a profound exploration of their unique condition and empowering them to live fully with MS. Using an interdisciplinary team, this intensive four-day experience goes beyond traditional programs by providing comprehensive assessments and education about MS – its effects, treatment options and lifestyle adaptation strategies. Participants develop a personalized lifestyle plan, learn how to address lifestyle areas unique to them and discover ways to seek out and acquire needed resources.

The individualized course of MS calls for more empowering and person-specific interventions. Taking a positive and optimistic approach to living with MS impacts physical adjustment, healthy coping strategies and influences positive physical health outcomes (e.g., Simpson et al., 2014). CAN DO goes beyond focusing on empowerment by incorporating a health focused orientation of physical activity and complete wellness with research showing physical activity can improve quality of life and MS symptoms (e.g., Motl & McAuley, 2014). CAN DO brings multiple formats and professionals together to provide variety and options best suited to each and every person with MS (PwMS) and support partner (SP) attending. The overwhelmingly positive and hands-on orientation of Can Do MS and the CAN

“I gained information, hope, goals, meaningful relationships and more.”

-CAN DO Participant

Current Survey:

- 46 people participated in the CAN DO Program 2016
- 22 PwMS & 19 SPs completed retrospective pre than post program surveys post program surveys
- Average age (PwMS 54 years; SP 58 years); Gender (PwMS 86% Women; SP 26% Women); Average length of MS (15 years)
- Also reported 2012-2014: pre/post and 6-month follow up data collected from ~60 PwMS & 58

Objectives:

- Provide a four-day program dedicated exclusively to helping individuals live their best lives with MS through a personal approach that addresses physical, emotional, interpersonal, intellectual and spiritual needs.
- Participants will gain knowledge, skills, support and confidence to transform challenges into possibilities.
- Participants will find new sources of self-empowerment and improve communication skills.

Findings Summary:

- 100% of PwMS reported improved confidence to better manage MS symptoms*.
- 100% of PwMS and SPs reported intention to make positive lifestyle behavior changes after CAN DO
- PwMS & SPs reported increased feelings of empowerment, MS specific communication, social support and knowledge*.
- PwMS & SPs reported overwhelmingly high levels of program satisfaction and gaining of knowledge, skills and resources.

Previous research:

- At 6-months after CAN DO, PwMS showed improved confidence to better manage MS symptoms, finding benefit in living with MS (personal growth) and improved MS specific communication*.

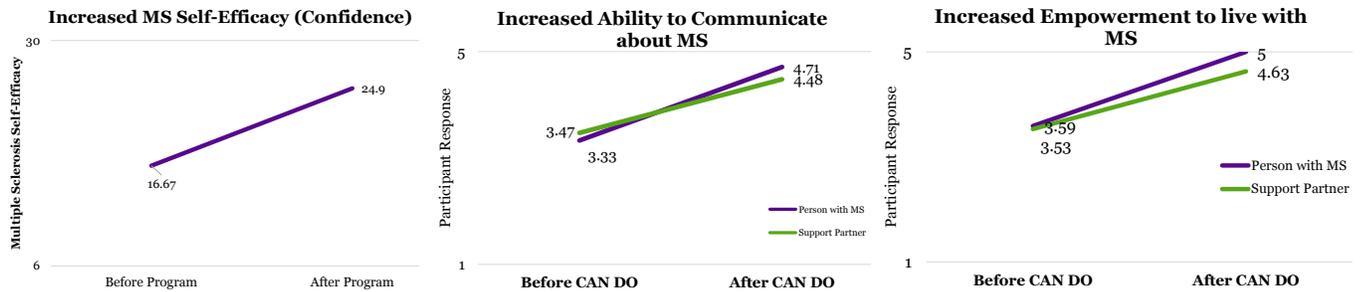
CAN DO participants finding support and engaged in learning new skills to live a fuller life with MS.



Can Do Multiple Sclerosis

Immediate Impact:

- **Increased Confidence in living with MS*** (better confidence living with MS, higher scores are associated with better mental and physical health, less stress, less pain, fewer sleep problems, lower depressive symptoms; *Amtmann et al., 2012*).
- **Increased knowledge, communication and empowerment to better live with MS***
- **Overwhelming program satisfaction and positive behavior change intentions**

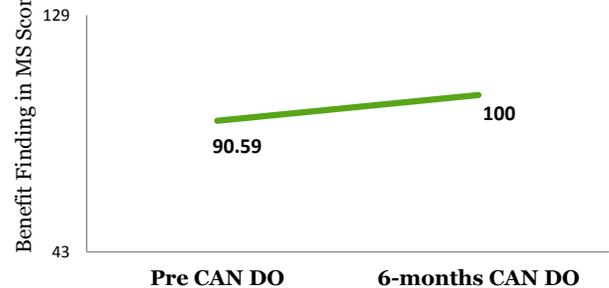


Long-Term Impact:

CAN DO participants showed additional 6-month outcomes (2012-2014):

- **Increased personal growth and hope** in living with MS (for both PwMS and SP)*
- **Increased MS Specific Communication***
- **Achievement of short term goals** set during CAN DO (91%)
- **Positive behavior changes** at 6-months post CAN DO (e.g., exercise, nutrition)

Long-term Increased Personal Growth and Hope Living with MS



Conclusions:

The CAN DO Program is a personal and powerful MS program increasing confidence to transform challenges into possibilities. CAN DO resulted in immediate outcomes of increased confidence in the management of MS symptoms, knowledge, communication, social support and empowerment. Previous findings support longer-term outcomes such as benefit finding, confidence in MS management and illness communication at 6 months! Confidence in MS is linked to quality of life and fewer depressive symptoms (Farrell et al., 2004; Amtmann et al., 2012), and may translate to improved management of MS. Both PwMS and SPs also reported an intention to make positive behavior changes. Implications of increasing positive constructs are better medication adherence, less morbidity and increased longevity for both the Person with MS and their Support populations (e.g., Cuffee et al., 2012; Moskowitz et al., 2008).

As disease characteristics and clinical symptoms vary widely, interventions tailored to individuals' which provide an empowering approach are needed. With a staff to participant ratio of 1.5:1, the CAN DO Program provides an unsurpassed level of personal attention in an intimate, unhurried environment. The CAN DO Program is an effective way to

*CAN DO Staff take a personalized approach to care with each participant



What Participants are saying:

- "I am amazed at every staff person by how much compassion they have to help"
- "I gained encouragement and a way to move forward"
- "I feel better equipped to address changes I need to make"
- "I gained confidence to bike and do my job more safely"
- "I gained reasons to set exercise goals and stay as fit as possible"
- "The individual health care team approach was awesome"