

Impact Report: 2025-2026

The Neurological Alliance of Scotland is the national intermediary body for neurological charities in Scotland. We inform and connect member charities to influence policy development and drive improvements in care and support for those affected by neurological conditions. We advocate for financial sustainability across the third sector.

We **grew by 3% to 59 charity members**, expanding our expertise across a wider range of neurological conditions including FND, Fibromyalgia, paediatric acute onset neuropsychiatric syndrome (PANS), multiple sclerosis, and neuroscience research.



We hosted **35 meetings** this year; **94%** of members say they find our members' meetings **valuable** and **83%** said they find our policy group meetings **very useful**.

We are involved in **11 external groups**, ensuring the needs of the neurological community are heard by key decision makers.



Key learnings:

- Our **success** lies in the **strong engagement of our members** who come together to collaborate on powerful projects and share valuable expertise.
- With the end of the Neurological Framework for Action 2020-2025, our position as an **intermediary representing the neurological voice** has become **even more critical**.
- **Financial sustainability** is the biggest challenge facing all charities - this will be a **priority** for 2026-2027.

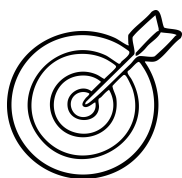
"I'm very happy with the work of the alliance - you give the Neuro community a real voice in Scotland."

Outcome 1

An Informed Community

1A. Our members are informed about the neurological and political landscape, enabling them to make a bigger impact for their own communities with wider stakeholders.

The complexities of the different healthcare systems in England and Scotland can be hard to navigate for our UK members. We consider what is most relevant for our membership with regard to neurological care and support in Scotland so that our members are informed of the key issues relevant to their communities.



Member feedback

“Meetings are invaluable for keeping up to date with key policy and current issues.”



35

Meetings hosted

We hosted **35 meetings** across the year including:

- Members meetings
- Policy group meetings
- Policy subgroup meetings
- Industry Reference Group meetings
- AGM
- Working groups



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Guest speakers

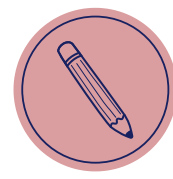
- Senior lecturer on AI and public policy from Glasgow University
- Patient Safety Commissioner
- Liam McArthur MSP
- Member of Scottish Human Rights' Commission
- General Manager at the Astley Ainsley Hospital



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Channels of information

- **Email shots** to our member mailing lists
 - Briefings
 - Research
 - Opportunities for involvement
- **Newsletter** - 45% open rate
- **Website** - 47.5% growth in active users
- **Social media** - 30% growth across platforms



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Monthly newsletters

- Showcased **research projects** from members, Scottish government, student researchers and Carers Centres
- **Published 5 reports** from members
- Showcased **7 members' campaigns**

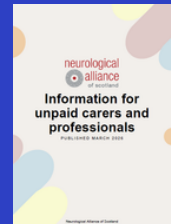
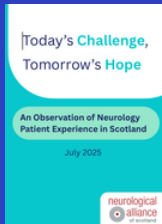
“The topics, updates and discussions during the meetings as well as the feedback from the groups that I am not involved in is great and is valuable.”



Outcome 1

An informed Community

1B. Scottish Government, Parliamentarians, NHS and key stakeholders are informed about the patient experience of living with neurological conditions in Scotland.



Outcomes for people with neurological conditions are wide-ranging, depending on a number of variables. By informing Scottish Government, Parliamentarians, NHS and key stakeholders about the prevalence and impact of neurological conditions, we raise awareness of patient experience, driving change so that people with neurological conditions have a better experience of their health and social care.



- We were invited to chair the Scottish Government's **Long Term Conditions neurology and rare diseases group**
- We sit on the **UK Neuro Forum** where we represent the needs of Scotland at a UK level



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Publications

- We created **5 valuable resources** for our members to share including a mental health toolkit for children and young people



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Member contributions

- To the Long Term Conditions Framework consultation
- **2 policy subgroups** to inform specific areas of work



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Policy inclusion of brain health

- In the **Woman's Health Plan (2026)**
- Invitation from the Women's Health Champion to join a brain health reference group



1013

Captured experiences

- 1013 people **shared their experiences** of neurology services
 - 776 adults
 - 67 children
 - 170 carers
- Representation from all 14 territorial health boards



Outcome 2 Building Connections

2A. The neuro community has opportunities to connect and collaborate across public, private and third sector.

Smaller organisations do not have the resources to manage everything, including policy and campaigning, whilst larger charities benefit from the lived experience and expertise of smaller organisations. By coming together to collaborate on cross sectoral work, we build strength in the third sector.



Member feedback

“For me, NAOs is all about community and shared purpose. Most importantly NAOs gives a voice to those of us affected by a neurological condition and our carers too.”



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Collaborative working groups

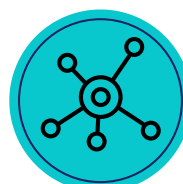
- **Brain Awareness Week** meetings
- Leaflet design meetings
- NAOs **strategy** meetings
- **Policy subgroup** meetings
 - Mental health
 - Election 2026



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New member charities

- PANS + Scotland
- Aberdeen Independent Multiple Sclerosis
- More Than Fibro
- Glasgow FND Support Group
- The Neurosciences Foundation



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Brain Awareness Week

- **9** members created the 2026 campaign
- **35 organisations took part** across the UK including 9 external organisations
- The toolkit has already been downloaded **90+ times**
- Our new mental health webpages had **289 active users**
- **2 news** articles were published



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Pan neuro election campaign

- Charity members worked together to develop a **manifesto** for the Scottish Holyrood elections
- Developed an **election toolkit** for members
- Created election infographics with link to a **#neurochampion** sign up page for candidates

“The work you do for such a small team is fantastic so well done for the huge impact you have.”



Outcome 2 Building Connections

2B. Scottish Government, NHS and other key stakeholders have timely access to charities working with those with lived experience of neuro conditions.

Government, the NHS and other key stakeholders need us to bring the collective expertise of the third sector to consultation responses and policy development. Without an intermediary like the Neurological Alliance of Scotland, this would be very time consuming and complex.



Stakeholder feedback

“A number of programmes were also nationally co-ordinated by delivery partners such as ... the Neurological Alliance of Scotland” (Scottish Government report on the Neurological Framework for Action, 2026)



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External Groups

- National Advisory Committee for Neurological Conditions
- UK Neuro Forum
- Neurology Network
- SCVO Intermediaries
- LDAN Bill stakeholder group
- Adult Disability Payment stakeholder panel
- ALLIANCE Digital Citizen Panel
- Neurology SDG
- NHS A&A Neurology Service Improvement group
- Women’s Health Plan Lived Experience Group
- ALLIANCE Community of Practice



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Wider Networks

- We are members of:
- **SCVO**: we engage regularly through the intermediaries group
 - The **ALLIANCE**: we have presented patient experience data to their Digital Citizen’s Panel
 - **Voluntary Health Scotland**: who shared our manifesto and Brain Awareness Week campaign
 - **ACOSVO**



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Invitations to speak

- Scottish Government’s Best Practice Network
- North Lanarkshire Council Mental Health and Resilience Steering Group
- Glasgow MS Symposium
- Private sector conference on Long Term Conditions



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Meetings with the Health Minister

- To discuss the Long Term Conditions Framework
 - 1 NAOs only
 - 2 roundtables

“...we are keen to better involve lived experience and your insights on this will be helpful.” (NHS Dumfries & Galloway, 2025)



Outcome 3 Influence Key Decision Makers

3. The voices and needs of those affected by neurological conditions- and those who support them are heard by key stakeholders and decision makers across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

With an estimated 600 neurological conditions affecting 1 in 6 of us in the UK, finding the shared voice is critical in order to break through the noise. Our aim is to ensure that the voice of lived experience, which is the expert voice, is heard by policy and decision makers and other key stakeholders including other condition charities.

Member feedback



“NAoS are a team of incredibly dedicated people who **inform and challenge decision and policy making at government level on behalf of those of us who feel mostly disregarded...** NAOs gives me hope that the care and support I receive will improve and change for the better.”



9

Health Boards engaged with

- We held **3** drop-in meetings with **8** Health Boards to present the **My Neuro Survey patient experience data**
- We wrote to all **14** health boards with the offer to meet to **support their engagement** with patient experience data collection
- We held **1 meeting** with a health board to discuss specific patient experience data in their area



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Letters

- 1 invitation to the Cabinet Secretary to speak at our AGM
- 1 co-signed letter to the Minister for Public Health and Women's Health about the **Long Term Conditions Framework**
- 1 co-signed letter about **Adult Disability Payment**



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Manifesto

- Shared with our 59 members
- Shared with all main Scottish **political parties and candidates**
- Shared with the Health and Social care Alliance and Voluntary Health Scotland
- Neurological **hustings** in development for April 2026



100%

Attendance

- At National Advisory Committee for Neurological Conditions meetings
- At Neurology Network meetings
- At UK Neuro Forum meetings
- At Neurology Speciality Delivery Group meetings

Outcome 4 Champion Financial Sustainability

4. We will improve our financial sustainability and promote and advocate for the sustainable funding of our members.

Financial sustainability has become increasingly important in 2025 as the funding landscape has become so competitive. As the Neurological Framework for Action 2020-2025 and our associated funding came to an end in 2025, we needed to diversify our income. In a financial climate where over 1,000 Scottish charities closed in a single year, our actions to increase our own sustainability had to become a priority.



- By launching a new paid membership drive with industry, we have introduced **new perspectives** into the alliance
- The Industry Reference Group has started to **bridge our funding gap**, supporting our sustainability



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New Industry Reference Group

- We welcomed **4** pharmaceutical companies to our new **Industry Reference Group** membership
- We have a wider network built amongst another 5 companies



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Call for sustainability of third sector

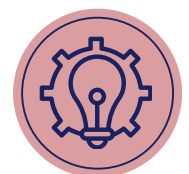
- Called for sustainable third sector funding as a **key principle in our manifesto**



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Grant applications submitted

- Hired a fundraiser for 1 day a week for 6 months to **support our grant writing**
- Developed **13 new policies** needed for fundraising applications
- Developed **key messaging** with trustees



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Financial strategy

- 5-year **funding strategy** approved by trustees in June 2025
- Regular financial re-forecasts keep NAOs on track

"Keep up the good work!"