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News and highlights keeping you informed as we work together to accelerate life-changing treatments for people with progressive MS worldwide.

## **Tim Coetzee, PhD, to Become Alliance Executive Committee Chair**

**New role comes with his appointment to National MS Society (US) President and CEO**



Tim Coetzee, PhD, of the National MS Society (US) has been an integral part of the International Progressive MS Alliance for more than a decade, and we are excited to announce that he has been appointed as the Society's President and CEO. With this appointment, he now also assumes the role of Chair of the Alliance's Executive Committee.

As one of the driving forces behind the formation of the Alliance, over his 24 year career with the Society, he has fostered collaboration with MS organizations and scientific leaders around the world. Tim's leadership, along with his research background are sure to lead to even more advancements in treatments and therapies for people with progressive MS.

Tim will be joining an engaged Executive Committee consisting of:

- Rohan Greenland of MS Australia
- Pam Valentine of MS Canada
- Mario Battaglia of AISM, Italy
- Peer Baneke of MSIF
- Nick Moberly of MS Society, UK
- Klaus Høm of Scleroseforeningen, Denmark

Congratulations to Tim!

## **Amplifying the Voices and Roles of People Affected by MS**

**Meet [Federico Bozzoli](#), Member of the Alliance People Affected by MS Engagement Coordination Team**



**Resides:** Genoa, Italy

**When he was diagnosed with MS:** In the summer of 2001, when Federico (“Fed”) was 23, an MRI showed he had three possible conditions, one of which was MS. In his fourth year of medical school at the time, he was able to determine that he was looking at MS. He remembers a psychologist asking him, “What you do think about that? How do you feel? Are you worried?” His answer: “Everyone has problems. I think I’m a lucky person because mine has a name—MS,” he recalls saying. And what’s more, it’s one of the most important fields in research, he adds, because it’s a very original, urgent problem that affects young people predominantly, so everyone wants to solve it.” He adds, “And if MS doesn’t cause me some big problem, I think I will be able to face it. I try to live my life.”

**How MS has changed his life:** Fed had to change aspects of his daily routine, but he never abandoned his dream or changed his professional direction. “I was in the age of dreams and taking action in life,” he says. “I had clear goals to achieve—I just had to modify my strategy to achieve them.” He continued his medical studies, opting to specialize in pharmacology. “I chose pharmacology to try to better understand what was happening in my body—what is wrong and what it’s possible to do to allow the body to heal,” he says. In 2022, Fed moved from Rome to Genoa, where there is more centralized MS care. “I have problems with my legs—weakness, spasticity, lack of balance—so I move with a walker,” he says. “Every day is different. Some days there’s spasticity, and it can be painful.” He’s grateful to be a pharmacologist so he can choose the right medicine. “I live with my pain,” he says. “Maybe in two to three hours it goes away, so I just have to wait.”

**Why the perspective of people with MS is so critical in research:** “People like me who study MS and have MS are in a unique position because I am in the middle,” Fed says. “I can translate the needs of the people and the goals we want to achieve to the clinicians.” He appreciates the opportunity for people with MS to be involved in finding solutions. “People with MS want to be engaged and try to solve their daily life problems,” he says. “Not just to hear solutions but also to get together, to work together to find out the best solutions for all of us.”

**What he would like others to know about the efforts of the Alliance:** The Alliance’s mission is clear, according to Fed. It’s for researchers, clinicians and people with MS to work together to end this disease. “Before, people are one side, clinicians are on the other, and thanks to the Alliance, now they work together,” he says. “This is a unique perspective, a unique solution.” He believes that this collaboration will allow research to move forward, instead of going around in circles. “I believe that a world free from MS is possible.” he adds.