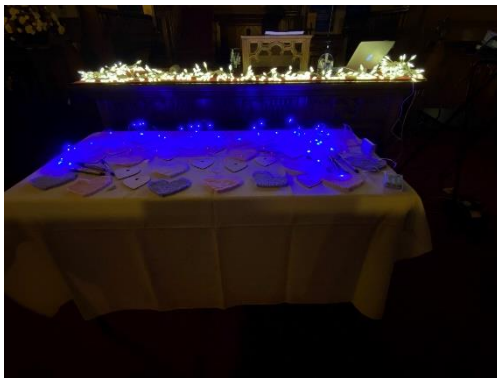




Miscarriage Information Support Service (MISS)

Trustees' Annual Report

Year to 31st March 2021

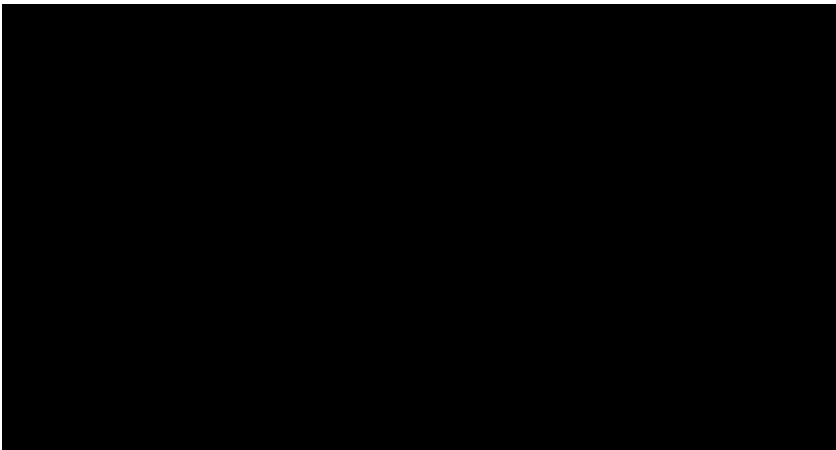


Charity contact information



Miscarriage Information Support Service (MISS)

Scottish Charity Number: SC049108



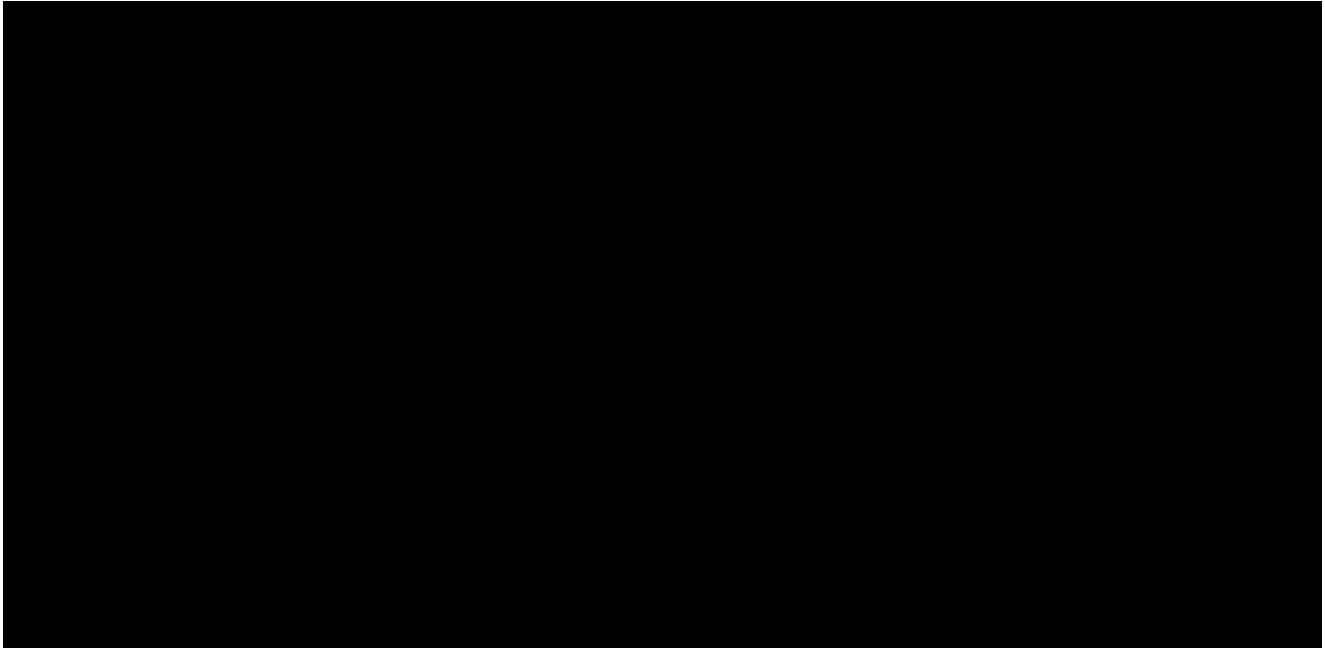
Email address: Info@miss-support.org.uk

Website: [MISS - Miscarriage Support - Registered Charity \(miss-support.org.uk\)](http://miss-support.org.uk)

www.facebook.com/miscarriagesupportscotland

[MISS - Miscarriage Support \(@miscarriagesupportscotland\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

Charity Trustees



Objectives and activities

MISS was formed in March 2017 as the Chairperson had a personal experience of baby loss in 2015 and following from this, felt that there was a lack of support and advice in North East Scotland for early pregnancy loss. After further research, there was no early pregnancy loss charity in the area therefore Abi Clarke decided to start MISS to provide a platform where members could talk, be open about their experience and not feel judged.

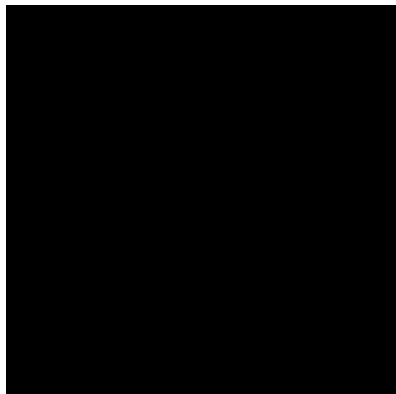
The vision for MISS is to support women and men after an early pregnancy loss by providing peer group support and recommending non-profit organisations and businesses. There are various platforms of support including face to face/online support groups and 1:1's and a 24/7 phone service. As well as this additional support is provided for men and partners through the Mister service; pregnancy after loss and a different pathway (including fostering, adoption and IVF).

Our aims are:

- To raise awareness about miscarriage by organising regular information events for members to attend; providing support and

advice at awareness weeks including Baby Loss Awareness Week, Fertility Week, Adoption Week and several others; encourage businesses to support their teams by allowing miscarriage leave.

- Give support to anyone (regardless of background, gender, age or ethnicity) in the form of 1:1's, coffee and chat sessions and support groups held at locations across Scotland including Aberdeen, Inverness and Ellon; 1:1 support with counselling; 24/7 phone service; social media pages with regular activities and posts; WhatsApp groups for members; offer support packs, memory boxes, pregnancy after loss bags or a different pathway bags.
- Continue to ensure that all of our services are free of charge to members and hospitals including all materials, packs and boxes provided.
- Encourage members to share their experience and talk with others; meet with other members and improve overall mental health and wellbeing
- Continue partnerships with Aberdeen Maternity Hospital, Peterhead Hospital and Dr Grays Hospital in Elgin by providing materials, support and funding as required for their early pregnancy units
- Supporting local medical centres and other third sector organisations with materials on MISS services and how we can support
- Collaborate with the Robert Gordon University by providing student placements and offering individuals an insight into volunteering in the third sector and the opportunity to learn new skills.



Some of our activities include:

- Regular coffee and chat sessions and in person and virtual support groups organised by our Support Coordinators
- 1:1 meetings for women and men after miscarriage. These are offered both in person and virtually
- A phone service which runs 24/7 with options of either speaking to one of the MISS team or messaging via text or WhatsApp
- A different pathway support and an online group for bereaved parents who are looking at alternative options. These include adoption, fostering and IVF.
- Pregnancy after loss support with regular social media activities and 1:1 online sessions with a midwife from Aberdeen Maternity Hospital
- Fundraising activities to raise awareness and donations for the charity held virtually and in person.
- Supply of memory boxes, pregnancy after loss bags & overnight packs for midwives at hospitals across Scotland to offer patients after early pregnancy loss.
- Supply of support packs to the community for those who have suffered a miscarriage. These commenced in March 2020 when physical meetings were restricted due to COVID and the committee voted to continue with these following positive member feedback.





Structure, governance and management

The charity is governed by the Constitution and Board (Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer) of Miscarriage Information and Support Service (MISS). There are monthly committee meetings where the trustees will discuss and vote on items on the agenda and any matters arising.

Trustee recruitment and appointment

The need for additional trustees is identified and discussed at monthly committee meetings with current trustees identifying suitable candidates to approach, usually from our volunteer pool as well as advertising on local networks, third sector sites and LinkedIn. The trustees vote on the candidate prior to approach and interview by the chairperson and subsequent appointment.

During the year [REDACTED] was appointed as a trustee with his main focus being to provide support to men and partners affected by miscarriage. [REDACTED] resigned as Secretary and moved to a new role of Fundraising and Events Lead, with the dual aim of increasing awareness of the charity and fundraising income.

The recruitment process for staff and volunteers is to advertise locally and on social media. Interested parties submit their CV and a further call or meeting is held with the Chairperson. Prospective volunteers are discussed at the next committee meeting and a decision made on whether to proceed.

As we continue to grow and expand our aim is to build a team (committee and volunteers) who have various levels of experience and skillsets to offer including HR, finance, marketing and other relevant areas.

Achievements and performance

The last 12 months have been challenging due to COVID however we have adapted to virtual for support, events and networking, expanded our services into Aberdeenshire and Highlands as well as gained a better understanding about the type of support our members would like, whether its support packs or information events. We have also introduced new services including “A Different Pathway” and “Pregnancy After Loss”.

One of our main forms of support is providing packs to hospitals and bereaved parents after they have gone through a miscarriage. There is a considerable amount of work put into these packs by our volunteers; from choosing items we feel are appropriate, , researching organisations which can provide items at an affordable cost and then making up the packs for delivery to hospitals or posting to members in the community.

Since March 2020, we have delivered over 500 memory boxes to hospitals including Aberdeen, Dr Grays in Elgin and Peterhead. The boxes include a candle, flower seeds, scanned card and several other items and are for bereaved parents to create memories and feel supported after their loss. Also we have posted out over 400 support packs which include several self care and therapeutic items and over 100 pregnancy after loss bags across the North East. Over the last few months we have had requests from Dundee, Inverness and Glasgow to offer packs in these areas too.

MISS have now approximately 4,500 members i.e. a male or female who receives support from ourselves whether it's by phone call, using our text/WhatsApp message service, attending support groups and 1:1's, social media or by email. This is a significant 66% increase over the last 18 months which may have been partly because of the pandemic but also due to the additional exposure we have been working on through local media and national coverage.

Fundraising activities have been challenging over the last 12 months with some virtual activities including a quiz and auction. However we are starting to get back to in person events including an afternoon tea, Halloween parties for children and adults and a family fun day.

We have a small range of merchandise which is displayed and sold at several local business premises in the North East. This includes journals, pens, tote bags and candles and the aim is to raise both awareness and donations for MISS.

We have continued to expand with the addition of staff and volunteers who have various different skills and experience which benefit the team.

MISS will continue the partnership with Robert Gordon University and we have provided placements for four students giving them experience of working in a third sector organisation. The students have supported on projects including adding posts to LinkedIn, creating a draft mobile application design and producing a fundraising document for supporters.

Financial review

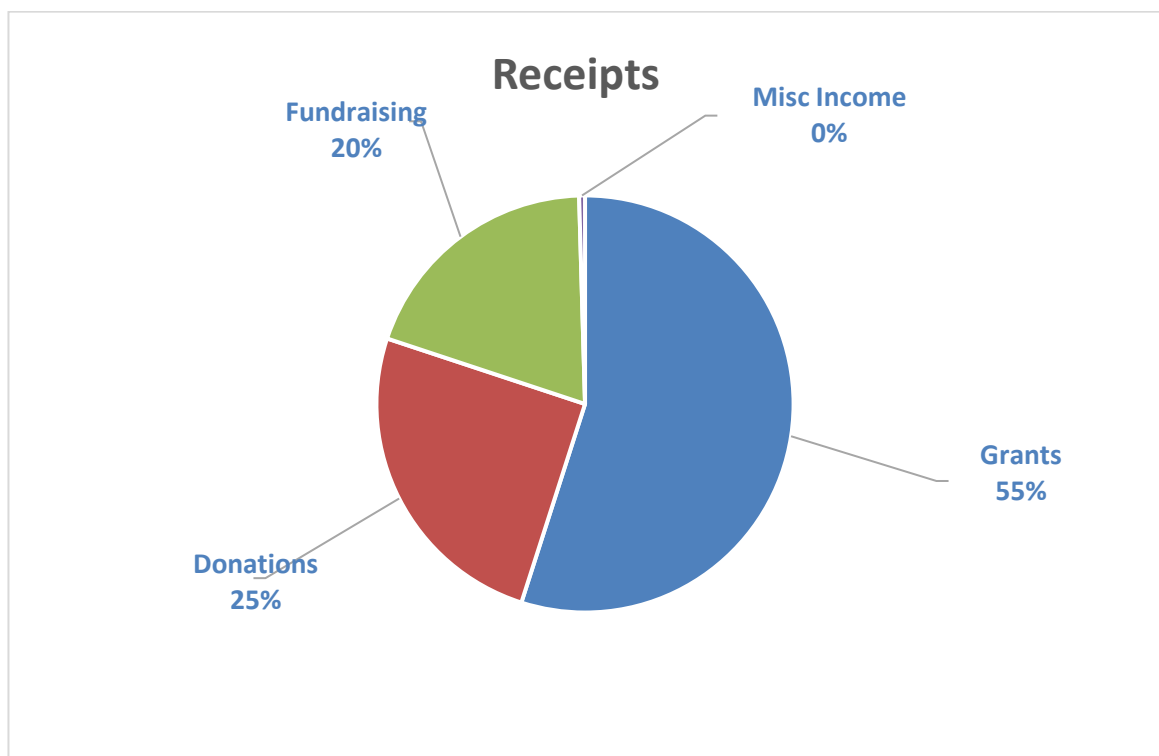
Net receipts for the period were £736. Income was received from grants, donations and fundraising.

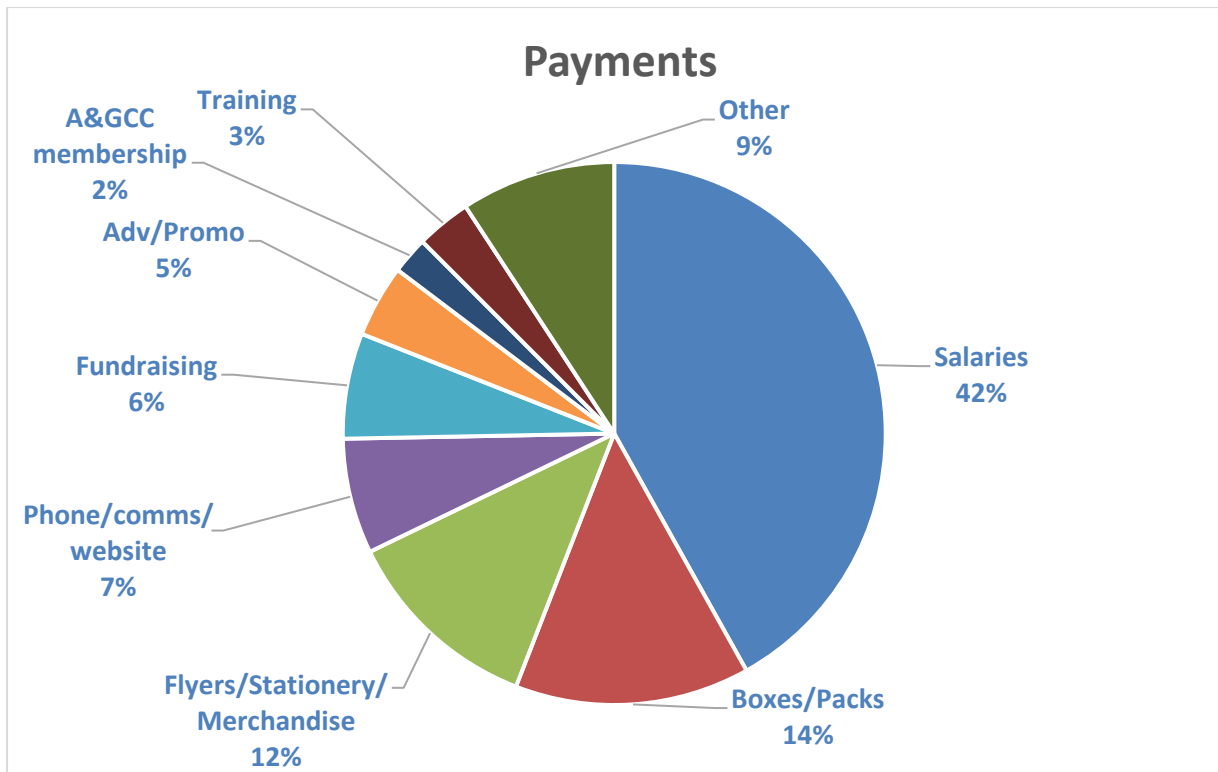
The main expenditures for the period were for salaries, costs related to memory boxes, overnight and support packs, flyers, stationery and merchandise and website and communications related costs.

Despite a challenging year due to COVID fundraising efforts adapted and we held an online auction, virtual fertility webinar and online funday amongst other activities. Net income from fundraising was £2,281.

Additional expenditure was incurred due to changing circumstances relating to additional COVID. This included the introduction of support packs to members, increased postage costs and virtual event software e.g. Zoom.

All funds held at the end of the period are unrestricted.





Statement of the charity's policy on reserves

As a charity funded mainly from grants, donations and fundraising, the receipt of which cannot be guaranteed, MISS aims to hold reserves to ensure the continuation of support to members. We aim to hold reserves to support ongoing activity for 6 months with the main expenses being salaries, costs related to the supply of memory boxes, overnight and support packs, flyers/stationery and merchandise costs and communications/website expenses. A treasurer's report is provided at the monthly committee meeting which monitors reserve levels.

Future plans

Our aims and objectives for the coming year are discussed and agreed at the Annual General Meeting and these include:

- increase the number of members by 40% to 7000
- Specific to the Highlands:
 - Increase new members by 48% to 300
 - Organise a launch event for the Highlands team
 - Add face to face groups to current online support
 - Introduce 24/7 phone service for phone, text and WhatsApp support
 - Begin monthly pregnancy after loss online sessions
 - Secure storage for packs and materials to reduce postage costs
- Hold a launch event for the start up of online/face to face groups in the Peterhead area and increase awareness by attending local networking events
- Support the early pregnancy loss unit at the new Baird Hospital in Aberdeen with additional funding
- Create a garden in the North East specifically for early pregnancy loss so members can reflect, grieve and remember their babies in a safe comfortable space
- For our “Pregnancy After Loss” service, we aim to increase members by 40% as well as start informal coffee and chat sessions.
- For our “A Different Pathway” service, add in person support groups to our current online support and increase members by 75%
- For our “Mister” service, we aim to increase members by 40% as well as continue to collaborate with other male focused organisations and organise curry nights
- Continuing to expand our team at MISS to ensure we carry out and fulfil all the services offered by the charity as well as ensuring the team’s wellbeing is a priority.
New roles will be covered by both volunteers and staff with salaries being funded by National Lottery and other national funding pots.

New volunteer roles planned for the year ahead include Vice Chair, support coordinators (Aberdeen, Highlands, Peterhead and Mister), fundraising and events coordinators, PA to the Board, operations assistant, funding officer and phone handlers.

Staff roles planned include an operations manager, phone service lead and a social media manager.

We also plan to introduce some new services including:

- A befriending service where bereaved parents who have completed specific training and have good understanding of MISS services can support members by meeting with them for a hot drink or health walk. The aim is to encourage nature and outdoors, being important for our mental health and wellbeing, as well as enabling members to meet others who have gone through a similar experience and help them not to feel isolated.
- MISS podcast, which will replace the fortnightly live activities on social media, inviting speakers to provide support and give advice. With this, we hope to connect to connect with members over a wider geographic area, engage with niche groups and cover special interests. Our aim is to get 5000 followers with a 3 month programme followed by a 1 month break for strategy and planning.

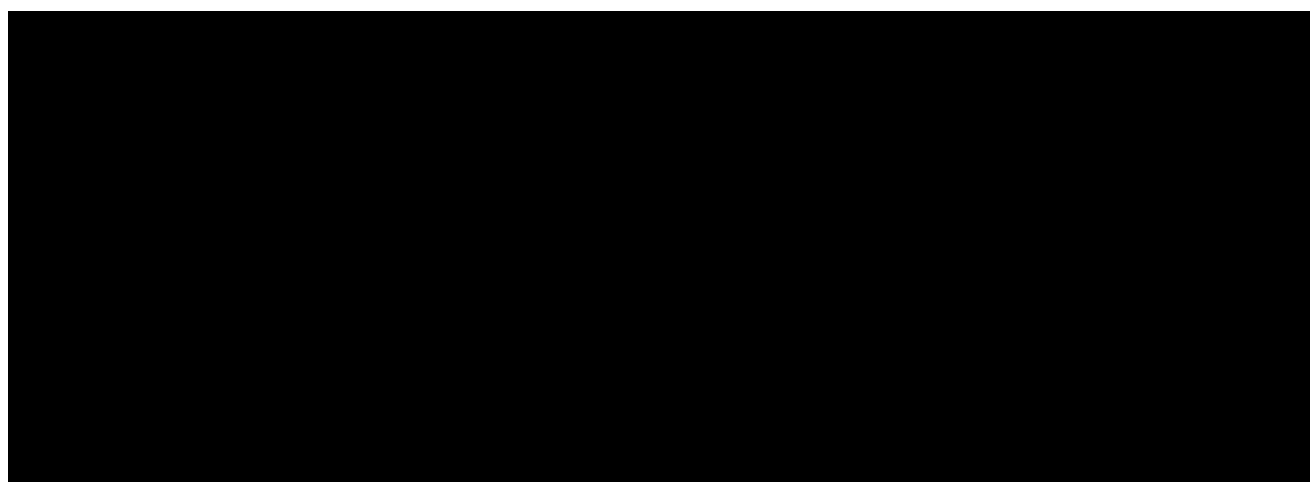
This is a very exciting time for our charity as we continue to grow and reach out to further members and organisations across the country.

Additional information

Due to the COVID pandemic restrictions, we have continued to adapt all of our services and events within MISS ensuring that all of our members and team are kept safe whilst still receiving the support they require.

For our team, we ensure that all volunteers and staff have the adequate training in place to carry out their roles and responsibilities as well as ensuring we have regular meetings and social activities in place to boost morale and promote positive wellbeing within the charity. Activities include quarterly awards for volunteers and staff and social meet-ups.

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:



Designation

Chairperson

Date

26/11/21