



**THE POWER TO BE MORE THAN YOUR MS**

Formerly The Heuga Center for Multiple Sclerosis

## Fact Sheet

### Overview

Can Do MS, formerly The Heuga Center for Multiple Sclerosis, is an innovative provider of lifestyle empowerment programs for people with MS and their support partners. A national nonprofit organization, we empower people to move beyond their MS by giving them the knowledge, skills, tools and confidence to adopt healthy lifestyle behaviors, actively co-manage their disease and live their best lives.

### Who do we serve?

The organization has helped thousands of people living with MS transform challenges into possibilities in health and life. In 2008, we provided programs and services to more than 10,000 people.

### How were we started?

Can Do MS honors the legacy and beliefs of the organization's founder, Jimmie Heuga, a pioneer in the MS care management field. Heuga embodies a positive, *can do* philosophy and perspective that complements the traditional medical model and standard of care to address people's mental, physical and emotional needs. Since 1984, we've been at the forefront of promoting the culture and belief that everyone living with MS has the power to live full lives.

### What do we offer?

Our approach is rooted in a uniquely empowering whole person, whole health, whole community philosophy to maximizing health and living with MS. Can Do MS offers a range of individualized experiential learning formats, including multi-day workshops, weekend seminars, online resources and peer support programs. We compassionately equip individuals with the expanded knowledge, skills, awareness and confidence to become active co-managers of their health. We enhance and complement traditional models of care by focusing on the physical, interpersonal, emotional, intellectual and spiritual aspects of living with MS.

The organization offers three principal programs:

**CAN DO<sup>®</sup> Program**—The flagship CAN DO program is an intensive educational program that teaches people with MS and their support partners how to take charge of their lives within the context of their MS. The five-day program goes well beyond traditional health and wellness programs by using a comprehensive spectrum of assessments, active-learning formats and goal setting to actively empower people with MS and their support partners to live their best lives.

Spouses, family members or friends are encouraged to attend the CAN DO program with a person with MS. Special sessions are devoted to this group of support partners, addressing their needs, goals, concerns and challenges.

**CAN DO 2<sup>®</sup> Program**—Because the symptoms of MS fluctuate over time, the two-day CAN DO 2 program gives the CAN DO program's participants a way to update and modify their personal program and provides renewed motivation for maintaining health and wellness.

**JUMPSTART® Program**—JUMPSTART is a one-day introduction to Can Do MS's wellness philosophy for people with MS and their support partners. Offered at no charge, JUMPSTART provides educational presentations, workshops and interactive sessions so participants can begin to see themselves beyond the challenges of their MS.

**Who's part of the Can Do MS network of professionals?**

Can Do MS has a network of more than 100 health care professionals from around the U.S. and Canada, including exercise physiologists, nutritionists, neurologists, physical and occupational therapists, physicians, psychologists, speech/language pathologists, registered nurses and other health care specialists. Our health care professionals are dedicated to teaching people with MS and their support partners how to take control of their lives and health by focusing on what they *can do* and live their best lives.

**How do we collaborate?**

We also work collaboratively with many MS care providers and organizations around the U.S. and Canada to provide our lifestyle empowerment programs where they're most requested and needed. In 2009, Can Do MS formed a collaborative partnership with the National Multiple Sclerosis Society to align resources and more effectively improve the quality of life of people with MS and their support partners. We are also members of the Consortium of MS Centers and MS Coalition. The MS Coalition is an affiliation of independent MS organizations dedicated to the enhancement of the quality of life for all those affected by MS.

**How have we been recognized?**

Can Do MS earned four stars, the highest rating possible, for the second consecutive year from nonprofit evaluator Charity Navigator for our ability to efficiently manage and grow our finances. We were in the top 18 percent of the 5,000 nonprofits evaluated by Charity Navigator in 2008. We're members of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) and have obtained certification from the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance.

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