



# Boston Cure Project Overview

[www.bostoncure.org](http://www.bostoncure.org)  
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## Mission

The Boston Cure Project is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to creating and executing a plan to cure Multiple Sclerosis (MS).

## Problem

More than 2 million people world-wide (300,000 in the US) have Multiple Sclerosis, a debilitating neurological disorder. The causes of MS are unknown and there is currently no cure, nor is there any central, organized effort to find a cure.

The Boston Cure Project is creating a Cure Map to illustrate a specific plan of research to determine what is known, what is currently being worked on, what needs to be worked on, and what has succeeded and failed in the past. The Cure Map will speed the process of determining what causes MS and of developing a cure by highlighting and facilitating promising areas of research.

Similar directed approaches are beginning to yield results in other areas, including The Human Genome Project, CapCURE ([www.capcure.org](http://www.capcure.org)) for prostate cancer, and the ALS Therapy Development Foundation ([www.als-tdf.org](http://www.als-tdf.org)) for Lou Gehrig's disease.

## Vision

The Boston Cure Project concentrates its resources on four major efforts:

1. Creating a Cure Map: In order to solve any problem, it is necessary to know what initially causes it. It is also necessary to understand the ways the cause induces the effects so that they can be removed, blocked, or slowed.

Our plan, in conjunction with top scientists who comprise our scientific advisory board, is to create a Cure Map linking possible root causes of MS to known characteristics of the disease. The purpose of the Cure Map will be to illustrate a specific plan of research necessary to determine the causes of MS. It will show in a structured manner what is known, what is currently being investigated, and what needs to be explored further to determine the root causes of the disease.

Using the results of the Cure Map as a basis for prioritization, the Boston Cure Project will facilitate (initiate, fund, or support) experiments in the most promising areas of research into the causes of MS. This includes the establishment of significant new research resources available to the scientific community, such as the multidisciplinary tissue and data bank we are currently designing for use in large-scale MS studies. We will also encourage the use of the Cure Map by researchers and funding organizations as a resource for determining the most promising areas of research and avoiding the duplication of research already performed.

2. Maintaining an MS Education Portal: The primary public face of the Boston Cure Project is a newly-launched, robust Internet presence called MSNews (<http://msnews.bostoncure.org>). With the Cure Map as the driving force, the site maintains a continually growing database of MS resources such as information about funding and research organizations, news clippings, research papers, and pointers to other useful information resources. This information is now available free of charge over the web and will become recognized as the premier starting point for anyone conducting research on MS. In addition, it will be useful to individuals with MS and their families as the most comprehensive resource available on the web. The success of similar portals for other areas of interest (such as [www.slashdot.org](http://www.slashdot.org) for high-tech news and [www.alzforum.org](http://www.alzforum.org) for Alzheimer's research) provides a model demonstrating the tremendous value of such a resource. In addition we sponsor the writing of other educational documents that address areas of concern and interest in the MS community. These documents include MS 101 overview, clinical trials, and an extensive overview of the health care community.
3. Community Building: In addition to providing information, the Boston Cure Project will work to create and build communities of people affected by or involved with MS. These will include individuals with MS and their families, researchers, and clinicians. By maintaining a growing database of contacts and sponsoring events that can bring these individuals together, we can facilitate necessary interaction for "cross-fertilization" of ideas, knowledge, and resources. These communities will be maintained both online and in person at events and symposia.
4. Funding and Promotion: We raise funds in order to develop the Cure Map, maintain the MSNews and education efforts, and initiate research to fill out the Cure Map. In addition, we will vigorously promote our vision, gaining the support of key scientists, and convincing other funding agencies to support research that advances the finding of a cure as indicated by the Cure Map.

## **Motivation**

The Boston Cure Project believes that by concentrating on a specific plan to find a cure and encouraging collaboration, our efforts will lead to success more rapidly than traditional scientific and medical methods, centered as they are around a culture of discovery rather than a drive to complete a cure. We believe that by combining entrepreneurial spirit, engineering methodology, community-building skills, and solid business know-how, we can boost the effectiveness of MS medical research and more quickly converge on a cure. We also believe that scientists from different fields will be eager to use our shared resources, consisting of the Cure Map, the information portal, and experimental assets, to further their knowledge in ways never before possible.

Having a clearly articulated, shared vision allows large numbers of disparate people to work productively to achieve a common goal. The Boston Cure Project will provide the vision and important new resources to achieve the goal of finding a cure for MS.

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