DOCTORS

HOW TO ESTABLISH A GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP

General practice and the NHS

Finding a supportive GP

Changing your GP surgery

Diagnosing ME/CFS

General management of ME/CFS

Drug treatments

Hospital-based and private medical services

THE ME ASSOCIATION

Doctors - How to establish a good working relationship was written by **Dr Charles Shepherd**, Trustee and Hon. Medical Adviser to The ME Association.

DISCLAIMER

We recommend that the medical information in this leaflet is discussed with your doctor. It is not intended to be a substitute for personalised medical advice or treatment. You should consult your doctor whenever a new symptom arises, or an existing symptom worsens. It is important to obtain medical advice that considers other causes and possible treatments. Do not assume that new or worsened symptoms are solely because of ME/CFS or Long Covid.

Doctors – How to establish a good working relationship

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Your GP serves as a bridge to various health professionals and services that you might require, including referrals for specialists, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, dietary advice and social services.

Building a good working relationship with your doctor is crucial for managing any medical conditions like ME/CFS. A competent GP should be able to make an accurate diagnosis of ME/CFS and effectively manage routine care while coordinating referrals to specialists when needed.

Your GP serves as a bridge to various health professionals and services that you might require, including referrals for specialists, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, dietary advice and social services. They can also provide vital medical documentation for disability benefits, insurance claims and workplace adjustments.

However, real-world experiences may differ from expectations. While some GPs are knowledgeable and supportive regarding ME/CFS, others may struggle to understand or recognise the condition.

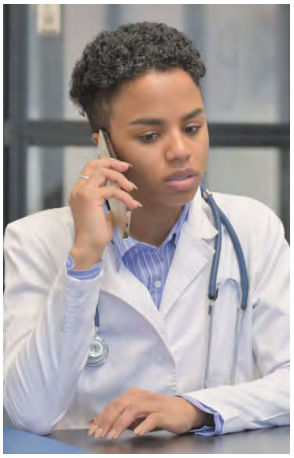
This guide addresses common questions and challenges encountered when dealing with healthcare providers. Focusing on GP services, what to expect and what to provide at your appointment and also includes information for interactions with hospital doctors.

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF GENERAL PRACTICE

The NHS is currently facing significant funding challenges and issues with recruiting general practitioners (GPs). Over the past five years, consultations with GPs have increased by 15%, leading to a rise in the number of patients with complex, long-term conditions, such as ME/CFS.

Many individuals no longer have a ‘family’ GP who knows them personally and consults with them face-to-face. Instead, patients are more likely to see any available doctor who may have limited knowledge of their medical history, only accessing brief notes just before the consultation.

Most practices now operate in a team structure, where you may see different healthcare professionals based on your needs. For minor issues, practice nurses are often available and can refer you to a GP if necessary. Appointments with nurses can be easier to obtain. Some GPs may have specialisations in certain illnesses and you can request a specific practitioner, but understand that this might result in a longer wait-time.



Routine appointment wait-times can exceed a week in some locations. If scheduling an in-person visit is challenging, consider requesting a phone appointment.

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF GENERAL PRACTICE *(continued...)*

Routine appointment wait-times can exceed a week in some locations. If scheduling an in-person visit is challenging, consider requesting a phone appointment. For ongoing concerns, it's advisable to see the same GP whenever possible. If you require more time during your appointment, ask for a double session beforehand. *N.B. Longer appointments may not be available at every UK GP surgery - please check with your healthcare professionals whether this is possible.*

Home visits have significantly decreased and are generally only provided for patients who are too unwell or frail to visit the surgery. It's essential to check your practice's home visit policy on their website or at the reception. For some, a video consultation may be an option.

All GP surgeries should now have a website that provides updated information about staff, office hours, special clinics, and home-visit policies. Some even allow you to book appointments online.

Most GPs no longer offer an out of hours or weekend emergency service. So if you require medical information or advice and your GP is not available you should dial the NHS on 111. If there is a medical emergency dial 999.

CHANGES IN THE NHS SYSTEM

In recent years, the UK's NHS has undergone major structural reforms driven by the 2026 "Fit for the Future" 10-Year Health Plan, emphasising shifts from hospital to community care, analogue to digital systems, and sickness treatment to prevention, while general practitioners (GPs) face workforce strains, mandatory online consultations, and contract disputes.

Read the "Fit for the Future" 10-Year Health Plan on the government website:

https://meassociation.org.uk/l9ku

NHS-Wide Reforms

The 10-Year Health Plan, following public consultations via Change NHS, aims to modernise the service through three core shifts, supported by new operating models, workforce strategies, and productivity targets.

https://meassociation.org.uk/li7b

CHANGES IN THE NHS SYSTEM *(continued...)*

A shift to community care includes a focus on community nursing, mental health, long-term condition management, and social prescribing to manage care closer to home.

Shift to community care

- Introduction of Neighbourhood Health Centres (NHCs) as "one-stop shops" open 12 hours a day, six days a week, with multidisciplinary teams to reduce hospital reliance and end traditional outpatients by 2035.
- Focus on community nursing, mental health, long-term condition management, and social prescribing to manage care closer to home.

https://meassociation.org.uk/qg4b

Digital Transformation

- Mandated online consultation tools in GP practices from October 2025, available 8am-6:30pm for non-urgent requests, has prompted 73% of practices to alter workflows with reported negative impacts on staff and patients.

Read "Campaigning for the future of general practice" on the BMA website:

https://meassociation.org.uk/5kci

- NHS England has started centralising GP data, which can now be shared for research purposes. This has taken place alongside measures that use IT tools and AI in order to boost productivity.

Primary care update:

https://meassociation.org.uk/uh69

- Broader digital goals include faster clinical trials (150 days by March 2026) and data-led regulation by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Prevention and Productivity

- Focus on stopping long-term health issues that lead to high expenses, in line with plans for the next few years.

Read the 'Productivity Plan Update' on the NHS England website:

https://meassociation.org.uk/vcdx

- Annual productivity gains of 2% are required, along with a post-2025 spending review aimed at reducing bed days, no-shows, and inefficiencies. As a result of this policy, waiting lists fell to 7.39 million.

CHANGES IN THE NHS SYSTEM *(continued...)*

- Funding includes 2.8% real-terms annual increases (below historical 3.7% average) and £122m yearly capital for GP IT and premises.

If you have been diagnosed with ME/CFS and are registered at a GP surgery, you may notice differing attitudes among GPs. If the doctor you see isn't helpful, consider inquiring with the practice manager about other GPs who have experience with ME/CFS.

FINDING A SUPPORTIVE GP

If you have been diagnosed with ME/CFS and are registered at a GP surgery, you may notice differing attitudes among GPs. If the doctor you see isn't helpful, consider enquiring with the practice manager about other GPs who have experience with ME/CFS.

If your current practice doesn't have an interested GP, you may need to switch to another surgery, if that is feasible. Local ME support groups can be a valuable resource for finding information about GPs in the area. The MEA website has contact details for local ME groups in the UK, or you can connect to us on social media.

Local support groups:

https://meassociation.org.uk/mesg

CHANGING YOUR GP SURGERY

Changing surgery should be a straightforward process, provided you have found a new GP willing to accept you. You don't need to inform your current GP of your decision, but doing so may expedite the transfer of your medical records. When you register with the new surgery, you'll fill out a registration form and the new GP will request your records from your previous practice.

If you cannot identify a new GP but wish to leave your current one, you may contact the NHS England Customer Contacts Centre for assistance, although this may not lead to better options.

For more information on finding or switching GPs, visit the NHS website:

Find a GP:

https://meassociation.org.uk/raho

How to change your NHS GP - a simple step-by-step guide:

https://meassociation.org.uk/t0vi

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A successful patient-doctor relationship depends on mutual respect and understanding. The General Medical Council (GMC) issues clear guidelines on professional conduct, requiring doctors to treat patients respectfully and involve them in decision-making. Patients should recognise that there are limitations to what a doctor can do or know, particularly regarding ME/CFS, and avoid making unreasonable demands for tests or treatments.

Regarding disability benefits, GPs are not obligated to provide supporting letters, and they may charge for such services. If the DWP requests a report, they will cover the associated costs.

Guidelines for medical conduct can be found on the GMC website:

https://meassociation.org.uk/ubvp

Diagnosing ME/CFS requires a comprehensive clinical history, a full physical examination and routine blood and urine tests to exclude other potential causes for similar symptoms.

WHAT ARE THE NICE GUIDELINE RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO GP CARE AND MANAGEMENT?

The 2021 NICE guideline makes a number of important recommendations regarding how GPs should diagnose and manage people with ME/CFS

These include:

Seek advice from an appropriate specialist if there is uncertainty about interpreting signs or symptoms (1.2.5)

Provide appropriate personalised advice on symptom management when ME/CFS is suspected (1.2.6 and 1.3.1)

When ME/CFS is suspected in a child or young person refer them to a paediatrician for further assessment and investigation (1.2.7)

ME/CFS can normally be diagnosed in primary care when symptoms have persisted for 3 months. Adults should then be referred to an ME/CFS specialist service to confirm the diagnosis and to prepare a care and support plan (1.4.3)

Offer to liaise on the person's behalf (with their informed consent) with employers, education providers and support services. Give them information about ME/CFS and discuss the person's care and support plan and any adjustments needed (1.9.1)

Offer adults a review of their care and support plan at least once a year (1.15.1)

Give adults, children and young people with ME/CFS and their family or carers (as appropriate) a named contact in their primary care and/or ME/CFS specialist team to coordinate their care and support plan, help them access services and support them during periods of relapse. (1.10.3)

Offer children a review of their care and support plan every 6 months (1.15.2)

https://meassociation.org.uk/tlpj

DIAGNOSING ME/CFS

Diagnosing ME/CFS requires a comprehensive clinical history, a full physical examination and routine blood and urine tests to exclude other potential causes for similar symptoms.

Diagnosing ME/CFS requires a comprehensive clinical history, a full physical examination and routine blood and urine tests to exclude other potential causes for similar symptoms. This process cannot be completed in a standard 10-minute consultation. If you need more time to discuss diagnoses or management issues, request a longer appointment in advance.

If necessary, further investigations may be needed to rule out other conditions, which may involve referrals to hospital services. Current medical understanding suggests that expensive tests like brain scans generally do not aid in the diagnosis or management of ME/CFS, so don't expect your GP to arrange them without reason.

The NICE guideline and Chief Medical Officer's Working Group recommend that a diagnosis of ME/CFS should occur within 3 months of symptom onset. Unfortunately, current evidence suggests that only 18% of patients receive a diagnosis within six months, with over 60% waiting more than a year. Delayed diagnosis can significantly impact patient management and outcomes.

For more details on early and accurate diagnostics, refer to the MEA information leaflet available here:

https://meassociation.org.uk/dmec

PREPARING FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT

Effectively communicating your medical concerns and preparing for a medical appointment can significantly enhance the quality of care you receive. Here are essential strategies to ensure you maximise your time with your doctor and achieve your health goals:

PREPARING FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT *(continued...)*

Before your appointment

- **Gather medical history:** Compile a summary of your medical history, including past illnesses, surgeries, allergies, and family medical history. Note any previous diagnoses or treatments relevant to your current concerns.

- **List current medications:** Write down all medications, including prescription medications, over-the-counter medications and supplements, along with dosages and frequency.

- **Prepare a symptom diary:** Keep a record of your symptoms, noting when they started, their severity, and any patterns (e.g. triggers or alleviating factors). Be specific about how they affect your daily life.

- **Write down your questions and goals:** Prepare a list of questions you want to ask and identify your primary goals for the visit.

- **Research relevant information:** If applicable, research your symptoms or condition to better understand what to discuss and bring relevant articles or leaflets.

- If your concerns require more time, consider requesting a double appointment when booking. If your issues remain unresolved, don't hesitate to contact your GP via phone or email after the appointment for further information.

- **Be on time:** Allow ample travel time so that you arrive punctually. Arrange transportation if needed.

- **Take any important documents with you:** Take any paperwork, such as referral letters or recent test results.

- **Practice communication:** If you feel anxious about talking to your GP, practice describing your symptoms to ensure clarity and consider bringing a family member or friend for support and to help remember discussion details.

By approaching your appointment prepared and focused, you can increase your confidence, improve communication with your doctor and ultimately achieve better health outcomes.

The MEA has prepared a helpful leaflet, Explaining ME/CFS to other people, which contains a useful symptom checklist:

https://meassociation.org.uk/5t5e

Write down all medications, including prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications and supplements, along with dosages and frequency.

PREPARING FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT *(continued...)*

At your appointment, clearly communicate what you hope to achieve from the appointment. Have a specific goal in mind for the appointment, such as seeking a diagnosis, requesting a referral, a prescription test, or discussing treatment options.

During your appointment

- Be aware that the doctor may not have reviewed your medical history before your visit, so prepare in advance:
  - Write down your symptoms, including their duration and severity. Focus on the most important details.
  - Make a prioritised list of topics to discuss, starting with the most pressing concerns.
- Summarise your symptoms succinctly, focusing on duration and severity. Writing a brief list can be helpful.
- Start with your most pressing symptom or concern if you have multiple issues to discuss. If you can clearly articulate your main symptom or issue first and keep your explanations brief it will allow time for questions and discussion. Limit the conversation to your prepared topics and, if you have multiple issues, suggest scheduling a follow-up for further discussion.
- Clearly communicate what you hope to achieve from the appointment. Have a specific goal in mind for the appointment, such as seeking a diagnosis, requesting a referral, a prescription, a test, or discussing treatment options.
- Set realistic expectations for how your GP can assist you, aiming for symptom relief where possible.
- Be open about your concerns. Share worries you have about your symptoms or potential diagnoses to help the doctor address your concerns more effectively.
- Inform the doctor about any over-the-counter medicines, supplements, or alternative treatments you're currently using, as these can influence your care.
- Wear appropriate clothing if an examination might be necessary and be prepared to clarify any misunderstandings about your symptoms, especially if they appear related to anxiety or depression.

Make the most of your ten-minute appointment.

DRUG TREATMENTS

In terms of prescription medications, GPs typically focus on key symptoms like pain, sleep disturbances and irritable bowel issues. Due to the complexities of ME/CFS and legal implications, most GPs are unlikely to prescribe drugs that lack regulatory approval for this condition. Consequently, treatments such as antiviral medications or specialised injections might only be accessible through hospital-based specialists in clinical trials.

When visiting your GP, inform them of any over-the-counter medications, alternative remedies or supplements you are taking, as these can interact with prescription drugs.

If you are referred to a hospital-based ME/CFS service you should be cared for by a doctor and other health professionals who have good experience and knowledge in the diagnosis and management of ME/CFS. Unfortunately, this is not always the case.

REFERRALS TO HOSPITAL-BASED ME/CFS SERVICES

If you feel your GP is unable to manage your ME/CFS effectively, it's reasonable to request a referral to an ME/CFS clinic. Some GPs might not be aware of such services, which primarily exist in England. Information about specialist clinics can be found on the MEA website:

https://meassociation.org.uk/rfrn

You can still ask your GP for a referral to a specialist ME/CFS service or consultant of your choice outside your local area.

However, as from April 1st 2026, various changes are taking place to the way in which GPs can refer patients to specialist services.

This includes GPs using the NHS e-referral service (e-RS) to find services with shorter waiting times or closer locations to work/family, and offering a shortlist for the patient to choose.

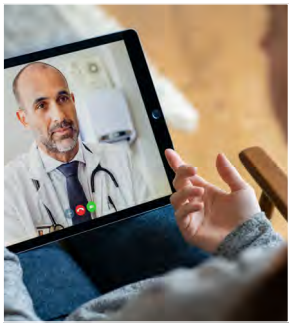
We are keen to receive feedback from people with ME/CFS on how the NHS e-referral service is operating in relation to ME/CFs referrals. We will update this section when we know more.

NHS information on specialist referral procedures:

https://meassociation.org.uk/6a6b

ONLINE DOCTOR CONSULTATIONS

Online consultations are available via the NHS's GP Pathfinder Clinics where you can access expert free medical support from the comfort of your own home.



Online consultations are available via the NHS's GP Pathfinder Clinics where you can access expert, free medical support from the comfort of your own home:

https://meassociation.org.uk/u6ya

Please note that to register with an online GP you will need to switch from your current GP practice. Once an application is made, a registration period will apply before you are able to access the service. The service is available only for people living or working In England.

Bear in mind that online consultations may have limitations; the doctor may know little about ME/CFS and some issues do require in-person visits. Always verify that any online service is regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC):

https://www.cqc.org.uk

When searching for health information, use trusted resources such as the MEA or the NHS websites:

https://meassociation.org.uk

Your choices in the NHS:

https://meassociation.org.uk/6oi0

PRIVATE MEDICAL SERVICES

Increasingly, private GPs and specialists, as well as private health providers like BUPA, are available for those willing to pay. Choosing this route may offer access to more understanding doctors who can spend additional time with you, though it's not guaranteed that they will have greater expertise in ME/CFS.

A few private doctors focus on ME/CFS but usually require a referral letter from your GP. An initial, in-person consultation with a private GP in the UK typically costs between £70 and £150 for a 15–30 minute appointment. Remote (video/phone) consultations are generally cheaper, ranging from roughly £50 to £100. Prices vary based on location, appointment duration, and the provider (e.g., Bupa, Nuffield, or private clinics).

Note: Seeing a private GP does not require you to de-register from the NHS. You retain your right to NHS care and can return to your NHS GP at any stage, although you cannot mix private and NHS care for the same single episode of treatment.

HOSPITAL DOCTORS

If you are referred to a hospital-based ME/CFS service you should be cared for by a doctor and other health professionals who have good experience and knowledge in the diagnosis and management of ME/CFS. Unfortunately, this is not always the case.

As hospital specialists come from different backgrounds - immunology, neurology, virology - they may have differing views on cause and management. The MEA takes the position that ME/CFS referral services should always have a physician as the clinical lead.

Before requesting a referral, consider what type of specialist heads the local service and their management approach. Local ME/CFS support groups can be helpful. The MEA's **Facebook** page is a forum where you can contact other people with ME/CFS and see if others can provide recommendations or otherwise. People can also visit **ME Connected** on **Discord** under local support where there is discussion about clinics:

https://www.facebook.com/meassociation

https://meassociation.org.uk/discord

The MEA's Facebook page is a forum where you can contact other people with ME/CFS. People can also visit ME Connected on Discord under local support where there is discussion about clinics.

PHARMACISTS

Local pharmacists can also be consulted for advice on minor ailments and medication interactions. Many have private consultation areas for confidential discussions. However, they may not have extensive knowledge of ME/CFS.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT GPs AND NHS SERVICES

If you encounter issues with your doctor's approach, lodging a complaint may be necessary. This can often be done with a simple, well-crafted letter addressed to the GP surgery or hospital detailing your concerns. Every surgery should have a complaints procedure accessible at the reception or online.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT GPs AND NHS SERVICES *(continued...)*

What you should do: To complain about a GP in the UK, first raise concerns directly with the practice manager or the GP for local resolution. If unresolved, formally complain to the local Integrated Care Board (ICB) or NHS England and, if still dissatisfied, escalate to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman. Complaints must be made within 12 months of the incident.

If verbal complaints are made, staff should record them in writing and provide you with a copy. Expect an acknowledgment of your complaint within three working days. If the response is unsatisfactory, you can escalate your complaint to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

For serious matters or concerns regarding professional conduct, a complaint may be filed with the General Medical Council. For legal issues, consult a solicitor specialising in professional injury or medical litigation.

For more information about complaints regarding GPs and NHS services, visit the Feedback and Complaints page on the NHS website:

https://meassociation.org.uk/z2z3

You can also refer to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), the NHS complaints procedure, including how to get independent help if you want to make a complaint:

https://meassociation.org.uk/vg46

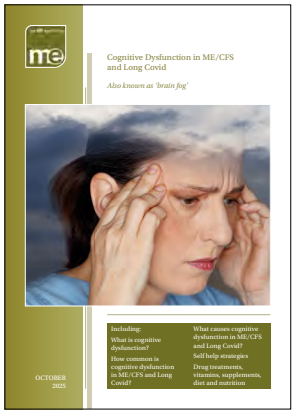
Or visit POhWER, an NHS Complaints Advocacy service which is free, independent of the NHS and confidential:

https://meassociation.org.uk/lhoc

REMOVAL FROM A GP LIST

Though challenging patients exist, most GPs view removal as a last resort. If a GP does remove a patient, it must comply with GMC ethical guidelines and contractual obligations. Reasons for removal include violence, threatening behaviour, and unreasonable actions.

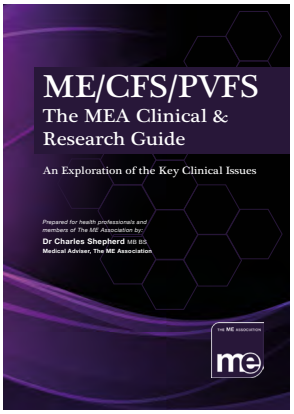
However, patients should not be removed for making complaints, behaviour caused by a medical condition, or having a long-term illness like ME/CFS. GMC guidelines emphasise restoring the professional relationship whenever possible and require written notification to the patient regarding the removal and arrangements for ongoing care.



Free MEA literature on ME/CFS management:

https://meassociation.org.uk/fdwc

EDUCATING DOCTORS ABOUT ME/CFS



Use this QR code to link to the MEA's **Clinical and Research Guide ME/CFS/PVFS: An Exploration of the Key Clinical Issues (The Purple Book).**

The varied perspectives held by doctors regarding the cause and management of ME/CFS often stem from their training. Many have never encountered a patient with ME/CFS during their education and may hold outdated beliefs based on incorrect notions surrounding psychosocial models that neglect recent research that recognises ME/CFS as a complex neuro-immune disease.

Patients with ME/CFS often become "expert patients," gathering more knowledge than their GPs. A good GP should be open to listening and learning from their patients, understanding that many doctors today suffer from information overload.

The MEA provides literature on ME/CFS management that is patient-friendly and acceptable to health professionals. Refer to our free literature section on our website:

https://meassociation.org.uk/fdwc

For more detailed information on both research and management, the MEA 'Purple Book", **ME/CFS/PVFS: The MEA Clinical & Research Guide**, is an excellent resource. We have funding available to send free copies of the MEA purple book to any health professional or medical student who would like one. Please visit or ask them to visit the MEA website at:

https://meassociation.org.uk/pbme

The MEA also has a section on the website dedicated to healthcare professionals:

https://meassociation.org.uk/ifhp

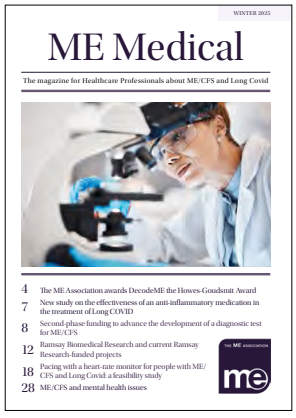
ME Medical magazine

ME Medical, the MEA's quarterly printed magazine for healthcare professionals can be sent out to healthcare professionals who practise in the UK, Channel Islands, or Isle of Man, whilst healthcare professionals from other countries can sign up to read ME Medical online.

Healthcare professionals and members of the patient community alike can use the sign-up to add a healthcare professional to the distribution list:

https://meassociation.org.uk/xwb2

"Thank you for producing such a helpful magazine. The standard is consistently high and each edition is interesting and varied. I need all the help I can get and this magazine is consistently encouraging, realistic, and helpful."



THE ME ASSOCIATION

Changing attitudes and improving lives...

■ **COMMUNITY:** We provide a safe and welcoming community for people affected by ME/CFS and Long Covid who come together and benefit from sharing their experiences. We provide membership, an essential support service, excellent website resources and we host engaging discussions on the most popular social media channels. Knowing that you are not alone can be a great comfort and we are happy to answer your questions and share helpful tips.

■ **MEMBERSHIP:** We put the interests of members at the heart of everything we do. Your subscription means that we can support more people, campaign more effectively and fund more medical research. Members receive the exclusive ME Essential magazine which carries the latest news, medical information, personal stories, and feature articles. **Join us today**.

■ **SUPPORT:** ME Connect is the charity's support and information service. We listen and we understand. All our staff and volunteers have knowledge and understanding of these medical conditions. We provide a personalised service and we're here when you need us most. You can contact us via our telephone support line (this is a FREEPHONE number) or by email. Please see back page for more details. You can also join ME Connected (Discord online community). To view the ME Connect telephone support line opening hours, please visit: **https://www.meassociation.org.uk/me-connect**

■ **INFORMATION:** We produce reliable and timely information written by topic experts and have the **largest range of free literature covering all aspects of life with ME/CFS and Long Covid**. We can show you how to recognise and manage symptoms, get an accurate diagnosis, a referral to specialists, and to obtain the healthcare that you deserve. We also provide an **e-newsletter** and free access on the website to **Medical Matters** and other relevant information.

■ **RESEARCH:** We fund medical research via the **Ramsay Research Fund** and are especially interested in research that can find diagnostic markers, causes, and treatments. We support the UK ME/CFS Biobank and the Manchester Brain Bank, and have invested over £2m in medical research in the last 10 years.

■ **MEDICAL EDUCATION:** We arrange training for healthcare professionals, offer a medical magazine, ME Medical, and are working with the Government, NHS, Royal Colleges of Medicine, and Local Authorities to implement the recommendations of the 2021 NICE Clinical Guideline on ME/CFS – the successful result of 14 years lobbying and hard work.

"The MEA is doing exactly what it said it would by providing support, actively lobbying for recognition, improvements to health and social care, and funding biomedical research."

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THE ME ASSOCIATION

Changing attitudes and improving lives...

■ **LOBBYING:** We campaign to raise awareness and bring about positive change. We believe in collaboration and work with the NHS and social care services, the Department of Health and Social Care, the British Association of Clinicians in ME/CFS (BACME), Forward-ME, the ME Research Collaborative (MERC), DecodeME, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on ME, Physios4ME, the Chronic Illness Inclusion project (CII), Hidden Disabilities Sunflower, and Long Covid initiatives.

■ **HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE:** The charity works with healthcare providers to successfully implement the NICE Guideline recommendations on ME/CFS and Long Covid to ensure that everyone receives the very best healthcare, wherever they live in the UK. We want well-trained healthcare professionals providing excellent services because timely intervention can lead to better health outcomes and improved quality of life.

■ **DONATIONS:** In order to help more people and invest in medical research we depend on your generosity. If you feel able to make a donation or want to raise funds in other ways, please get in touch with the fundraising team: fundraising@meassociation.org.uk or you can **make a direct donation via the website.**

WHAT ARE ME/CFS AND LONG COVID?

We answer key questions about these medical conditions and compare similarities and differences. You'll also find the NICE Guideline reproduced in full in an easy-to-use **database**.

MEDICAL MATTERS

Medical Matters is an easy-to-use online supplement to the more detailed literature. The same topic experts provide answers to commonly asked questions.

NHS REFERRAL SERVICES

If you need to locate an ME/CFS specialist service or Long Covid Clinic, then we can help. We have listed all secondary care referral services in an easy-to-use **database**.

THE ME ASSOCIATION

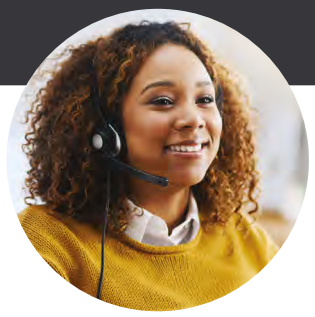
ME CONNECT

The Support and Information Service for people affected by ME/CFS/PVFS and Long Covid

Freephone 0808 801 0484

For opening hours visit: meassociation.org.uk/mec

Contact ME Connect
HOW TO GET IN TOUCH: by phone or email



HERE TO LISTEN

We are here to listen, validate and empathise with any issues you might be facing.

VITAL SUPPORT

We are here to help you reach an informed decision.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

We provide a safe, confidential and understanding environment where you can be heard and understood.

We're here for you!

meconnect@meassociation.org.uk

For all information relating to ME Connect visit: https://meassociation.org.uk/mec