

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your recent email to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), in which you express concern about the membership of our ME/CFS guideline committee.

It is important that our guideline committees have the experience and expertise to consider the published evidence and to take account of the views of people who receive and who provide care for this condition. Our arrangements for appointing the chair, vice chair and the members of guideline committees are designed to ensure that the opportunity to take part is advertised and that appointments are made on merit.

We are very aware that the causes of ME/CFS and the treatments that should be made available are the subject of debate and many people living with the condition hold strong views on both questions. Because of this, we have worked carefully to ensure that the membership of the committee contains a balance of those who have expressed clear views, together with members who have not so far taken a position on the currently available evidence.

Because of the concerns you and others have expressed, we have reviewed the appointments made so far and we consider that they are appropriate and that the interests the members have declared can be managed using our conflicts of interest policy. We will ensure that the small number of final appointments yet to be made retain the balance referred to earlier.

I hope that you will allow the guideline committee to begin its work and judge it not on the basis of your views of those who sit on it, but by how it interprets the evidence and the way in which it takes account of your perspectives and experience, when you have the opportunity to comment on the draft recommendations.

Kind regards

Helen

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