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Ref: <http://www.me-net.combidom.com/meweb/web1.4.htm#westminster>

[Debates - Topical Questions]

Health and Social Care

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Andrew Gwynne

My hon. Friend raises a really important point. NHS England is due to complete a stocktake of long covid services throughout England at the end of this month. That will provide an accurate in-depth overview of not only long covid services but ME/CFS — myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome — services. The stocktake will provide a comprehensive and accurate national picture, identify key challenges and make strategic recommendations for future service improvement, development and assurance.

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Date: January 9, 2025

URL:

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-01-09/23070>

Ref: <http://www.me-net.combidom.com/meweb/web1.4.htm#westminster>

[Written Answers]

Employment: Disability

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Mark Swards

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that people with (a) fibromyalgia, (b) ADHD and (c) other invisible disabilities are supported back into work.

Alison McGovern

Backed by 240m pounds investment, the Get Britain Working White Paper launched on 26 November will drive forward approaches to tackling economic inactivity and work toward the long-term ambition of an 80% employment rate.

As a Government, we want to support all forms of neurodiversity in the workplace, and we are looking to build on the findings of the Buckland Review of Autism Employment by gathering expert evidence in line with this expanded focus.

Appropriate work is generally good for health and wellbeing, so we want everyone to get work and get on in work, whoever they are and wherever they live.

Disabled people and people with health conditions, including those with fibromyalgia, ADHD and other invisible conditions, are a diverse group so access to the right work and health support, in the right place, at the right time, is key. We therefore have a range of specialist initiatives to support individuals to stay in work and get back into work, including those that join up employment and health systems.

Measures include support from Work Coaches and Disability Employment Advisers in Jobcentres and Access to Work grants, as well as joining up health and employment support around the individual through Employment Advisors in NHS Talking Therapies and Individual Placement and Support in Primary Care.

Employers play a key role in increasing employment opportunities and supporting disabled people and people with health conditions, to thrive as part of the workforce. Our support to employers includes increasing access to Occupational Health, a digital information service for employers([opens in a new tab](#)) and the Disability Confident scheme.

<https://www.support-with-employee-health-and-disability.dwp.gov.uk/support-with-employee-health-and-disability>

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<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-01-27/26770>

Ref: <http://www.me-net.combidom.com/meweb/web1.4.htm#westminster>

[Written Answers]

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Health Services

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Alison Bennett

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to Coroner Deborah Archer's report entitled Maeve Boothby O'Neill: Prevention of Future Deaths Report, reference 2024-0530, dated 7 October 2024, what steps he has taken to ensure that the (a) care for patients and (b) training available for (i) GPs, (ii) hospital doctors and (ii) other health workers on treating patients with myalgic encephalomyelitis and chronic fatigue syndrome is adequate.

Andrew Gwynne

We are committed to improving care and support for people with myalgic encephalomyelitis, also known as chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS). We recognise how devastating the symptoms can be, and the significant impact they can have on patients and their families.

The Department has reconvened the ME/CFS Task and Finish Group, including senior Department and cross-Government officials, ME/CFS specialists and representatives from NHS England, the National Institute

for Health and Care Excellence, the devolved administrations, and ME/CFS charities and organisations. With stakeholder engagement via the ME/CFS Task and Finish Group, we are developing the final delivery plan for ME/CFS, which we aim to publish by the end of March. The plan will focus on boosting research, improving attitudes and education, and bettering the lives of people with this debilitating disease.

The Department is also working with NHS England to develop an e-learning programme on ME/CFS for healthcare professionals, with the aim of supporting staff to be able to provide better care and improve patient outcomes. Sessions one and two of the e-learning programme are now available. The third session will become available later in 2025.

The Medical Schools Council will promote the NHS England e-learning programme on ME/CFS to all United Kingdom medical schools, and encourage those medical schools to provide undergraduates with direct patient experience of ME/CFS. The General Medical Council (GMC) is the regulator of medical schools, and it is important that education is reinforced at different stages of medical training. Royal colleges play an important role in this. The GMC has included ME/CFS in the content map for the new national exam, so all medical schools will need to teach it as a subject.

NHS England is currently undertaking a stocktake, commissioned in September 2024 and due at the end of January 2025, that will provide a more accurate, in-depth overview of the position of post-COVID-19 services across England. The scope of this commission has been extended to include ME/CFS services.

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