

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request Reference FoI/24/143**  
**Myalgic Encephalomyelitis and Long Covid**

- 1. Has the process of diagnosing/treating long COVID and ME/CFS as relayed to me been implemented in response to this announcement? <https://www.gov.wales/funding-boost-open-long-covid-services-people-long-term-conditions>**

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board's (the UHB's) Long COVID/Live Well rehabilitation service has been in existence since January 2021.

As reported within this announcement, the continuation of the funding for services and to support evolution has come from the significant benefit analysis of the existing teams and services – including the UHB's own service – across Wales.

Within the UHB, an electronic healthcare pathway has been used from before this announcement, to support diagnosis, rehabilitation, and identified secondary care intervention or consideration when required.

The healthcare pathway development was a close collaborative effort between the UHB's Primary, Community and Intermediate Care team and its Secondary Care consultant specialists to identify a diagnostic pattern that is suggestive of Long COVID, or consideration of pre-existing conditions, exacerbation, or development of new conditions that would mirror and explain similar symptom presentation.

In general, diagnosis is supported within the primary healthcare field with collaborative confirmation support within the Rehabilitation Service or Secondary Care Consideration if requested due to medical concerns.

There is no specific test, biomedical markers, or screens that identify Long COVID – rather, it is a clinical pattern in line with NICE guidelines and supporting research-based evidence.

In short, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation pre-date this announcement. The announcement supports the ongoing pathway and direction of intervention for the Long COVID/Live Well service.

- 2. Is the health board implementing the NICE guidelines on ME/CFS from 2021 and if so, how? These are the guidelines <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng206>**

The UHB is working towards the implementation of the NICE guidelines for ME/CFS with the collaborative development of an adult ME/CFS health pathway using lived experience expertise, primary care, secondary care, therapy, and rehabilitation medicine. As regards the Long COVID pathway, supporting diagnosis, intervention, rehabilitation, and care are all considerations.

Certain elements of the pathway, such as supporting individuals living with significant disability, may take some time to implement due to the complex nature of the individual's condition and the inter-medical disciplines, social care, and community resources required to coordinate.

The plan is for the Live Well service to be available to support individuals living with mild or moderate ME/CFS from April 2024, while supporting care pathways and interventions recommended by the NICE guidelines and research-based evidence.

In respect of the work currently undertaken with individuals living with Long COVID, it is paramount that our services are patient-centred, holistic, psychologically-informed using mind–body linked and evidence-based strategies, as well as skill development interventions, while also maximising the expertise of lived experience and community care.