

Kirkham House
John Comyn Drive
Worcester
WR3 7NS

0330 053 4356
hw.complaints@nhs.net

Date: Wednesday 21 June 2023

Ref:

Robin Walker MP
VIA EMAIL

Dear Robin,

Subject: Diagnostic service for Myalgic encephalomyelitis or chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS) in Worcestershire.

Thank you for sharing the concerns of Ms _____, on behalf of the Worcestershire ME Social Group regarding the local diagnostic pathway for patients with suspected ME/CFS.

I can advise that; this service has not been decommissioned by NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire. However, the CFS service is under considerable pressure due to recruitment difficulties, which is having a significant impact on Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust's (HWHCT) ability to safely deliver this service to its patients, and unfortunately, the service can only accept patients that have been officially diagnosed with CFS at present, as they do not currently have access to a suitable clinician to diagnose patients. I can assure you that this issue is currently flagged as a risk with the ICB and all options are being considered with regard to how the service may operate going forwards. However, as you will be aware, the current immediate focus for the NHS is addressing waiting lists and recovering from the backlog of work because of the COVID pandemic, as well as dealing with the extreme winter pressures seen this year.

I understand that this will be a cause of concern for your constituents, and I am eager to ensure that all our patients receive support where appropriate, and as such I wanted to highlight a service which may be of use to patients experiencing CFS/ME related pain. The Worcestershire Pathway for Management of Persistent Pain, Worcestershire Acute Hospital Trust (WAHT) has launched their Specialist Pain Management Programme and are now taking referrals from primary care and the community MSK service. The Pain Management Programme will provide appropriate patients, non-MSK or MSK, presenting with complex or widespread pain related disability, with a full assessment to formulate a treatment plan with the patient. The programme will enable patients to manage their pain with psychological,

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physical, and behavioural support. I have attached the WAHT patient information leaflet in my email to you should you, or your constituents wish to look into this option further. Additional information can also be found here [Pain Management Programme - Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust \(worcsacute.nhs.uk\)](https://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk/pain-management-programme)

I am sorry that we cannot give you more information at the moment but if you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the patient and stakeholder liaison team in the first instance. They can be contacted via email on hw.complaints@nhs.net.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Trickett
Chief Executive of NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICB