

**Bristol CFS/ME Service, The Lodge, Cossham Memorial Hospital
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Referral criteria

These are the referral criteria for the Bristol CFS/ME Service, which is a multidisciplinary service covering Bristol, North Somerset and Gloucestershire. The team consists of specialists including Clinical Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists and a counsellor.

Patients should meet the following criteria for the diagnosis of CFS/ME:

Persistent/excessive tiredness or fatigue, lasting over four months (but not lifelong) with ≥ 4 of the following symptoms:

- Subjective memory/concentration impairment
- Post-exertional malaise
- Sleep disturbance including unrefreshing sleep
- Muscle pain
- Joint pain
- Headaches
- Tender lymph nodes/recurrent sore throat
- Other symptoms may include nausea, dizziness and sensitivity to noise/light.

To exclude other possible causes of chronic fatigue, the following conditions should have been considered:

- Primary Sleep Disorder
- Thyroid Disease
- Adrenal insufficiency
- Anaemia
- Vitamin D deficiency
- Chronic infection
- Coeliac disease
- Immunodeficiency
- Fibromyalgia (pain dominates fatigue in clinical presentation)
- Malignancy
- Anxiety/Depression
- MS
- Myasthenia Gravis
- Rheumatic Diseases

Refer to the appropriate specialist if an alternative diagnosis is in doubt.

The following blood tests should have been completed within the past 12 months in order to exclude other causes of fatigue. If you are referring from outside of BNSSG area we require a print out of the actual results for our records.

Severn Pathology have introduced a streamlined screening request system, and it is available on ICE as a profile called CFS/ME. Using this profile will ensure all of these blood tests are done.

Test results for patients with CFS/ME should be normal: please comment on any abnormalities that can be explained.

- FBC
- ESR or PV (for UBHT lab, tick “required for secondary care” to request ESR)
- CRP
- Urea and electrolytes including potassium
- Liver function
- Calcium
- Thyroid function
- Creatine kinase
- Random blood glucose
- Local coeliac screen (e.g. IgA endomysial or tissue transglutaminase autoantibodies)
- HbA1c or alternative measure of blood glucose

Exclusion criteria for the Bristol CFS/ME Service

- Major psychiatric illness with psychotic or manic features.
- Fibromyalgia (refer to Pain Management)
- History of failed rehabilitation specific to CFS/ME (e.g. specialist CBT programme) unless there are specific reasons to reconsider the role of rehabilitation (please outline these in the referral).
- Concurrent rehabilitation from another service.
- Ongoing medical investigation

What the service offers

- Multi-disciplinary outpatient assessment.
- Consultation and advice in liaison with Primary Health Care Team.
- Direct clinical work (group or individual).
- Multi-component rehabilitation package for symptom management. Complex case management.

NB: we do not offer long-term counselling / support.

Due to our large catchment area and limited staff resources, we will prioritise referrals and can only accept those that meet our criteria and have a completed negative blood test screen. In some cases, we will be expecting to advise other professionals regarding case management rather than accepting the referral ourselves.