

STATEMENT FROM DR'S WITH ME ON NICE GUIDELINES

"Doctors with ME heartily welcome these new guidelines. In particular we welcome the emphasis on ME being a genuine medical condition. This goes along with NICE having implicitly rejected the "Biopsychosocial Hypothesis". This hypothesis has long been influential, and regards ME as a virtual non-disease, instead being a condition caused by a combination of faulty illness beliefs leading to the patient becoming deconditioned. This hypothesis had led to patients being given Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for their abnormal illness beliefs, and Graded exercise Therapy (GET) for their deconditioning.

NICE has now clearly withdrawn support for both forms of therapy on the grounds of lack of efficacy, and in the case of GET likely harm. NICE received a large volume of evidence on this latter area. Instead of GET and CBT, NICE now recommends an approach to energy management that is virtually identical to Pacing, a form of management long favoured by most ME charities and patient groups

We regard these guidelines as a recipe to empower all doctors to be aware of the condition, to make the diagnosis in most cases and also to offer correct management and support.

We have a concern that some specialist centres will continue to offer Graded Exercise Therapy but with the name changed to "Graded Activity Management"