

22 April 2021

William T Frances

By email: [fyi-request-15017-32a4976c@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-15017-32a4976c@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Ref: H202103702

Dear William T Frances

### **Response to your request for official information**

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 29 March 2021 for:

*“Details on the Ministry of Health's intention to update its stance and propagation of official information and guidelines regarding Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and its classification, considering the most recent reference was published in 2004 [0].*

*The Ministry of Health's current stance toward CFS' classification ("complex illness" or "disability" or other), considering the US VA's rating for CFS varies between 10% and 100%, and considering modern research and recent findings that it is not psychosomatic[1].”*

The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) acknowledges the difficulties that people face with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS).

Please note that the 2004 report that you refer to *Diagnosis and Management of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome / Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME)* was undertaken by the New Zealand Guidelines Group (NZGG). The NZGG was an entity independent from the Ministry and was subsequently disestablished in 2012. While their report remains in the Ministry's Library Catalogue, it is not being actively promoted or used to guide services for people with CFS/ME.

More current advice on CFS/ME for the public and clinicians is available on the Health Navigator website ([www.healthnavigator.org.nz](http://www.healthnavigator.org.nz)) which may be of interest to you.

The Ministry itself does not classify CFS/ME and therefore your request for this information is refused under section 18(e), as the information requested does not exist.

Individuals may wish to contact their local district health board for advice and assistance with information attaining to services available to them.

Under section 28(3) of the Act you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by calling 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'N' followed by a horizontal line that curves upwards at the end.

Nick Allan  
**Manager, OIA Services**  
**Office of the Director-General**