

To Sam Barnett-Cormack
C/o request-100910-134ddec4@whatdotheyknow.com

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: freedom-of-information-xxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx

Our Ref: VTR 2804-220

DATE 16 February 2012

Dear Sam Barnett-Cormack,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request that was received by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Adelphi on 19 January 2012 and forwarded on for response by DWP Medical Services Contracts Correspondence Team (MSCCT) Freedom of Information Officer.

In your email you asked to be provided with information answering the following questions:-

Dear Department for Work and Pensions,

I am writing to request all training, briefing, knowledge base or similar material, approved for use by HCPs conducting Work Capability Assessments, regarding or relevant to the following conditions/diagnoses:

- *Fibromyalgia*
- *Depression (including specific forms, such as Major Depressive Disorder)*
- *Bi-Polar Disorder (including BP-I, BP-II, and other related diagnoses)*
- *Narcolepsy (both with and without Cataplexy)*
- *Migraine (including any specific forms, such as Classical, Basilar, or Status Migraines)*
- *Irritable Bowel Syndrome*
- *Eczema (including any specific forms)*
- *Asthma*
- *Non-seasonal Allergic Rhinitis*
- *Atopic Tendency (also known as Atopy, Atopic Syndrome and Atopic Allergies)*
- *Myalgic Encaphelemyelitis (ME)*
- *Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)*
- *Somatisation Disorder*

And also any guidance for assessing or dealing with people who have symptoms for which they have not yet received a diagnosis, but for which there are reasonable steps to pursue a diagnosis and these steps are being taken; and also those symptoms for which no diagnosis has been received and, on medical advice, efforts to diagnose have ceased. I realise that

some of these have been released in existing FOI requests, but I wish to make sure that I have the most up-to-date information.

In answer to your request please find enclosed a link to a copy of the Revised WCA ESA (LCW/LCWRA) Amendment Regulations 2011 Handbook

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/specialist-guides/#other> which contains advice on some of the medical conditions listed, the Continuing Medical Education Programme Guidelines for the Disability Analyst on Fibromyalgia; the Training & Development Learning Set for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) and Fibromyalgia; the Training & Development Guidance for Neurological and Infections Key Points and Analytical.

In addition I have attached copies of the Evidence Based Protocols for the Disability Analyst in respect of Asthma, Bipolar Disorders, Depression, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome / Myalgic Encephalomyelitis and the EBM Mental Health Protocols: Key Points and Analytical Guidance that are also issued to approved Healthcare Professionals (HCP) employed by Atos Healthcare.

I have also enclosed a copy of information from Logic Integrated Medical Assessment (LiMA) Searchable Repository that is available for use by HCPs in relation to some of the diagnoses on which you have requested information.

At present, there is no specific information in the LiMA Searchable Repository for: Cataplexy Non-seasonal Allergic Rhinitis, and Somatisation Disorder.

I can advise that ME and CFS are dealt with together under Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and that the section on asthma, includes reference to 'Atopic', though again there is not a separate section at present for Atopic Tendency.

These documents have been produced as part of a programme for HCPs to carry out medical assessments as approved HCPs. All HCPs undertaking these medical assessments must be registered medical or nursing practitioners who in addition, have undergone training in disability assessment medicine. The training includes theory training in a classroom setting, supervised practical training, and a demonstration of understanding as assessed by quality audit. These documents must be read with the understanding that, as experienced medical or nursing practitioners, the HCPs will have detailed knowledge of the principles and practice of diagnostic techniques and therefore such information is not contained in these documents. In addition, these are not stand-alone documents, and form only a part of the training and written documentation that a HCP receives. As disability assessment is a practical occupation, much of the guidance also involves verbal information and coaching. Thus, although the documents may be of interest to non-medical readers, you are advised that some of the information may not be readily understood without background medical knowledge and an awareness of the other training and guidance given to HCPs.

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If you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Fol Team

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xxx.xx or by writing to DWP, Central Fol Team, 5th Floor The Adelphi, 1-11, John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HT. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF www.ico.gov.uk