

Clarification about CRITICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Margaret Williams

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In response to enquiries about the source of one item of information contained in the above document, the following clarification is provided.

It concerns the information about “incentives” being offered to GPs for identifying and referring patients with fibromyalgia.

The source of this information was Dr Stephen Ladyman MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State.

Dr Ladyman spoke in person at the All Party Parliamentary Group on Fibromyalgia held on 12th May 2004 in the House of Commons and his contribution was revealing.

He said clearly and unequivocally that the Government would now be giving “incentives” to GPs for identifying patients with fibromyalgia. The main thrust of his speech was that the Government had invested substantial funding in order to set up new clinics for “CFS/ME” patients **and that fibromyalgia patients would be included in this funding.**

Dr Ladyman was asked outright why patients with fibromyalgia were to be included in the MRC trials on ME / CFS. His answer was that Government did not get involved in medical research.

It was pointed out to him that Pacing was a common-sense life-style approach adopted by many patients with chronic diseases, which did not merit being subjected to expensive clinical trials.

Dr Ladyman was then reminded that the Health Minister, Lord Warner, had confirmed that the Government now accepts that ME / CFS is classified by the WHO as a neurological disorder.

Dr Ladyman replied that that the MRC believed these trials had merit.

He then said that he could not understand why there was such a fuss about the WHO classifications and that “part of the time, CFS/ME had been listed as a mental health problem”.

Dr Ladyman went on to say that other people believe CFS/ME is a psychological or psychiatric disease, **and that “some of these scientists are very highly regarded by the Government”.**

Dr Ladyman left early and the meeting continued without him.

