

Correct Citation for the “London” criteria?

Margaret Williams 18th May 2005

On 15th May 2005 Co-Cure carried a letter from Dr Raymond Perrin in which he referred to (quote) “things that are being said on Co-Cure about my work regarding the London criteria for ME”.

In the interests of accuracy, although Co-Cure has carried items about the “London” criteria, it has proved impossible to locate any posts on Co-Cure that have mentioned the work of Dr Perrin in regard to the “London” criteria.

However, the requisite search of Co-Cure archives has revealed a further issue of apparent discrepancy concerning the “London” criteria that seems to merit clarification.

On 17th October 2004 Jan van Roijen of the Help ME Circle posted an item that included a statement on Co-Cure from Dr Charles Shepherd. Dr Shepherd’s post purported to provide an answer to a request for an accessible reference for a published version of the “London” criteria.

In his post, Dr Shepherd cited the following reference for the “London” criteria:

“LONDON CRITERIA FOR ME

EG Dowsett, E Goudsmit, A Macintyre, C Shepherd et al., London criteria for M.E., Report from the National Task Force on Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS), Post Viral Fatigue Syndrome (PVFS), Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME). Westcare, 1994. pp 96-98.”

This seems curious, given that the Task Force Report itself gives no such reference, either on pages 96-98 or elsewhere.

The Task Force report provides no names of authors of the proposed “London” criteria: it merely states on page 96: **“ME/PVFS – The UK Patients Organisations (1993) ‘London criteria’ ”.**

Whilst it is true that Dr Shepherd was Medical Adviser to the ME Association and Dr Macintyre was Medical Adviser to MEAction (and Miss Goudsmit had links to international ME Associations through what she named as The International Federation of ME Associations), for Dr Shepherd to provide a specific reference that differs from what is actually published in the Task Force Report would seem to be not only incorrect but also misleading.

It could be misleading because anyone carrying out a search for the “London” criteria using the specific reference supplied by Dr Shepherd would be unsuccessful, as no such published reference exists.