

Værløse d. 25/10-2020

Kære Sundhedsudvalg

(cc Sundhedsstyrelsen, Sundhedsministeren og formanden for regionernes sundhedsudvalg)

Jeg kan forstå at ME/V82 er på dagsordenen d. 3 november. Det glæder mig meget i lyset af at ME er kommet i verdens fokus i forbindelse med covid19 senfølger (1). Dr. Fauci og verdens ME-forskere er bekymret for at vi nu vil se en stigning i antallet af ME-tilfælde (2), så det er meget presserende at vi snarest får et tidssvarende udrednings- og specialiseret behandlingstilbud i Danmark.

I lederen i det prestigefyldte videnskabelige tidsskrift Nature, der handler om disse covid19 senfølger, bruger man ME som skræmme-eksempel på hvordan det går, når man ikke inddrager patienternes stemme. Herved har patienterne måtte kæmpe en ulig kamp for at blive troet på, se uddrag nedenfor (3). I Danmark kæmper vi stadig denne kamp, selvom et enigt folketing støttede os i marts 2019 og besluttede at der skal oprettes et specialiseret tilbud.

Måske det kan være svært at gennemskue at de tiltag sundhedsstyrelsen har indført for at imødegå V82 på ingen måde lever op til vedtagelsen. Her er hoved-ankerne:

1. Patienter bliver henvist til et af de regionale centre for funktionelle lidelser, hvor de ikke udredes for ME, men får diagnosekoden DR688A9B1 almen træthed (4), som dækker over en ikke-fysisk funktionel lidelse. Patienter der allerede er diagnosticeret med ME (fysisk diagnosekode) får også denne kode. Det er volapyk, da man ikke både kan være fysisk syg og ikke-fysisk syg. Det har derfor negativ værdi for patienten, da det bidrager til misforståelser og fejl.

2. De regionale centre for funktionelle lidelser har ikke et specialiseret ME-tilbud, som beskrevet i Nature. Alle er underlagt den samme behandling med graderet træningsterapi og kognitiv terapi i grupper, og der gives ingen individuel medicinsk behandling eller lindring. U.S. ME/CFS Clinician Coalition beskriver i deres behandlings-guideline, at selvom der ikke findes helbredende behandling, så er der ingen grænser for hvilken lindring man kan give for at øge patientens livskvalitet (5). The British Association for CFS/ME er enig i denne vurdering og de er derfor lige kommet med et statement med ændret retningslinier (6). I Danmark nægtes lidende mennesker altså simpel lindring, som fx benyttes i USA, hvilket må anses for at være uetisk.

3. Ifølge Sundhedsstyrelsen følger Danmark NICE-guideline for ME, men den er desværre blevet fejl-tolket. NICE betoner selv at graderet træningsterapi kun må anvendes, hvis patienten er i et specialiseret ME-behandlingsforløb med en individuel tilgang og kun til dem der ikke er særlig hårdt ramt (7). Ydermere skriver de at guidelinen er forældet og at anbefalingerne vil blive ændret i et nyt draft der sendes i høring d. 10. november. Derfor har de udsendt en advarsel mod at anvende graderet trænings-terapi til patienter, der ikke kan komme sig af covid 19, da symptomerne minder meget om ME.

4. Vedtagelse V82 pålægger sundhedsstyrelsen at opdatere sig på ME, men man har stadig ikke indført diagnose-kriterier hvor post-exertional malaise (PEM) indgår (CCC-kriterier, ICC-kriterier eller IOM-kriterier) og man respekterer stadig ikke at patientens fysiske symptomer blusser op efter aktivitet. USA's National Institute of Health har lige udsendt pressemeddelelse om deres nyeste studie om PEM (8). At tvinge patienter med PEM til aktivitet, som det danske samfund gør i alle aspekter af patientens vej gennem systemet er uetisk. Se artikel fra 1993, hvor vi faktisk ikke er kommet videre i 2020 (9).

Jeg stiller gerne op til en uddybende samtale*.

Mvh Vibeke Vind

*Min baggrund for at udtale mig er at jeg er cand. Scient i Biokemi og har fulgt med i den internationale udvikling på området i de sidste 10 år. Jeg fungerer som videnskabelig rådgiver for ME-foreningen, fx da Detektor ville have dokumentation for at de udsagn DR havde indhentet fra ME foreningens hjemmeside i denne artikel var fagligt korrekte.

<https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/indland/rasmus-lider-af-sygdommen-me-sidder-dagen-lang-paa-sit-vaerelse>

(1) <https://www.statnews.com/2020/07/21/chronic-fatigue-syndrome-keys-understanding-post-covid-syndrome/>

Anthony Fauci, the country's top infectious diseases expert, acknowledged this month that the symptoms in many of these unrecovered patients are "highly suggestive" of myalgic encephalomyelitis, the disabling illness also commonly called chronic fatigue syndrome or ME/CFS. "This is something we really need to seriously look at," said Fauci.

(2) <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2771111>

Nath, chief of the Section of Infections of the Nervous System at NINDS, is planning a prospective study of persistent ME/CFS-type symptoms among people who've had COVID-19. "I think we need to assure the public that we are aware of the syndrome," he said in an interview. "We're very keen to understand what it's about."

(3) <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02796-2>

"In deciding how to act on long COVID, researchers and policymakers must take heed of what happened in the case of myalgic encephalomyelitis, also called chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS). The condition shares some of the symptoms of long COVID, and people with ME/CFS struggled for many years to be recognized as having a serious and debilitating medical condition that needed specialized treatment and research."

"And although COVID is well known, long COVID isn't — at least, not yet. It is crucial that those with the condition are listened to in a way that, tragically, people with ME/CFS were not."

"The difficulties faced by people with ME/CFS and their representatives resulted, in part, from the fact that the patient voice was marginalized."

(4) <https://www.sst.dk/da/Udgivelser/2020/Vejledning-til-anvendelse-af-koder-for-funktionelle-lidelser>

(5) <https://mecfscliniciancoalition.org/clinical-management/>

"there are no shortage of interventions a clinician can make to improve patient quality of life and significantly reduce the overall symptomatic burden of ME"

(6) <https://meassociation.org.uk/2020/10/me-association-response-to-bacme-position-statement-on-the-management-of-me-cfs/>

There is evolving evidence to indicate a dysregulation of multiple dynamic physiological systems in explaining the symptom picture seen in ME/CFS. Research has demonstrated changes in Immune System responses, Autonomic Nervous System function, Neuroendocrine pathways including the Hypothalamus-Pituitary-Adrenal axis along with cellular metabolic changes.

(7) <https://www.bmj.com/content/370/bmj.m2912>

“The recommendations on graded exercise therapy in CG53 only apply to people with a diagnosis of ME/CFS as part of specialist care, and CG53 is clear that this should be part of an individualised, person-centred programme of care, with GET only recommended for people with mild to moderate symptoms”

“As the guideline is currently being updated, it is possible that these recommendations may change. The evidence for and against graded exercise therapy is one of the important issues the guideline committee is considering.”

(8). <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/nih-study-details-self-reported-experiences-post-exertional-malaise-me-cfs>

“It was quite striking to hear the extent to which PEM can affect their quality of life,” said Barbara Stussman, statistician at the NIH’s National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health and lead author of the study. “The widespread body symptoms, the unpredictability of PEM, and the sometimes-lengthy recovery greatly hindered individuals’ ability to live a ‘normal’ life.”

The study also identified, for the first time, differences between PEM caused by daily activities, such as grocery shopping or going to a doctor’s appointment, and PEM caused by the lab test CPET. The results suggest that the overall symptoms were similar, but PEM caused by the exercise test came on faster and lasted longer.

(9). <https://twitter.com/RFH1955/status/1317748340659015680?s=20>