

Paediatric Long Covid and Chronic Fatigue Service

Hampshire and Isle of Wight

*Children and teenagers in your school may be experiencing long term symptoms or problems from COVID-19 or chronic fatigue symptoms include fatigue, brain fog, pain, breathing difficulties, headaches, anxiety, low mood and sleep disturbances. You may see the effect of this in different ways including **poor school attendance**, difficulty maintaining usual activity levels and increasing anxiety. Whilst most children / teenagers will get better without any specialist help, if symptoms persisting for more than 12 weeks and this is having a functional impact help should be sought.*

Parents should be encouraged to seek advice from their GP, who can assess the child and refer them to the fatigue service if appropriate. The service is a specialist team including a paediatrician, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, and psychologist who will discuss the child symptoms and meet with them face to face if necessary. The team will work with child / family and to help develop and implement a plan to support them moving forwards. The service will provide signposting to self-help and community resources.

The Children's Long COVID service has been extended until March 2025 and expanded to include children and young people with a diagnosis of ME/CF (Chronic Fatigue).

From our experience the earlier we provide the intervention and support the better the outcomes, **therefore strongly encourage families to seek help early.**

Focus on equity of access.

COVID-19 disproportionately affects groups of people with house inequality's, ethnic minorities and those living in deprivation. We want to ensure that children in these categories also receive the help they need and increased vigilance may be required from you to empower parents to seek help self-help resource is an GP advice,

If parents are not following advice to seek input GP, then consider if this is a safeguarding concern.

Child / teenagers who have mild symptoms may benefit from schools being aware of universal support, which can help them during their recovery and to enable early support. Please see resources below

<https://www.what0-18.nhs.uk/professionals/hospital-staff/safety-netting-documents-parents/resource-pack/chronic-fatigue>.

You can call Therapy Services Telephone advice line if you need more advice 0300 300 2019.

