

## APPG Frequently asked questions

### What is an APPG?

All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) are informal cross-party groups of MPs and Members of the House of Lords. They meet regularly to discuss, campaign, and promote certain issues, in this case M.E. When effective, they are a great means of spreading awareness of an issue within Parliament and the media.

### What is the APPG on M.E?

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME) is a cross-party group of Members of Parliament (MPs) and members of the House of Lords (Peers).

It seeks to improve health, social care, education, and employment opportunities for people with ME and encourage biomedical research into the cause and treatment of ME.

The Group meets several times a year and uses each meeting to focus on a specific issue affecting people with ME. Sometimes experts are invited to give presentations on a specific topic, to improve the understanding and knowledge of the APPGs members. This helps members both to support individual constituents and to advocate for policy change in Parliament.

The APPG creates an important setting to show politicians the scale of challenges facing people with ME and give space for discussions on how best this can be changed.

### What was the role of the March AGM?

The Annual General Meeting was aimed to give MPs an opportunity to hear about the challenges people with M.E. face in receiving a diagnosis for their condition along with the challenges in accessing treatments, welfare support and education.

The meeting also served as a way of aligning the work plan for 2022.

### What is Myalgic Encephalomyelitis?

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (M.E.), sometimes referred to as chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), is a serious, chronic, complex, and multisystem disease that

frequently and dramatically limits the activities of affected patients causing significant functional impairment, ill-health, and disability.

The physical symptoms associated with M.E. include activity-induced muscle fatigue, pain, cognitive dysfunction, problems with the regulation of pulse and blood pressure (dysautonomia), the inability to sustain physical and mental activity, and post-exertional malaise. These symptoms are as disabling as multiple sclerosis, systemic lupus erythematosus, rheumatoid arthritis, congestive heart failure and other chronic conditions.

### **Can I attend?**

As it stands only parliamentary individuals can attend. We encourage you to write to your MP inviting them to attend the meetings.

APPG meetings are held for Members of Parliament and the House of Lords to learn more about the issues facing people with ME. The Parliamentary Security Department has specified that APPG meetings must not be advertised as public for security reasons. However, guests may be invited to speak or provide evidence to the APPG to provide the best information possible about ME to those in attendance. You can find more information on the relevant APPG rule [here](#). Meeting minutes are required to be open to the public and will be posted to this website as soon as possible after meetings.

We have created tools to facilitate this; whether it be through our template letters or through our tweets you can use to flag the event to your MP.

### **What is the role of Action for M.E. in APPG's?**

For 2022, we a joint secretariat with the ME Association. In this role we help to arrange meetings as well as keep track of the members associated with the APPG on M.E.

### **Will Action for M.E. supply the minutes and contents of the APPGs?**

APPGs are for MPs to learn and discuss issues pertaining to a particular topic.

These meetings usually include several invited experts who have been chosen to address the group because of their specialism in a particular area.

APPG meetings must be a safe space for MPs to ask difficult questions without public scrutiny.

### **Can I raise a personal issue related to M.E. with the APPG?**

Unfortunately, not, parliamentary rules are very clear that MPs can only do work on personal issues for their own constituents. Our All-Party Parliamentary Group works on the broader issues around ME that effect many people.

You can get in touch with your own MP by looking up their contact details [here](#). They can advise you on whether your issue is something they can help with.