

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 10983



INTRODUCED BY REP. PATRICK MICHAEL “PM” D. VARGAS

AN ACT
PROMOTING AWARENESS OF CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Myalgic encephalomyelitis or chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS) is a complex, chronic illness characterized by debilitating fatigue, post-exertional malaise, unrefreshing sleep, cognitive difficulties, and other symptoms that substantially limit daily activities. No definitive diagnostic test or universally established cure currently exists, and prevalence estimates vary because of differences in diagnostic criteria.¹

Management generally focuses on individualized medical care, symptom monitoring, sleep support, and energy management to prevent worsening after physical or mental activity. Patients may also experience stigma because the illness is often invisible and poorly understood, resulting in delayed diagnosis, inadequate treatment, and social isolation.²

In the Philippines, research and official data specifically concerning myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS) remain limited. The absence of reliable national prevalence data highlights the need for local epidemiological studies, clinical guidelines, health-worker training, and improved reporting and referral systems. International research describes ME/CFS as a disabling, multisystem illness characterized by persistent fatigue, post-exertional malaise, unrefreshing sleep, and cognitive difficulties

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/>. May 30, 2024

² [Recommendations | Myalgic encephalomyelitis \(or encephalopathy\)/chronic fatigue syndrome: diagnosis and management | Guidance | NICE](#). October 21, 2021

The lack of Philippine-specific data should not be interpreted as evidence that the condition is uncommon. Limited recognition, the absence of a definitive diagnostic test, and the possibility of misdiagnosis may contribute to underreporting. Accordingly, this measure seeks to promote awareness, strengthen clinical recognition, reduce stigma, support research, and improve access to appropriate assessment, treatment, rehabilitation, mental-health support, and social services for persons with ME/CFS.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



REP. PARICK MICHAEL “PM” D. VARGAS

Fifth District, Quezon City

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Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Short Title. This Act shall be known as the “*Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Awareness Act*”.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) is widely misunderstood such that patients are viewed as malingering, wanting attention or feigning CFS-like syndrome. The lack of recognition of the disease and support for CFS patients affect them psychologically thereby prolonging their recovery from the disease. It is in accord with the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them that awareness of CFS be raised to dispel the social stigma associated with the disease so that the patients may attain early recovery and restoration to a productive and fulfilling life.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. – For purposes of this Act, the term:

- a) “DOH” refers to the Department of Health;
- b) “Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)” refers to CFS is an energy deficit disorder, the impact primarily is on the immune system, the brain, the muscles and endocrine system; and
- c) “PIA” refers to the Philippine Information Agency.

SECTION 4. National Public Awareness Campaign. – The Department of Health (DOH) in cooperation with the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) shall carry out a national campaign to increase public awareness and knowledge of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

Activities under the national campaign shall include:

1. The dissemination of information on recent findings about CFS, its probable causes, prevention, diagnosis, and available treatments.
2. Information and workshops on how to provide the necessary emotional support to a family member, relative, or friend suffering from CFS.

SECTION 5. *Implementing Agency.* – The Department of Health (DOH), in cooperation with the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), is hereby authorized and directed to adopt a system to implement and carry out the provisions of this Act. The DOH shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate rules and regulations to carry out and enforce the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 6. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the annual budget of the Department of Health.

SECTION 7. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions hereof.

SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, and issuances, or portions thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,