

**TO THE HONOURABLE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

This is a petition of Australians who are concerned about the significant lack of funding for research for Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME/CFS) and its accompanying illness Multi Chemical Sensitivities (MCS).

ME/CFS has been classified as a neurological disorder in the World Health Organisation's International Classification of Diseases since 1969 (ICD 10 G93.3).

ME/CFS and MCS are severe, complex, acquired illnesses with numerous symptoms related mainly to the dysfunction of the brain, gastro-intestinal, immune, endocrine and cardiac systems. The petition draws to the attention of the House the following:

Despite recognition by the WHO, there are no universally recognized treatment protocols. Currently, over 180,000 people are affected by ME/CFS and MCS (R.A.C.P 2004). Sufferers diagnosed since the 1980's, are alarmed at the lack of knowledge and understanding amongst the medical profession, Government institutions and the wider community about these debilitating illnesses, which cause rapid deterioration of health and may result in death – sometimes, by suicide.

Thousands of sufferers are still undiagnosed, or misdiagnosed. Due to belated diagnosis, many have been permanently damaged. Living with these severely disabling illnesses, impacting on all areas of their lives, is extremely stressful, isolating and frustrating. Sufferers spend from \$5000 - \$25000 on alternative medicine tests/treatments (with limited success), forcing many families into financial ruin and dependency.

We therefore ask the House to urgently invest into funding for research and support services for ME/CFS and MCS. If there is no research, no cure can be found.