

Medline/PubMed, PsycINFO, CINAHL and Web of Science databases searched in August 2013. Search terms:
[chronic fatigue syndrome or CFS or myalgic encephalomyelitis or myalgic encephalitis]
and
[doctor or family physician or general practice or general practitioner or GP or primary care]
and
[English language, 1988 to 2013].

After removal of duplicates, 496 abstracts were extracted. Initial screening on basis of title and abstract by AW and MG. Inclusion criteria:

1. Used qualitative methods
and
2. Reported original research based in primary care
and
3. Described the practice of diagnosis or management of CFS/ME
or
4. Described perceptions (of health care practitioners or patients) of diagnosis and management of CFS/ME in primary care.

449 articles excluded on the basis of title/abstract

The full text of 47 articles were read independently by AW and AC. The references of these articles were also checked in order to identify any further relevant studies.

18 articles retained by AW

22 articles retained by AC

Discussion of 5 articles

26 articles excluded after full reading

21 articles retained for meta synthesis