

WRITTEN QUESTION E-6262/08
by Nicolae Vlad Popa (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: EU recognition for fibromyalgia, the need for treatments in Europe for fibromyalgia and the need for more data on fibromyalgia

1. On 28 October 2008, Commissioner Vassiliou answered Written Question E-4898/08. In her answer she stated that:

'Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) have been, for years, controversial disorders. There are a lot of experts within and outside the world of medicine who doubt that these disorders exist, while they are recognised by others. This situation has given rise to major differences of opinion concerning the ability of fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) patients to work, and to their entitlement to social security benefits.'

However, the current version of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) does now recognise Fibromyalgia (Code M79.7).'

In countries with a developed health infrastructure this disease can be diagnosed and treated, whereas in the new Member States that is not always the case.

Can the Commission state its position on fibromyalgia, as the WHO did in 1992? Does the Commission think that there is a need for action at European level, in the interests of European citizens, in order to avoid the disparities in diagnoses and treatment which exist in all Member States?

2. Can the Commission comment on the lack of availability of approved treatments in the EU for fibromyalgia? Millions of people suffering from fibromyalgia across Europe do not have the same access to medicines to treat fibromyalgia as in the US. Following its October meeting, the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) took a negative decision regarding the first medicine for the treatment of fibromyalgia in Europe. Patients across Europe were disappointed to hear that a licence to approve a drug for fibromyalgia had not been granted. Yet the reality is that in Europe patients are taking medicines off-label. What solution does the Commission see for this specific problem?
3. In order to obtain a treatment for fibromyalgia, there is a need to collect EU data. Can the Commission help collect and receive data and also help with the coordination of national expertise?