

Developing a Multidisciplinary Fatigue Service for Adolescents and Young Adults in Western Sydney

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Background:

Fatigue is a common debilitating symptom for adolescents and young adults (AYA) that can have a negative impact on quality of life (QoL). Multiple changes (biological, social, developmental, psychological) occur during adolescence that can lead to fatigue related conditions (FRCs). In addition, chronic diseases, post infective illnesses, sleep disorders and poor mental health all contribute to fatigue.

The Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine (AYAM) multidisciplinary team at Westmead Hospital in Western Sydney manages medically unwell AYAs. In 2025, we will establish a fatigue service for AYAs aged 15-25 years old with FRCs.

Approach:

This fatigue service will be AYA focused, provide multidisciplinary care (by doctors, nurses, a social worker, psychologist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist & dietitian) and be guided by the latest available evidence-based guidelines.

Initial consultation will occur with a doctor and an allied health team member. The case will be further discussed with the AYAM multidisciplinary team. Review appointments will occur in the outpatient department. A two week inpatient admission will be offered to severely functionally impaired AYA with FRCs for multidisciplinary care. Inpatient admission goals will be determined prior to admission in collaboration with the patient and team.

An AYA centred approach will be used to understand and address symptoms, manage comorbidities, and improve QoL.

Research capacity will be built into this service.

Outcome:

Using an intake process, consultations will be offered for the following FRCs:

- Post Viral Fatigue (PVF)
- Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS)
- Postural orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (PoTS)
- Fatigue secondary to a Chronic Illness
- Unexplained fatigue.

Evaluation of recovery and functional rehabilitation will be embedded into the service with clinician-based and patient reported outcomes assessed and reviewed.

Innovation and Significance:

This will be the only multidisciplinary fatigue service in Australia dedicated to 15–25-year-olds offering both inpatient and outpatient care. Outcomes from this service will be internally reviewed and presented at future conferences.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

Nil