

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Margaret Williams December 2002

These three issues need to be taken together:

1. The Royal College of Paediatricians and Child Health has produced a quite lengthy document entitled "THE NEXT TEN YEARS: educating paediatricians for new roles in the 21st century" (*January 2002*). It is published by the Royal College of Paediatricians and Child Health: ISBN 1-900954-59-1.

It is a joint training project with the Royal College of Psychiatrists. A Project Director has been appointed (Dr Quentin Spender, Senior Lecturer and Consultant in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at St George's and Chichester), whose job is to liaise with psychiatrists about the most common mental health disorders of childhood.

On page 30, the heading is: "SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS" (Box 54) includes chronic fatigue syndrome (along with substance abuse and anorexia)

2. There is a new name for Munchausen's Syndrome: it is now known as **FII**, which stands for "**Fabricated and Induced Illness**". (As Dr Nigel Speight has made plain, there is now what amounts to an epidemic of such a diagnosis surrounding the parents of children with ME/CFS).
3. The Royal College of Psychiatrists has produced a series of 36 Fact Sheets entitled "Mental Health and Growing Up. Fact Sheets for parents, teachers and young people" (2nd edition, *October 2001*). The fact sheets are each referred to as "This popular publication...."

Fact sheet 32 covers "medically unexplained physical symptoms" and includes chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS).

Fact sheet 33 is called "CFS—helping your child to get better". It talks about "tiredness" and claims that symptoms are made worse by "worries" and by "emotional problems" and it says that children need the right treatment.

Sources of further information are given as:

- (i) the Joint Royal Colleges 1996 report on CFS
- (ii) CFS: Guidelines for Good Practice (ACPP publication).