

PE2165/A: Raise awareness of and provide educational resources and training for Functional Neurological Disorder (FND)

Scottish Government written submission, 2 June 2025

Does the Scottish Government consider the specific ask[s] of the petition to be practical or achievable? If not, please explain why.

No. Developing and disseminating new resources to provide training and education to medical professionals requires additional budget not currently available and it is considered that current work underway addresses the concerns raised in the petition. A number of funded projects support an improved awareness and understanding of FND described under section 4 of this form. Further work is required to implement more widely the approaches described and discussions will take place between Scottish Government, NHS boards and other providers on the best approach to improve awareness amongst GPs, the wider healthcare community and employers. There are, for example, Practice Based Small Group Learning Modules that can be developed for primary care practices and this would be an option that could be progressed if felt to be the most appropriate and cost effective approach.

What, if any, action the Scottish Government is currently taking to address the issues raised by this petition, and is any further action being considered that will achieve the ask[s] of this petition?

Through our 5 year strategy, Neurological Care and Support in Scotland: A Framework for Action 2020-2025 and the Centre for Sustainable Delivery the Scottish Government has funded the following resources:

- **FND Care pathway:** this was developed by the Centre for Sustainable Delivery in 2024: [fnd-national-pathway.pdf](#). This provides recommendations to NHS Boards and practitioners on the content of an FND service and more efficient, sustainable, and cost-effective use of existing services.
- **FND Clinical Network in NHS Lothian:** The creation of an FND network facilitated by an FND specialist practitioner to improve clinical pathways, provide education and training to other healthcare professionals and a relapse service for people with FND. This project is still in progress and aligns with the FND Care Pathway. It is due to complete in the autumn of 2025. The specialist practitioner role includes delivering education about FND to those health professionals not in a primary neurological setting who come in to contact regularly with people with the condition. Although full data has still to be analysed, the early indications are that this approach will result in reduction in A&E attendance, and savings in hospital bed days. If we can make the case for wider adoption and spread of this model, it potentially provides a way of enabling people with FND to be supported and to be better able to manage their condition.
- **NHS Grampian: GP Pathways for FND Education:** pilot study investigating ways to enhance knowledge and diagnosis of FND within three GP surgeries. Evaluation of training led to GP's feeling more confident in diagnosing and

managing FND patients with their surgeries, improving confidence to initiate a joint learning model with patients and a shared understanding of supported self-management

- It should be noted that the project data at the time of reporting had not been fully analysed and we would need the final data to see what improvements in referral quality have resulted. Further consideration could be given to scale and spread of the GP education modules.
- [Functional Neurological Disorder \(FND\) – A Patient's Guide to FND](#): this internationally recognised website was developed by Professor Jon Stone of NHS Lothian and includes information on the causes, symptoms and treatment of FND. It is aimed at patients and professionals and contains accessible and in-depth information about the condition.

The petitioner references being signposted to this resource. It needs to be recognised as a source that, used appropriately, can enhance healthcare professional and patient literacy of the condition.

- **Dissociative Seizures app**: [Dissociative Seizures | Right Decisions](#); dissociative seizure is a symptom experienced by people with FND. This module is available on the NHS Right Decisions Service and downloadable as an app.

We will continue to work with health and social care providers to integrate these approaches and resources with the goal of providing holistic care and support to all people with a diagnosis of FND.

Is there any further information the Scottish Government wish to bring to the Committee's attention, which would assist it in considering this petition?

We are working with all NHS boards on the delivery of improvement plans for neurological conditions. This includes services for people with FND. A Neurological Conditions Improvement Network has been established to support collaboration and sharing of good practice around improvement in neurology services. Boards are being asked to report on progress with these plans annually (commencing in May 2025).

Long Term Conditions Policy Unit, Quality and Planning Division