

Press release

## **International Declaration in Support of Research and Drug Development for ME/CFS and Long COVID**

Berlin, 1 September 2025

**More than 60 leading international scientists and medical professionals have signed a new Declaration. They are calling for a globally coordinated approach on research and drug development for ME/CFS (Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome) and Long COVID.**

With the "International Declaration in Support of Research and Drug Development for ME/CFS and Long COVID," leading experts from 14 countries, including the United States, Japan, Australia, and Europe, have joined forces to express their demands to combat these serious illnesses, for which there are still no recognised treatment options.

Prof Carmen Scheibenbogen first presented the Declaration on 12 May 2025 at the International ME/CFS Conference 2025 in Berlin. Since then, the Declaration has garnered growing international support.

### **Scientists call for the pharmaceutical industry to become more engaged**

The declaration highlights the growing health crisis caused by ME/CFS and Long COVID and emphasises the urgent need to advance biomedical research and drug development worldwide. In particular, governments and international bodies are called upon to prioritise research funding for these diseases.

The signatories emphasise that more translational and clinical studies are needed to investigate potential treatment options. Studies are also needed on the efficacy of drugs that have already been developed for other diseases. The experts are calling for incentives to be created for pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies to actively participate and invest in research and drug development.

## Leading researchers comment on their demands:

**Carmen Scheibenbogen** ([website](#)), Director of the Division of Immunodeficiencies and Post-infectious Diseases and the Charité Fatigue Center (CFC) at Charité - University Medicine Berlin, initiator of the Declaration, underscores her motivation to issue a global call for enhanced cooperation: *“Our understanding of what is causing ME/CFS and Long COVID has made notable progress in the past five years. We are now more confident than ever in being able to identify targets for biomedical treatments. Collectively, we must now concentrate our efforts on pinpointing suitable biomarkers and developing potentially curative treatments. This needs to happen globally and in close cooperation with governments and pharmaceutical companies. As the signatories of the International Declaration, we call on all potential partners to join us in this effort.”*

**Ziyad Al-Aly** ([website](#)), Director of the Clinical Epidemiology Center, Chief of the Research and Development Service at the Veterans Affairs St. Louis Health Care System, and Professor of Medicine at Washington University in St. Louis, USA, underlines his support for the declaration: *“Long COVID and ME/CFS mount a significant burden not only on healthcare systems, but also on national economies and the society at large. From a public health perspective, it is paramount that we find ways to prevent and effectively treat these conditions. The cost of inaction in this regard would simply be too high. It is essential that funding organisations and private industry answer our call and actively engage with the research and patient community to address this global challenge.”*

**Akiko Iwasaki** ([website](#)), Sterling Professor of Immunobiology and Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology at Yale University, USA, and signatory of the Declaration, emphasises the need for a joint effort on drug development: *“Research and drug development in the field of Long COVID and ME/CFS must be prioritised, if we are to bring effective therapies to the people living with these conditions. I am convinced that, by joining efforts across disciplines and sectors, we will be able to make important strides in this endeavour. Harnessing the expertise and resources available to both basic science and industry will be of central importance. To this end, we are calling for establishing goal-oriented partnerships between academia, biotech and pharmaceutical industry.”*

**Takashi Yamamura** ([website](#)), Director of the Department of Immunology at the National Institute of Neuroscience and of the Multiple Sclerosis Center at the National Center of Neurology and Psychiatry in Tokyo, Japan, who signed on to the declaration on 12 May, points to the need for more international cooperation: *“We are now rapidly advancing our understanding of ME/CFS and similar infections-associated conditions, including Long COVID. Against this backdrop, I believe there is a growing need for the global research community to come together and jointly elaborate on the way forward in terms of research and treatment development. I am convinced that, by pooling our knowledge and resources across countries, we can create important synergies that will ultimately help us to deliver faster on making therapies available to patients.”*

**David Putrino** ([website](#)), Professor of Rehabilitation and Human Performance at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, USA, who also signed on to the declaration at the conference in Berlin, reiterates the need for more research: *“There is an urgent need to provide tailored medical care to the millions of people living with post-acute infection syndromes. While some efforts are already underway to find effective treatments, we urgently need more research and clinical trials to achieve timely results. As scientists and doctors, we will do our best to leverage our expertise and advance our understanding on how to diagnose, treat and ultimately prevent these conditions. Establishing partnerships with the private sector can take us a long way in achieving this.”*

The “International Declaration in Support of Research and Drug Development for ME/CFS and Long COVID” is an independent initiative of the signatories. The ME/CFS Research Foundation is making the Declaration available on its website on behalf of the signatories, as the document was first presented at the International ME/CFS Conference 2025 ([website](#)), which was organised with the support of the Foundation.

The full text and list of all supporters can be found at the following link:  
<https://declaration.mecfs-research.org/en/declaration>

**Presse contact:** Petra Dohrendorf, Tel: +49 - 179-1419112  
[presse@mecfs-research.com](mailto:presse@mecfs-research.com)

Further information on ME/CFS, the foundation and current media coverage can be found in the press section of our website: <https://mecfs-research.org/en/press/>

**Donations info:** <https://mecfs-research.org/en/support/>

**Donations account:** DE35 2004 0000 0628 5316 00 (Commerzbank)

ME/CFS Research Foundation is a non-profit limited liability company and fulfils the statutory requirements under Sections 51, 59, 60 and 61 of the German Fiscal Code (AO). It is authorised to issue donation receipts within the meaning of Section 10b of the Income Tax Act.

## **About ME/CFS Research Foundation**

<https://mecfs-research.org/en/>

The ME/CFS Research Foundation promotes the establishment and expansion of biomedical research into ME/CFS (Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome). Due to insufficient research, there is still no causal treatment for this common, severe and complex multisystemic disease. The non-profit Foundation funds research projects, connects researchers and provides information about research developments. The Foundation cooperates with ME/CFS patient organisations that have long been active in improving the situation.