



Why terminology matters

Harini Sathanapally, Pauline Mountain MBE

The power of words

Words have the immediate potential to evoke imagery and emotions

Say each of the following words to yourself....

Then consider how each word makes you feel and any imagery that might pop up in your mind:

- Health -
- Disease -
- Condition –
- Morbidity –
- Long-term – ----

What are the issues with the term “multimorbidity”?

- The term “multimorbidity” evokes negative imagery
- Could give the impression to patients that they are in poor health, their body is failing them, they may be dying soon, and there is nothing they can do about the condition ⁽¹⁾
- A taskforce on multiple conditions led by the Richmond Group of charities reported that people do not find multimorbidity an acceptable term to describe their condition ⁽²⁾

What it means to the patient... with little or NO choice!

- breathing difficulty
- debilitating
- afraid
- tests
- pain
- anxious
- crushing sensation
- uncertain

As professionals you know -

- the technological facts,
- access to the knowledge
- more importantly have the ability to understand the implications and either separate or group together the important bits!

As a patient I live with it all on a daily basis, so....
it's how I'm feeling right here right now?

Unaware of new procedure
fear of outcome
feel so poorly
never heard of it!
Did I hear that right?
Description of procedure
What if!
Terminology – what is sudden to me!
Confused
They look so young how can they know so much?
I won't bother them
Sleepless nights Frustrated
Depressed
Denial

Why is “multiple long-term conditions” the preferred term?

- Conveys a sense of longevity, and with this, a better sense of hope for the management of the long term conditions.
- Better captures the interplay between multiple co-existing long-term conditions and has more clinical relevance
- Now the preferred term by the NIHR strategic framework (3)
- Facilitates greater understanding & communication between patient-carer-clinician....



**How are
YOU today!**



**Bridge the Gap
Together!**

Opinion

Multiple long term conditions, multimorbidity, and co-morbidities: we should reconsider the terminology we use

BMJ 2023 ; 383 doi: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.p2327> (Published 13 October 2023)

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2023;383:p2327

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Kamlesh Khunti^{1 2}, *Harini Sathanapally*², *Pauline Mountain*³

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