



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Health systems, medical products and innovation
Performance of national health systems

Expert Panel on effective ways of investing in health

Drafting group on Facing the impact of post-Covid-19 condition on health systems

(Virtual meeting)

11 March 2022

Minutes

1. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved without changes. The minutes of the previous meeting of 8 February were adopted and will be published on the Expert Panel website.

2. Nature of the meeting

The second drafting group meeting on ‘Facing the impact of post-COVID-19 condition on health systems’ took place on 11 March 2022 via MS Teams. The meeting, which was chaired by Dr Dionne Kringos, Chair of the drafting group, was a non-public meeting.

Members welcomed Dr Nisreen Alwan as an external expert.

No declarations of interest that could in any way interfere with the topic discussed were submitted by any member.

3. List of points discussed

Draft outline

The mandate was agreed and published on the Expert Panel’s website. The proposed draft opinion outline was sent to drafting group members prior to the meeting.

The chair and rapporteurs suggested the draft outline with two main chapters. The first one on *the definition of the post-COVID-19 condition* with sub-chapters on *i) nature and extent of Post-COVID-19 condition* and *ii) impact on functioning and quality of life at individual level*. The second chapter on *forecasted impact of post-COVID-19 condition on health systems and services delivery and need for re-design*, covering, among others, the recognition of post-COVID-19 condition, rehabilitation for the medium- and long-term consequences of COVID-19, research on post-COVID-19 condition, and reporting through surveillance, monitoring, and response.

Members stressed the importance of having a clear scope of the opinion, i.e. to have clear understanding of what post-COVID-19 condition is, and which known conditions will be included in the scope. They mentioned some examples of new services for the specific type of patients (with post-COVID-19 condition) which might create inequalities in access to therapies. They stressed the importance of using and improving existing infrastructure.

Members further discussed the conceptual framework. The proposed framework leads from population perspective to individual person needs, based on risk assessment. To explore the impact of post-COVID-19 condition on health systems, the existing levers and options for re-design, an assessment of the existing structures and processes is needed, including those that emerged during pandemic.

Members elaborated on different elements of the framework, such as patient empowerment within the community, goal-oriented care, and a team-based approach in the disease management. The importance of primary care, and the role of active primary, secondary and tertiary disease prevention were highlighted. It was emphasised that public health policy should consider the future burden of the post-COVID-19 condition, and be aware of its fluctuating, relapsing and episodic nature which has consequences for healthcare and for employment.

The Expert Panel drafting group reiterated the importance of close coordination and exchange of information with Directorates–General for Health and Food Safety (SANTE), Research and Innovation (RTD) and European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) about their respective work streams on post-COVID-19 condition.

Schedule for the opinion and the drafting group meetings

Drafting group members agreed on the following schedule:

Drafting group meetings: 4 April, 13 May, 13 June

Discussion and reporting on ongoing work in plenaries: 21 March, 23 June

Public hearing: September

Finalisation of the opinion: October

4. Conclusion

Members agreed to provide their contribution for specific sub-chapters of a draft opinion to have a first draft ready prior to the next meeting of the drafting group. The Chair thanked everyone for their active participation and valuable discussion.

5. Next meeting

The next meeting of the drafting group is scheduled for 4 April 2022 via MS Teams.

6. List of participants

EXPH members: Professor Jan De Maeseneer, Dr Dionne Kringos, Professor Lasse Lehtonen, Professor Christos Lionis, Professor Martin McKee, Professor Sabina Nuti, Professor Pedro Pita Barros, Dr Heather-Lynn Rogers, Professor Katarzyna Wiczorowska-Tobis, Dr Sergej Zacharov, Dr Jelka Zaletel

Invited external expert Dr Nisreen Alwan

Representatives from the European Commission (DG SANTE: B1, DG RTD)

Representative from ECDC