



Expert Panel on effective ways of investing in health

Drafting group meeting on mental health of health workforce and other essential workers

(Virtual meeting)

11 May 2021

Minutes

1. Approval of the agenda and the minutes

The agenda was approved without changes as well as the minutes of the previous meeting.

2. Nature of the meeting

The fourth drafting group meeting on *mental health of health workforce and other essential workers* took place on 11 May 2021 via MS Teams. The meeting, which was chaired by Professor Pedro Pita Barros, chair of the drafting group, was a non-public meeting.

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

3. Points discussed

DG SANTE and the Chair of the group debriefed the drafting group on the high level conference “*Mental health and the pandemic: living, caring, acting!*” on 10 May which was attended by over 1 000 participants. It included a session on mental health of the healthcare workers and of informal carers and a session on health systems and mental health needs. A report on the conference will be published.

Feedback/comments on the draft opinion

The latest draft of the opinion was presented by the rapporteurs. They are now working on a shorter version of the conceptual framework. Examples from the Commission’s best practice portal were considered. A strong evidence based section on best practices will be developed.

The opinion will be further reviewed to streamline its content as well as recommendations. The discussion focused on the draft recommendations with the aim to streamline the 15 recommendations that emerged from previous drafting meetings. It was emphasised that the recommendations should be actionable and targeted to the specific actors responsible for implementing them.

The recommendations were discussed one by one. On indicators, it was suggested that a minimum set of data at EU level was important, alongside nationally collected data which can have a broader scope.

The role of the employer, including in small and medium size enterprises was discussed as well as possibilities offered by digital tools.

The concept of well-being was debated since it is understood in different ways in different national contexts. Identifying concrete dimensions of wellbeing would be useful to achieve a better understanding of the concept. It was pointed out that there are existing tools to measure wellbeing at national level. The link between mental health and fundamental rights was also mentioned as well as the importance of diversity and inclusion.

The group acknowledged that data that are more comprehensive would help evaluate the effectiveness of mental health interventions. In this respect, user satisfaction would be a good measure.

Several members emphasised the importance of community based mental healthcare as an enabler to shift to first line interventions, including workplace based solutions.

For streamlining the recommendations in the current draft, it was suggested to map them to the conceptual framework and the evidence presented in the opinion to ensure that each recommendation is backed-up in the preceding text.

Planning and organisation of the work in the drafting group

As next steps, the rapporteurs will streamline the recommendations.

4. Conclusion

The draft opinion will be published on the Expert Panel's website in time for the public hearing on 8 June, preferably 10 working days in advance.

The Chair thanked everyone for their active participation and valuable discussion to move forward with the opinion.

5. List of participants

EXPH Members

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