



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 (2019-2022)

2nd plenary meeting

29 April 2020

14:00-17:00h CET

WebEx

Draft Minutes

The second plenary meeting of the Expert Panel on effective ways of investing in health (term of office 2019-2022) took place on 29 April 2020 via WebEx. The meeting, which was a non-public meeting, was chaired by the Panel's Chair, Professor Jan De Maeseneer.

1. Welcome and introduction

The agenda was approved without changes, the minutes of the previous plenary meeting had been already approved in writing and published on the Expert Panel dedicated website.

Prof De Maeseneer announced his nomination as Head of the WHO Collaborating Centre on Family Medicine and Primary Health Care (Centre Department of Public Health and Primary Care, Ghent University). Prof Nuti announced that she had been nominated as a member of the Governing Board of the Italian Institute of Health.

No conflicts of interest were raised on matters on the agenda.

2. Possible new mandate – scoping discussion on a new mandate possibly related to Covid-19 crisis

Andrzej Ryś, Director of Directorate B - Health systems, medical products and innovation gave introductory remarks stating that the current Covid-19 pandemic would undoubtedly have a long-term impact on population health as well as on the health systems. It is still difficult to forecast the course and the outcome of the ongoing pandemic as well as to predict all the consequences on the health status of the population and the health systems. Nevertheless, he stressed the important role the Expert Panel could play in the assessment/reflection and analysis of consequences of the current health crisis and what lessons to be already drawn to understand future scenarios.

He highlighted two sets of issues, first, long term effect of Covid-19 on the health of the population, including potential rise of chronic conditions as a result of Covid-19 as well as the economic hardship, mental health issues related to healthcare staff and caregivers as well as to children, the elderly who live alone or in care homes, impact on patients awaiting non-urgent medical treatments, impact on patients in palliative and long term care, health inequalities, etc.

The second set of issues relates to long term effect of Covid-19 on the healthcare system, mainly investments needs to improve healthcare systems, resilience enhancing measures (adaptability, efficiency, sustainability, accessibility), crisis response capabilities and readiness, medical supply chains, incl. coordination and solidarity among EU Member States, disease surveillance mechanisms and information infrastructures (e.g. use of health data to predict and map epidemics and for (self-)diagnostics and contact tracing).

During discussion Panel members agreed that the drafting of the opinion related to the Covid-19 would be very challenging as not much scientific evidence is yet available. Nevertheless they stressed that it would be a lesson learned document in a process which could already examine several aspects, among others how the healthcare is organised, the role of integrated care, resilience, efficiency and ethics of health systems, use of new technologies and data. Interaction between healthcare systems and economy was also highlighted as well as impact of the crisis on vulnerable groups and mental health and importance of prevention and innovation. The Panel members concluded that based on their expertise the new mandate could possibly focus on the organisation of the healthcare, including primary, hospitals and social care, health information systems, patient management and lessons for resilience and ethics in health system.

COM will draft the mandate and present it to the Panel in due course. Panel members agreed on members of the drafting group, its chair and rapporteurs.

3. Opinion on public procurement in healthcare systems

The first meeting of the drafting group on public procurement in healthcare systems took place on 15 April via WebEx. The first draft was circulated prior to the meeting. The chair of the drafting group and rapporteurs reported on ongoing work and the progress made on the opinion and the next steps. Panel members discussed inter alia evaluation criteria, including quality and other components and how to address them in the opinion, security of supplies, specific situation in some countries. COM welcomed the first draft of the opinion and asked to clarify the terminology under the part on pharmaceuticals, notably to distinguish pricing/coverage negotiations as a concept from the actual acquisition of goods through procurement. It suggested to give more considerations to how tenders can be designed to foster long-term competition (in relation to existing criticisms on “winner takes all” approaches) and how to deal with specific market failures.

The next meeting of the drafting group will take place on 15 May via WebEx. The updated draft will be circulated by rapporteurs prior to the meeting.

4. Communication and dissemination

The dissemination discussion paper drafted by COM was circulated prior to the meeting. COM presented the ideas on potential audiences, channels and communication tools for the promotion of the work and messages deriving from the Panel's opinions. It stressed that the opinion itself has to convey clear and relevant key messages, also using a plain language understandable for non-specialist audiences.

Panel members welcomed the paper and discussed the possibilities of having a short policy brief translated to several languages. Members agreed that the national and regional political decision-making bodies should become primary focus. Members suggested to use their national as well as international networks to promote and present the opinions and shared the best practices to disseminate the Panel's work.

5. Collaborative platform

COM created a common workspace for Expert Panel members under Health Policy Platform where all relevant documents and different versions of opinions can be stored. COM presented shortly the workspace modalities and advantages and encouraged Panel members to use it.

6. Any other business and next steps

The amended rules of procedure (RoP) was circulated to the members prior to the meeting. Point 18 on intellectual property rights had been added in order to cover the Panel's opinions for reuse in accordance with Decision 2011/833/EU and distribution under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence. Amended RoP were adopted.

Chair reminded the members the schedule of the plenary meetings in 2020: 24 June, 23 September, 25 November. It is yet to be decided, given the situation, whether the next meeting will take place in Brussels or via WebEx.

The Chair thanked all participants and closed the meeting.

7. List of participants

MEMBERS

AZZOPARDI MUSCAT Natasha
BARROS PITA Pedro
DE MAESENEER Jan
GACIA-ALTES Anna
GRUSON Damien
KRINGOS Dionne
LEHTONEN Lasse
LIONIS Christos
MCKEE Martin
MURASKIENE Liubove

NUTI Sabina
ROGERS Heather
SICILIANI Luigi
STAHL Dorothea
WIECZOROWSKA-TOBIS Katarzyna
ZACHAROV Sergej
ZALETEL Jelka

DG SANTE

RYS Andrzej (B)
GIRAUD Sylvain (B1)
DAJKA Bela (B1)
LARSSON-LINDQVIST Carl (B1)
VAN DEN STEEN Dirk (B1)
VOLOSINOVA Viera (B1)