WHO R&D Blueprint  
COVID-19

Terms of Reference of the

WHO COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Research Working Group

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# Table of Contents

[Table of Contents 2](#_Toc69125657)

Introduction 3

[Objectives](#_Toc69125659) 3

[Composition of the group](#_Toc69125660) 4

Working group members………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….4

[DISCLAIMER](#_Toc69125660) 6

# INTRODUCTION

In February 2020, the World Health Organization Research and Development (R&D) Blueprint in collaboration with the GloPID-R (the Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness) held the first Global Research and Innovation meeting which was followed by the publication of a roadmap of priorities for research on SARS-CoV-2 in eight areas, one of which was Infection Prevention Control (IPC) with about 50 invited international experts. Following this meeting, all experts interested in continuing to provide input and actively engage in IPC research were invited to form an ongoing working group, that was named WHO COVID-19 IPC R&D Working Group.

The aim of the WHO COVID-19 IPC Research Working Group is to work in concert with the WHO secretariat, other experts and other COVID-19 research working groups with the purpose of facilitating coordination and collaboration of research and innovation in the field of IPC during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The participation in the group provides WHO and the group participants with the opportunity to have a protected and confidential forum for sharing of results from ongoing research and gathering expert input for their interpretation. The group has also a critical role in continuing to advance the discussion about the evolving priorities for research in the field of IPC in the context of COVID-19. Finally it identifies the key evidence that is relevant for supporting critical public health and IPC measures to fight against COVID-19 with special focus on protecting health workers and preventing reducing healthcare transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and ultimately of health care associated infections (HAI) and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in support of all Member States and WHO priorities.  The group will also ensure that the needs of low- and middle-income health care settings/countries will be taken into consideration in the development of their protocols and designs.

The terms of reference of the WHO COVID-19 IPC R&D Working Group may change to include other research – not solely restricted to COVID-19 and its focus may change during the course of the epidemic in the event that new priority areas become known and new research is needed.

# OBJECTIVES

* To promote, support and engage in research into all aspects of IPC of relevance to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the identified research questions and priorities
* To continue to review and update the global IPC R&D agenda according to the emerging evidence
* To enhance timely sharing of IPC research results and evidence interpretation
* To contribute to the development and implementation science of evidence-based IPC recommendations/documents during the COVID-19 pandemic
* To enhance and provide COVID-19 global outbreak response through provision of evidence-based technical advice
* To dedicate special focus on research areas aimed at improving knowledge and tools to avoid health care-associated transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and to better protect health workers from getting infected with SARS-CoV-2
* To contribute to the research agendas of other areas such as social science and epidemiology, in particular for the understanding of the SARS-CoV-2 modes of transmission
* To explore and understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on health care-associated infections and AMR
* To ensure that the needs of low- and middle-income health care settings/countries will be taken into consideration in the development of their protocols and designs.

Long-term objectives may include other research and innovation on IPC, not necessarily related to the COVID-19 response, pending the assessment of the current collaboration and the resources available at WHO for coordinating the group.

### COMPOSITION OF THE GROUP

The WHO COVID-19 IPC R&D Working Group aims to ensure representation among its members. Group members bring expertise from across global regions and diversity across the Infection Prevention and Control disciplinary approaches. The group includes members with specific expertise in priority thematic areas of the WHO R&D roadmap for IPC and with cross cutting expertise. Group membership may change during the course of the epidemic in the event that new priority areas become known and new expertise is needed.

**Chair**: John Conly - Professor of Medicine, Microbiology, Immunology & Infectious Diseases, Pathology & Laboratory Medicine, University of Calgary and Alberta Health Services, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

The chair has the following responsibilities:

* Moderate group activities and discussions to ensure all diverse perspectives are represented.
* To liaise with the WHO focal point and other technical areas as needed.
* Ensure ongoing review and (re-) prioritization of research agenda based on emerging needs and Covid-19 dynamics.
* Promote cross-cutting engagement with other thematic areas and with end-user groups.

**WHO secretariat lead:** Benedetta Allegranzi

**Expert group members**

The expert group members have the following responsibilities:

* Provide feedback on “state of the art” Covid-19 IPC evidence and call attention to emerging priority areas
* Conduct IPC research in the context of COVID-19 and confidentially share its results and/or contribute to evidence interpretation
* Respond to requests for evidence and expert guidance to inform response operations via the WHO secretariat
* Conduct tasks and develop materials related to delivery or facilitation of the IPC research agenda.
* Share tools, protocols, and (where appropriate) methodological expertise and research outcomes
* Contribute to building networks of IPC experts as well as other relevant disciplines in an effort to ensure global representation for Covid-19.

### WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

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| **Member** | **Affiliation** |
| Luciano Attard | IRCCS Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria di Bologna |
| Francesco Basoli | University’ Campus Biomedico Roma, Italy |
| Umberto Bracale | University Federico II of Naples, Napoli, Italy |
| Prof Michael Barer | University of Leicester, United Kingdom |
| John Conly (Chair) | University of Calgary and Alberta Health Services, Canada |
| May Chu | Colorado School of Public Health, USA |
| Larry Chu | School of Medicine, Stanford University, USA |
| Barry Cookson | University College London, United Kingdom |
| Brian Crook | Health & Safety Laboratory, United Kingdom |
| Jonathan Decker | University of Leicester, United Kingdom |
| David Evans | University of Alberta |
| Dale Fisher | National University of Singapore & Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network |
| Giorgia Gon | London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom |
| Belinda Heyne | University of Calgary, Canada |
| Alison Holmes | Imperial College London, United Kingdom |
| Seto Wing Hong | WHO Collaborating Centre for Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Control, University of Hong Kong, China |
| Eric Haubruge | University of Liège, Belgium |
| Joost Hopman | Radboud University Medical Center, Netherlands |
| Paul Hunter | University of East Anglia, United Kingdom |
| Thomas Jaenisch | Colorado School of Public Health, USA |
| Tom Jefferson | University of Oxford, United Kingdom |
| F Selcen Kilinc-Balci | NIOSH/CDC, USA |
| Molly Lamb | Colorado School of Public Health, USA |
| Fernanda Lessa | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA |
| Thomas Lendvay | University of Washington, USA |
| Anna Sara Levin | Hospital das Clinicas, Faculdade de Medicina, University of São Paulo, Brazil |
| Yuguo Li | School of Public Health, University of Hong Kong, China |
| Moi Lin Ling | Singapore General Hospital, Singapore |
| Marc Loeb | McMaster University, Canada |
| Louisa F. Ludwig-Begall | University of Liège, Belgium |
| Kalisvar Marimuthu | National Centre for Infectious Diseases, Singapore; Department of Infectious Diseases, Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Singapore |
| Mary-Louise McLaws | University of New South Wales, Australia |
| Shaheen Mehtar | Stellenbosch University, South Africa |
| Christopher Mores | Department of Global Health, The George Washington University, USA |
| Maria Clara Padoveze | University of São Paulo, Brazil |
| Ben Park | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA |
| Diamantis Plachouras | European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control |
| Mathias Pletz | Jena University Hospital, Germany |
| Amy Price | School of Medicine, Stanford University, USA |
| Mitchell J Schwaber | National Center for Infection Control, Ministry of Health, Israel |
| Mark Sobsey | University of North Carolina, USA |
| Paul Tambyah | National University of Singapore, Singapore |
| Etienne Thiry | University of Liège, Belgium |
| Sara Tomczyk | Robert Koch Institute, Germany |
| Fabio Tumietto | IRCCS Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria di Bologna |
| John Volckens | Walter Scott Jr. College of Engineering, Colorado State University |
| Andreas Voss | Canisius Wilhelmina Ziekenhuis, Netherlands |
| Walter Zingg | Zurich University, Switzerland |

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| **WHO HQ Secretariat members** |
| Benedetta Allegranzi (IPC technical lead and COVID-19 IPC pillar co-lead)  April Baller (WHE IPC focal point and COVID-19 IPC pillar co-lead)  Adriana Velazquez Berumen  Alessandro Cassini  Ying Lin  Madison Moon  Leandro Pecchia  Alice Simniceanu  Vicky Willet |

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### DISCLAIMER

The opinions represented by the participants are not necessarily the opinions or recommendations of WHO.