

Expanding our understanding of Post COVID-19 condition

Second Webinar

15 June 2021, 13:00–16:00 CET

WHO Executive Board Room, Geneva HQ and Zoom

Meeting background and agenda

Background

As of June 2021, over 170 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and over 3.5 million deaths have been reported to WHO (<https://covid19.who.int/>), although estimates by World Health Statistics greatly surpass these figures (<https://www.who.int/data/gho/publications/world-health-statistics>). The estimate of total persons affected with sequelae after experiencing COVID-19 remains unknown, but published reports identify that about 10% or more COVID-19 patients experience lingering symptoms for weeks/months after acute SARS-CoV-2 infection, identified under the umbrella **Post COVID-19 condition** or related terms. After a successful first WHO webinar held on 9 February 2021 on Post COVID-19 condition, focusing on **recognition** and burden, WHO conducted a Delphi survey to come to a consensus on the clinical case definition of Post COVID-19 condition.

This second WHO webinar will present the consensus clinical case definition from the global Delphi exercise, and then expand on understanding the **mechanisms that may cause Post COVID-19 condition**, and the **care models** to manage it. We all recognize that “**without an established mechanism/s, there will be no COVID-19 new treatments**”.

There are at least **seven mechanisms to be considered**: inflammation/hyperinflammatory state; immune dysregulation/autoimmune; coagulation/vasculopathy; direct viral toxicity/viral perseverance/long-term infection; autonomic dysfunction/neurologic; endocrine/metabolic; and maladaptation of the ACE2 pathway. Likely, many interact synergically. Thus, this global meeting brings together stakeholders to advance the field in solidarity.

Objectives of the meeting

The objectives of this second WHO webinar are to:

1. Present the WHO clinical case definition of Post COVID-19 condition and other global activities to advance our understanding of Post COVID-19 condition.
2. Present up-to-date research on Post COVID-19 condition with a special focus on pathophysiology and care models, and other large observational studies, with presentations

from public health and clinical researchers, patient representatives and key partner organizations.

3. Convene parallel panel sessions to further explore bringing pathophysiology into our clinical understanding of Post COVID-19 condition and on care models, to develop research priorities.

Methods

An inclusive and participatory manner is being adopted in this series of seminars. Participants have been invited via clinical networks, research networks and collaborating centres; and speakers selected to present findings from clinical and laboratory experience, and population studies from systematic literature searches and through our partners. Working groups will be assembled with multidisciplinary panels to delve into pre-specified questions, led by two chairs (one external and one WHO). We are suggesting a lumping of independent mechanisms identified and considered together, for any cross-fertilization during joint working group discussions. Similar to the first WHO webinar in this series, the outcomes of the plenary sessions and working groups will be published as a meeting report and other deliverables. WHO has collected, evaluated and managed conflicts of interests for all speakers and working group panellists.

Agenda

Time (CET)	Topic	Speakers
Plenary session		
13:00–13:10	Welcome remarks	Dr Maria Van Kerkhove COVID-19 Technical Lead, WHO
Part 1: Post COVID-19 condition: scene setting and lessons learned on mechanisms		
13:10–13:20	WHO updates: clinical case definition and more on Post COVID-19 condition	Dr Janet V Diaz Lead, Clinical Management COVID-19, WHO
13:20–13:30	Ten things we can learn from Post COVID-19 condition (Long Covid)	Dr Nisreen Alwan University of Southampton, United Kingdom
13:30–13:40	Immunology and mechanisms: children	Professor Petter Brodin Karolinska Institutet, Sweden
13:40–13:50	90-day persistent symptoms and new complications in SARS-CoV-2 infected children	Anna L Funk, PhD University of Calgary, Canada
13:50–14:00	Higher level and combinations of COVID-19 mechanisms	Professor Maximilian Ackermann Wuppertal, Germany
14:00–14:10	Cohorts from Bangladesh	Dr Reaz Mahmud Dhaka, Bangladesh

14:10–14:20	Cohorts from South Africa	Dr Murray Dryden Johannesburg, South Africa
14:20–14:30	Potential disease mechanisms of Post COVID-19 condition	Professor Akiko Iwasaki Yale University, New Haven, United States of America
14:30–14:40	Funding landscape	Professor Charu Kaushic GLOPID-R Chair, McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada
14:40–14:45	Summary of Part 1 and Q&A	Professor Joan B Soriano Health Care Readiness, WHO
14:45–14:50	Break	

Part 2: Two parallel sessions: small group panels and discussion sessions		
14:50–15:45	Group I: Pathophysiology Chaired by: Dr Manu Shankar-Hari (United Kingdom) Dr Soumya Swaminathan (WHO)	Questions: Are we able to describe the natural history of COVID-19, the recovery period and when it diverts into the Post COVID-19 condition? Are we any closer to understanding the etiology and pathophysiology of Post COVID-19? Have we identified any pathophysiological steps where interventions may be focused on? Research priorities Open forum for questions and answers
14:50–15:45	Group II: Care models Chaired by: Dr Colin Brown (United Kingdom) Mr Antony Duttine (PAHO)	Questions: Care Models in Primary with/without Hospital care? How to succeed in integrated care? Advance secondary or tertiary care needs Case studies for success Research priorities Open forum for questions and answers
Part 3: Wrapping up and Closing remarks		
15:45–15:55	Wrapping up, instructions, calendar	All working group chairs
15:55–16:00	Closing remarks	Dr Michael J Ryan Health Emergencies Programme, WHO

SAVE THE DATE: 15 June 2021 from 1 PM to 4 PM CET in your agendas and register via the link below:

Registration Link:

https://who-e.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_AHMkKpWcReeA9aSgCrsz0g