

Caring for Long Covid-19 patients in primary health care

Dear colleague,

Primary care is under great pressure from patients with Covid-19 and those affected by long COVID. Unfortunately, there is a national and international information gap on long COVID within general practice. Considering long COVID is a global issue, a collaborative study is being undertaken between Belgium (Sciensano) and Malta (University of Malta).

This questionnaire aims to question **your views on long COVID, in order to gain a better understanding of your knowledge, experience and opinion as a GP** on this topic.

Because there is currently no consensus, we have deliberately chosen not to include a definition, diagnostic criteria or time frame for complaints of long COVID in this questionnaire. We would like to ask you to answer from your experience as a GP, as faithfully as possible for you/your practice.

Finally, through this questionnaire we also try to find out whether and how many long COVID patients are followed up/treated in primary care. Based on your answers, we will try to estimate the proportion of long COVID patients in general practice in Malta.

Your participation in this questionnaire is crucial for us to get a better view on long COVID in primary care in Malta.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

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<https://www.sciensano.be/en/network-general-practitioners> (<http://www.sciensano.be/en/network-general-practitioners>)

1. Identification

In which primary care setting do you work in? *

❗ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Health Centers
- ☐ Private clinics
- ☐ Both Health Centers and Private clinics

In which of the following district/s do you practice family medicine? *

❗ Check all that apply

Please choose **all** that apply:

- ☐ Southern Harbour (Cospicua; Fgura; Floriana; Ғal Luqa; Ғaḏ-Ḑabbar; Kalkara; Marsa; Paola; Santa Luċija; Senglea; Ғal Tarxien; Valletta; Vittoriosa; Xgħajra.)
- ☐ Northern Harbour (Birkirkara; Gżira; Ғal Qormi; Ғamrun; Msida; Pembroke; San Ġwann; Santa Venera; St Julian's; Swieqi; Ta' Xbiex; Tal-Pietà; Tas-Sliema)
- ☐ South Eastern (Birżebbuġa; Gudja; Ғal Għaxaq; Ғal Kirkop; Ғal Safi; Marsaskala; Marsaxlokk; Mqabba; Qrendi; Żejtun; Żurrieq.)
- ☐ Western (Ғad-Dingli; Ғal Balzan; Ғal Lija; Ғ'Attard; Ғaḏ-Ḑebbuġ; Iklin; Mdina; Mtarfa; Rabat; Siġġiewi.)
- ☐ Northern (Ғal Għargħur; Mellieħa; Mġarr; Mosta; Naxxar; St Paul's Bay.)
- ☐ Gozo

What is your gender? *

❗ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

What is your age?

❗ Only numbers may be entered in this field.

Please write your answer here:

2. Long COVID

1. Do you feel that you, as a health care provider, have sufficient scientific knowledge regarding long COVID? *

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Yes, absolutely	Yes, moderately	No, not really	No, not at all
regarding diagnosis	☐	☐	☐	☐
regarding treatment	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. Do you think that you, as a health care provider, can find enough reliable information regarding long COVID? *

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Yes, absolutely	Yes, moderately	No, not really	No, not at all
regarding diagnosis	☐	☐	☐	☐
regarding treatment	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. Do you think that there is currently enough scientific research on long COVID? *

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Yes, absolutely	Yes, moderately	No, not really	No, not at all
regarding diagnosis	☐	☐	☐	☐
regarding treatment	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. Do you feel that long COVID patients are currently well followed up within primary health care? *

❗ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes, absolutely
- ☐ Yes, moderately
- ☐ No, not really
- ☐ Not, not at all

If you wish, you can give further explanations below:

Please write your answer here:

5. Do you believe that a multidisciplinary approach is necessary in the follow-up of long COVID patients? *

❗ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes, absolutely
- ☐ Yes, moderately
- ☐ No, not really
- ☐ Not, not at all

6. Do you think that a positive COVID-19 test result (PCR or antigen rapid test) is a minimum requirement when speaking about long COVID complaints/symptoms? *

❗ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes, positive test result must be known
- ☐ No, not required if symptoms
- ☐ No, not required
- ☐ I don't know / no opinion

7. If you/your workplace follows long COVID patient(s), do you feel that the scientific information disseminated on long COVID corresponds to what you experience in practice with your patient(s)? *

❗ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes, absolutely
- ☐ Yes, moderately
- ☐ No, not really
- ☐ No, not at all
- ☐ Not applicable / I don't know

8. Would you suggest a vaccination (booster or first dose) to long COVID patients? *

❗ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes, absolutely
- ☐ Yes, moderately
- ☐ No, not really
- ☐ Not, not at all

9. Do you think that long COVID should be officially recognized as a disease? *

❗ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know / no opinion

10. Do you feel that you, as a health care provider, have enough accessible educational material on long COVID? *

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Yes, absolutely	Yes, moderately	No, not really	No, not at all
regarding diagnosis	☐	☐	☐	☐
regarding treatment	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. Do you think that an awareness-raising campaign about long COVID could be useful for you as a healthcare provider? *

❶ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes, absolutely
- ☐ Yes, moderately
- ☐ No, not really
- ☐ Not, not at all

What should the awareness campaign focus on?

Please write your answer here:

12. Do you think that an awareness-raising campaign about long COVID could be useful for your patients? *

❶ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes, absolutely
- ☐ Yes, moderately
- ☐ No, not really
- ☐ Not, not at all

13. Do you think there is enough media attention (newspapers/social media/etc.) for long COVID?

❗ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes, absolutely
- ☐ Yes, moderately
- ☐ No, not really
- ☐ Not, not at all

14. Have you encountered patients with (symptoms of) long COVID? *

❗ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

14a. How many long COVID patients have you consulted?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was 'Yes' at question '20 [Q14]' (14. Have you encountered patients with (symptoms of) long COVID?)

❗ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ 0 patients
- ☐ 1 patient
- ☐ 2 or 3 patients
- ☐ 4 or 5 patients
- ☐ more than 5 patients
- ☐ more than 10 patients
- ☐ more than 20 patients
- ☐ I don't know

Make a comment on your choice here:

14aa. Can you estimate the total number of long COVID patients with whom you had at least one contact (physical or remote) during the past year?

Please enter your answer here: (round to the nearest hundred)

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was 'Yes' at question '20 [Q14]' (14. Have you encountered patients with (symptoms of) long COVID?)

❗ Only numbers may be entered in this field.

Please write your answer here:

14b. Is the follow-up of these long COVID patient(s) mainly done by you/GP colleagues or mainly by another healthcare provider/institution or multidisciplinary collaboration? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was 'Yes' at question '20 [Q14]' (14. Have you encountered patients with (symptoms of) long COVID?)

❗ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ By myself / GP colleagues
- ☐ By another healthcare provider / healthcare institution
- ☐ By multidisciplinary cooperation

14b1. Which other healthcare provider/institution or multidisciplinary collaboration?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was 'By another healthcare provider / healthcare institution ' or 'By multidisciplinary cooperation' at question '23 [Q14b]' (14b. Is the follow-up of these long COVID patient(s) mainly done by you/GP colleagues or mainly by another healthcare provider/institution or multidisciplinary collaboration?)

❗ Check all that apply

Please choose **all** that apply:

- ☐ Pneumologist
- ☐ Infectiologist
- ☐ Neurologist
- ☐ Physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist
- ☐ Physiotherapists
- ☐ Occupational therapists
- ☐ Psychiatrists / Psychologists / Psychotherapists
- ☐ Dieticians
- ☐ Social workers
- ☐ Hospital rehabilitation centre
- ☐ Other/external rehabilitation centre

☐ Other:

14b2. How frequently do these long COVID patient(s) consult you?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was ' By myself / GP colleagues' or 'By multidisciplinary cooperation' at question '23 [Q14b]' (14b. Is the follow-up of these long COVID patient(s) mainly done by you/GP colleagues or mainly by another healthcare provider/institution or multidisciplinary collaboration?)

❗ Choose one of the following answers

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ 1 time per week / weekly
- ☐ 1 time per fortnight / fortnightly
- ☐ 1 time per month / monthly
- ☐ every few months
- ☐ hardly ever
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ not applicable
- ☐ Other

14c. What complaints/symptoms do these long COVID patient(s) mainly have? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was 'Yes' at question '20 [Q14]' (14. Have you encountered patients with (symptoms of) long COVID?)

❗ Check all that apply

Please choose **all** that apply:

- ☐ (general) fatigue
- ☐ short of breath / difficulty breathing
- ☐ headache
- ☐ concentration and/or memory problems
- ☐ brain fog
- ☐ muscle pain
- ☐ persistent fever
- ☐ sleep problems / sleep disorder
- ☐ limitation in daily functioning
- ☐ depression / depressive feelings
- ☐ fear / anxiety attacks
- ☐ loss or change of sense of smell/taste
- ☐ gastrointestinal complaints
- ☐ hair loss
- ☐ no complaints / no (long-term) symptoms

☐ Other:

15. What criteria (diagnostic, type or duration of complaints/ symptoms, referral by, etc.) do you/your GP colleagues use to consider patients as long COVID patients?

📌 Check all that apply

Please choose **all** that apply:

- ☐ on the basis of diagnostic criteria (by myself)
- ☐ on the basis of diagnostic criteria (by specialist)
- ☐ type or duration of complaints/symptoms: < 4 weeks
- ☐ type or duration of complaints/symptoms: 4 to 12 weeks
- ☐ type or duration of complaints/symptoms: 3 months (>12 weeks) to 5 months
- ☐ type or duration of complaints/symptoms: >= 6 months
- ☐ referral
- ☐ Other:

Further questions or comments can be formulated here.

Please write your answer here:

Thank you for participating in this survey.

Submit your survey.

Thank you for completing this survey.