

Save the Date
What are the challenges faced by COVID-19 high-risk patients and how can we improve their care?
An invitation-only roundtable discussion


24 May, 11:00-12:30
Stanhope Hotel, Brussels

This event will highlight the identified opportunities to achieve optimal care through the launch of Policy Recommendations on COVID-19 Patient Pathways.


These recommendations are the result of a collaborative effort between high-risk patient groups and key stakeholders. Join us to discuss the tangible actions that should be considered by European policymakers and Member States to tackle existing gaps.

The event will be held in person and by invitation only.

[Please register your attendance by clicking here.](#)

With support of 

This event, funded by EFSD, is a non-promotional event, and thus, no specific products will be discussed.



Introduction

Mariano Votta

Director Active Citizenship Network

May 5, 2023 will remain a historic day for the Covid-19 pandemic. On that date, the World Health Organization officially **declared the end of the health emergency** that broke out just over three years earlier, on 11 March 2020, with the declaration of the start of the pandemic.

This of course does not mean that Covid-19 has disappeared nor that its effects should not be handled with the same care as in recent years. **We are here today to reinforce this message, very well highlighted in the pillar of the Policy Recommendations titled “Setting Up A Comprehensive Policy Framework” that will be shortly presented.**

The pandemic has shown us how much damage an uninformed citizen & patient who perpetrates unhealthy behaviour can cause and how much, on the other hand, an informed citizen & patient can make the difference not only to his or her individual health but to public health in general.

The Covid-19 pandemic reminds us how much damage even an uninformed citizen and patient - who perpetrates unhealthy behaviour - can cause and how much, instead, an informed citizen and patient can make a difference not only to their own individual health but to public health in general.

The understanding of what the risks are, especially for some patients with comorbidities, and the awareness of what the benefits of Covid vaccination & therapies are, on the other hand, can help

mitigate the Covid-19 pandemic and other similar events, which cannot be ruled out for the future: hence the need for us to be more prepared and prepared.

To date, several **preventive** (such as vaccines produced with different technologies) and **therapeutic** (such as monoclonal antibodies and antivirals) **strategies** are now available to counter the COVID-19 pandemic, which need to be adequately communicated to the public, defining the precise indications for use, particularly for vulnerable patients and their families/caregivers. **And this is the second message of today's initiative, summarized in the pillar of the Policy Recommendations titled "Public Awareness And Communication on Covid-19 Symptoms and Risks".**

Data from several studies confirm that heart disease, diabetes and chronic renal failure are significantly more frequent and numerically more numerous among COVID-19 patients who died, compared to the general population¹.

Vulnerable individuals have a higher rate of adverse disease outcomes: ascertaining frailty at an early stage is important to identify the most vulnerable patients. In other words, some people have a **greater risk** than others of becoming severely ill with COVID-19, which means they are more likely to:

- ✓ going to hospital
- ✓ being admitted to intensive care
- ✓ needing the ventilator to breathe. In the USA, for instance, experts declare that "Half of the COVID problem is actually COVID, and the other half is VAP Pneumonia and secondary bacterial infections which is preventable if hospitals use proper and advanced secretion management equipment".
- ✓ die

The administration of current **antiviral drugs** is strictly indicated for frail/vulnerable patients at high risk of contracting serious forms of the disease (having neoplasia, renal insufficiency, immunodeficiency, obesity or cardiovascular disease, etc.). Such individuals must be expressly

¹ Pranata R et al, Clinical frailty scale and mortality in COVID-19: A systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis. Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics. 2021; 93:104324

indicated by the doctor, who, having been alerted in good time to the onset of symptoms attributable to COVID-19, will manage the patient appropriately.

Today we have vaccines and specific treatments, but it is essential not only - as already said - the maximum information for patients and their families/caregivers – but also to reinforce a synergy between the general practitioner, the patient and the other specialists treating them. **With the Recommendations we want to also emphasize this aspect, included in the pillar titled “Transformation Of Health Services”.**

It is now time to show in the details the 10 Policy Recommendations, realized with the direct involvement of nine European and national organisations, thank you.