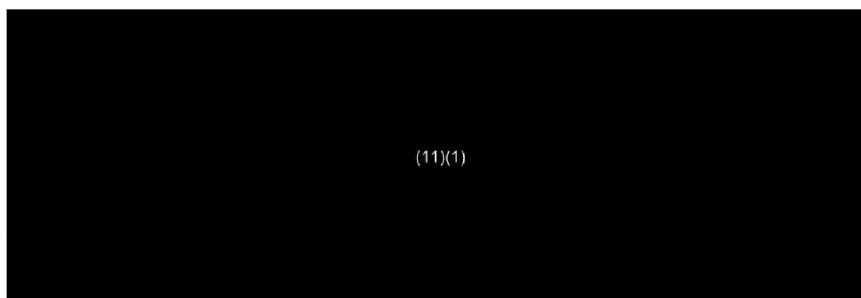


**Written remarks**  
**Director-General for Public Health**  
**On behalf of minister of health Mr. Bruno Bruins**  
**The Netherlands**

Unfortunately we were not able to see or hear you during the videoconference, apparently the system was overloaded. We would therefore like to send the answers to your questions in writing. Before answering your questions, I would like to express some general concerns:

1.



2.

In reaction to your questions, we would like to state the following:

- 1. *Have you already activated your national public health emergency systems? Which actions were most challenging to implement? Would you have any suggestions to improve further cooperation and preparedness for public health emergencies at EU level?***

We have activated the national public health emergency systems. The structure functioned as prepared. There was (and still is) a lack of knowledge and uncertainties around the new corona virus, which made the communication the most challenging element.

We would welcome a conference call amongst the EU public health professionals and the ECDC to discuss technical matters. For example what is the case definition, and what is the definition of the endemic area. Several countries are now trying to get in touch with each other and the ECDC. Technical coordination, to discuss this matter, would be highly appreciated before there is a (next) meeting on political level.

- 2. *What is the current situation of supply of emergency protective equipment (EPE)? How would this change if the number of cases in your country increased? What information can you give about the availability of emergency protective equipment and the possibilities to increase the stock?***

There are no cases of Corona yet in the Netherlands. We are in close contact with health institutions and trade associations about stocks and possible shortcomings. For now, we have received a few reports of shortages of EPE from single health institutions in the Netherlands.

We have no indications for an immediate risk of shortages for the whole country for the short term. Only that there is sometimes some delay in delivering. Of course, this situation could change if Corona reaches the Netherlands.

Trade associations have let us know that manufacturers and suppliers are prioritizing in their deliveries to avoid unnecessary extra stocks. Hospitals get the highest priority. Orders that are unusual higher than normal for that particular hospital, are on occasion being blocked by the supplier to guarantee the supply to other hospitals. Increasing stock is therefore difficult.

We do call for a European approach for communication about the lack usefulness of EPE amongst the general public, to avoid any additional shortcomings for situations where the use of EPE is absolutely necessary. Our Public Health Institute - the RIVM - states that the use of EPE outside the hospital does not add to the prevention of Corona, and should therefore not be used by the general public. It should solely be used by professionals for necessary medical care.

(11)(1)

**3. *In your view, if the public health emergency persists in China, could it have an impact on the access to medicines in EU?***

Although I do not have any concrete signals yet, we have received information that there's indeed a risk for availability of medicines especially when transport is hindered for some time.

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have contact with relevant parties such as umbrella organizations of manufacturers and wholesalers in the Netherlands.

Sincerely,  
Angelique Berg