

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to ask for your views on the format, content and timing of the next scheduled Advisory Forum meeting, and also your views on the need for further extraordinary Advisory Forum meetings on COVID-19 between now and the next scheduled meeting.

As you will be aware, it was originally intended to combine the May meeting of the Advisory Forum with the third ECDC Joint Strategy Meeting (involving Advisory Forum, Management Board, and Competent Body Directors and/or Coordinators), and that as a consequence the Advisory Forum meeting would be limited to one day only. In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have postponed the Joint Strategy Meeting, and will reschedule it once it is clearer as to when the current emergency situation will be over.

We consider that we should still convene a meeting of the Advisory Board in May, or shortly after May, as there are a number of outstanding items that were deferred from the February meeting (due to the need to focus our discussions on COVID-19) and because it is likely that there will still be important COVID-19-related issues on which we would wish to seek your advice, or on which it would be important to exchange information. It is also specified in ECDC's Founding Regulation that the Advisory Forum *"shall meet...not less than four times per year"*.

My specific questions regarding the next scheduled Advisory Forum meeting are as follows:

1. If the current emergency situation still exists at its present level in May 2020, should the next scheduled Advisory Forum meeting be deferred until a later date when the emergency situation is substantially reduced?
2. If the meeting is to be held in May or early June of this year, should the meeting be arranged as face-to-face meeting in Stockholm (subject to travel constraints) or as an audio-conference?
3. Should all, or a large part, of the meeting's agenda be devoted to COVID-19 topics (see next question for potential non-COVID-19 topics)?
4. Should agenda items that have been deferred from the February meeting be dealt with through written procedure, or would they be better discussed in face-to-face or audio-conference meeting? These items include
 - a. ECDC decision making tool for addressing emerging and re-emerging infectious disease threats that are not under EU-wide surveillance
 - b. Results and implications of laboratory capacity assessments: EU LabCap survey
 - c. Evaluations of EU/EEA public health surveillance systems (EPHESUS) for (i) invasive bacterial diseases, (ii) diphtheria, (iii) tuberculosis
 - d. Composition of the Advisory Forum Preparatory Group

In addition to the questions about the next scheduled Advisory Forum, I would also like to seek your views on the possibility of holding further extraordinary meetings to discuss COVID-19 topics. Given the work pressures that everyone is experiencing, and the relatively low participation rate in the most recent extraordinary Advisory Forum meeting, I would be grateful for your answers to the following:

1. What criteria do you consider appropriate for convening further extraordinary meetings on COVID-19?
 - a. A significant change in the emergency situation (e.g. wide scale overwhelming of healthcare systems, reversal of current upwards trend in EU cases and deaths, new scientific evidence on transmission, control or prevention)
 - b. To discuss new ECDC risk assessments or guidance
 - c. To exchange information and experience on a defined regular basis
 - d. Other

I hope that you can find time to answer these questions, which only require short responses, so that we can plan Advisory Forum meetings to best suit your needs as well as those of ECDC.

Please respond with your answers to the questions above to ECDC Corporate Governance Secretariat

(10)(2e) [@ecdc.europa.eu](mailto:(10)(2e)@ecdc.europa.eu).

Best regards,

(10)(2e)



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