

Minutes TC 4VITAL 01-04-2020

Present: 5.1.2e

Midterm review preparation: Impact of COVID pandemic on 4VITAL

5.1.2e works day and night on the management of the COVID-19 outbreak. This pandemic leaves little room for her to work on the VITAL project. 5.1.2e has been so kind to take over 5.1.2e responsibilities with regard to VITAL where possible. 5.1.2e mentions he is very short on time as well, due to the pandemic. The qualitative review proceeds according plan up till now, although it is unsure whether this can be maintained throughout this pandemic.

Regarding the interview study among healthcare professionals we may encounter the following problems:

- Interviews with HCPs may need to be conducted by phone if face-to-face is not possible
- HCPs are overburdened due to the pandemic and may not be available for us to interview until after the peak of this pandemic.
- Meetings of ethical committees are suspended in both Italy and Hungary
 - o Mitigation: leaving out the question on vaccination status of the HCP (interviewee) will save time in both Italy and Hungary in the process for ethical clearing. Due to the COVID-19 and the delays that will cause in the process of ethical clearing and conduction of the study, it was decided to leave out the question on the vaccination status of the HCP being interviewed.

Update study documents HCP study

1) Review network analysis questionnaire before the 8th of April

This was feasible for everyone attending the TC

2) Topic list

a) Include vaccination status HCP?

An advantage of including the vaccination status of the HCPs would be the ability to identify whether unvaccinated HCPs may have different training needs compared to vaccinated HCPs. One might expect that HCPs make a deliberate decision with regard to vaccinating themselves, so if they decide not to accept a vaccination, they may also provide less information to their older patients. However, as mentioned above, due to the extra time needed for ethical clearance for both Hungary and Italy when the question on vaccination status is included, it was decided to leave it out. More so because the COVID-19 will cause extra delay in the process of ethical clearance.

b) Finalize the document

- It was suggested to use vaccine against COVID-19 for the case description. Hence we can adapt the study to the actuality, especially as the disease target especially the elderly and vulnerable population. A problem with this idea, however, is that as the vaccine doesn't exist yet, there is no information on side-effects of the vaccine, number of doses needed to administer, etc. The conclusion was to keep herpes zoster the focus of the case study. Beyond that, it was supported to add some extra questions on COVID-19 at the end of the interview/questionnaire because the VITAL project wants to be innovative. An example of such a question could be 'Did COVID-19 change your perspective with regard to vaccinations for older adults and elderly? If yes, please explain how your perspective changed'. Moreover, we need to keep in mind that this pandemic is on the forefront of everyone's mind, which may in turn, influence the answers of the HCPs regarding vaccinating older adults and elderly.

- Everyone agreed with the questions suggested by 5.1.2e
- The table in the document of the topic list shows the HCPs per country involved and/or asked for information on vaccines. For each country it was discussed which HCPs were most important in giving information on vaccines. It was concluded that the HCPs in the upper rows were most important, whereas those in the lower rows were less important in providing information on vaccines to older adults and elderly. France also added to this that the vaccination centers are usually only for travel vaccinations.

3) Planning ethical clearance

Most of the study documents (information letter, informed consent, research protocol) have already been finalized and were sent (see the e-mail containing today's agenda for the TC). The topic list and the questionnaire on the networking analysis will be finished as soon as possible. After 5.1.2e vacation (9th of April), an update will be sent to inform you when these last two documents will be ready to send.

AOB

- It was suggested to not only ask HCPs whether they think they have a role in informing patients on vaccinations, but to add 'if not your role, who do you feel should provide information on vaccines?'
- It was asked if HCPs will also receive information on what kind of questions (topics) they can expect in the interview. This will probably be covered in the invitation letter.
- The interviews with HCPs will be individual interviews (not focus groups)
- The online questionnaire also needs to be translated in the languages of the study countries.