

Statement of the ERN Board of Member States on the COVID-19 Communication Support System

(adopted on 31 March 2020)

As Member States in the European Union face a rapid evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ERN Board of Member States calls for strengthened cooperation and a renewed commitment to the set of operating principles that are shared by health systems throughout the Union, notably universality, access to good quality care, equity and solidarity^[1].

The European Commission has set up the COVID-19 Communication Support System (COVID-19 CMSS) to help healthcare professionals to exchange knowledge and experience in treating COVID-19 patients, based on the experience and knowledge generation gained with the ERN system.

Knowledge on COVID-19 is still scattered across the individual countries and the EU can provide significant added value by connecting the dots, bringing expertise together, and that is exactly the essence of the ERNs initiative.

The COVID-19 CMSS Web Conferencing system is aiming to allow clinicians to communicate easily with any other colleagues across the EU and EEA to exchange knowledge and to discuss cases. The System consists of a database of treating clinicians (the COVID19 Clinicians Network), a central helpdesk, a WebEx communication tool and a simple and easy procedure for Web conferences and Webinars following the request of any of the hospitals identified as reference centres across the EU. The establishment of the system, with start of operations on the 23 March 2020, has been communicated to the competent National authorities represented in the Health Security Committee of the EU.

The ERN Board of Member States fully supports the COVID-19 CMSS initiative, and the Board members are fully committed to making the initiative known and in assisting, as appropriate, in the implementation in their respective countries.

^[1] Council Conclusions on Common values and principles in European Union Health Systems (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2006:146:0001:0003:EN:PDF>)