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“Long Covid” and access to the right to health

Motion for a resolution

tabled by the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

“Long Covid” is a condition characterised by diverse and often debilitating symptoms that can last for months after SARS-CoV-2 infection. Common symptoms include fatigue, shortness of breath and cognitive dysfunction. The mechanisms involved affect multiple systems and include persisting inflammation, thrombosis, and autoimmune responses. Studies show that women, healthcare workers, the middle-aged, individuals with underlying health conditions, and those who are unvaccinated are at greater risk of developing long Covid.

Research so far indicates that about 10-20% of adults infected by the virus (and up to 30-50% of the unvaccinated infected) will have persistent symptoms, and many have been left unable to perform their everyday activities. Moreover, many patients are likely suffering in silence, unsure that their symptoms are connected to their Covid-19 infection. A large new pool of chronic disease sufferers means lives and families destroyed, people out of work and an enormous pull on our economies and healthcare systems. The introduction of unified treatment guidelines and the use of screening programmes could give a better understanding of how many people are affected by the condition and the kind of support they would need, and how this support can best be provided.

The Parliamentary Assembly should thus further study recommendations made by the World Health Organization (WHO) and other experts to provide guidance on necessary policy responses, taking into account the complexity of long Covid, to ensure that the right to health is upheld. Governments must make this a public health priority and urgently allocate the necessary resources for research on the condition and treatment of persons suffering with post Covid-19 symptoms in line with the relevant legal standards, building on [Resolution 2373 \(2021\)](#) on “Discrimination against persons dealing with chronic and long term illnesses”, so that sufferers are given the support they need.

