



British Embassy
The Hague



Wilton Park

Provisional programme

Learning key lessons on COVID: a UK/Netherlands discussion on health

Tuesday 22 February 2022 | WP2029V

1200-1515 GMT / 1300-1615 CET

To be held online

Context and key policy issues

COVID-19 has posed a range of short and long-term impacts to health systems in countries around the world. This Wilton Park event seeks to bring together key stakeholders from the UK and the Netherlands to build on the strength of ongoing bilateral relations to forge a key partnership for cooperation on COVID-19 response, with particular emphasis on shared learning in the health space. Both countries are committed to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the concept of Building Back Better, the strategy aimed at reducing the risk to the people of nations and communities in the wake of future disasters and shocks: nowhere more needed than in the international response to the aftermaths of COVID-19.

While Covid-19 is a global pandemic, no one country or region is alike and there are limitations to the applicability of experiences from one country to another. But the Netherlands and the UK have similar problems, good science and education links and the opportunities to work closely together on progressing an impactful response. Important engagement between the two countries already exists: one example is the International Joint Comparators Unit (ICJU), established in April 2020 to maximise UK learning from others. A joint FCDO/Cabinet Office team, the unit uses international data, including from the FCDO's overseas network, to provide timely, relevant and objective analysis of different countries' responses to the crisis. The Netherlands is a key contributor to the unit.

The actual COVID19-pandemic has shown that multilateral and international cooperation is more needed than ever. In 2015 the UK and Dutch governments committed to achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, also known as the 'Global Goals'), aimed at improving peace, prosperity, access to healthcare and education and tackle climate change worldwide. Each country signed up to a deadline of 2030 to achieve the SDGs.

Goal and objectives

This dialogue seeks to build co-operation between relevant government and non-government stakeholders in the UK and the Netherlands.

It aims at the following specific objectives:

- To raise awareness of the ongoing post-COVID threat posed to the health sectors
- To facilitate the exchange of best practice around pursuing partnership opportunities while managing associated risk

- To identify and discuss emergent threats and opportunities and define effective approaches to cross-sector collaboration
- To strengthen the links and engagement between the relevant UK and Netherlands government and non-government stakeholders
- To support the development and dissemination of shared support, advice and guidance

In association with the British Embassy in the Hague

(Speakers invited and themes proposed * denotes confirmed)

Tuesday 22 February

**1150-1200 UK/
1250-1300 CET**

Participants join

**1200-1220 UK/
1300-1320 CET**

Welcome and introduction

***Nick Linfield**

Programme Director and Head of Policy, Wilton Park

***Joanna Roper**

British Ambassador to the Netherlands and UK Permanent Representative to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

***Karel van Oosterom**

Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

**1220-1300 UK/
1320-1400 CET**

1. Vaccines and variants

This session will focus on experiences and lessons learned from each country, including vaccine rollout and response to variants. What lessons have been learnt for future resilience to pandemics. How can cooperation between countries help to build this resilience and threat mitigation as we transition out of the pandemic?

***Jaap van Dissel**

Director of the Center for Infectious Disease Control of the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment

***Neil Ferguson**

Director of the MRC Centre for Global Infectious Disease Analysis and Vice-Dean in Faculty of Medicine at Imperial College

**1300-1345 UK/
1400-1445 CET**

2. Winter planning and infrastructure

This session will focus on experiences and insights from each country. What changes to winter planning and health infrastructure have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic and what further changes need to take place to build resilience and threat mitigation for similar future scenarios? How might cooperation between the UK and the Netherlands help to progress these approaches?

Jaap Van Delden

Deputy Director General, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, The Netherlands

***Carole Mundell**

Head of Science Council at University of Bath and former Chief Scientific Adviser at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office

***Marion Koopmans**

Head of the department of viroscience (OMT), Erasmus University Medical Center

1345-1355 UK/
1445-1455 CET

1355-1430 UK /
1455-1530 CET

1430-1445 UK/
1530-1545 CET

1445-1515 UK/
1545-1615 CET

Break

3. Breakout session – mutually supporting the Building Back Better initiative in relation to healthcare

This session will involve two breakout groups that will consider the following key questions:

- i. How are we prepared for a new global pandemic after Covid-19?
- ii. How close are we to covid becoming an endemic issue and what will that look like?

Group 1 Facilitator

*Michael Marmot

Director, UCL Institute of Health Equity

Group 2 Facilitator

*Will Jennings

Professor of Political Science and Public Policy and Associate Dean in Research and Enterprise at the University of Southampton

4. Report back from breakout groups

Brief feedback from breakout groups. What are the next steps to take this agenda further forward?

5. Conclusions and next steps

Summary of the discussions.

*Jennifer Dixon

Chief Executive Officer, The Health Foundation

*Andre Knottnerus

Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), Maastricht University

This is a preview programme and as such may be subject to change.

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