

Title: Invitation to participate in an ERS study aiming to improve the quality of clinical trials evaluating the management of COPD exacerbations.

Dear colleagues,

Clinical trials evaluating the management of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) exacerbations evaluate heterogeneous outcomes (endpoints), often omitting those that are clinically important and relevant to patients. This limits their usability and comparability.

To remedy this issue, the European Respiratory Society (ERS) set-up a Task Force aiming to develop a core outcome set (COS). A COS is a consensus-based minimum set of clinically important outcomes that should be evaluated in all future clinical trials on the management of COPD exacerbations.

We have identified around 50 outcomes of COPD exacerbations and we need your help to prioritize a small number of the most important outcomes, to be included in the core outcome set and to be evaluated in all future clinical trials on the management of COPD exacerbations. To help us prioritize the outcomes, we will be grateful if you could complete a survey that has two stages, 4-8 weeks apart. Each survey takes about 20 minutes to complete.

In the first survey, you will be asked to rate the importance of 50 outcomes between 1-9:

- 1-3: Outcomes of limited importance.
- 4-6: Outcomes that are important but not critical.
- 7-9: Critical outcomes.

We welcome responses from health professionals, researchers, patients with COPD and any other stakeholders with interest in COPD exacerbations.

In the second survey, you will see a graph summarizing the responses of all participants in the first survey and you will be asked to reconsider your ratings, taking into consideration the views of the other responders. While the aim of this survey will be to reach consensus, you will not have to change your ratings if you do not want to.

Your opinion in both surveys is extremely important in developing the core outcome set.

It is crucial that you complete both surveys and we would be very grateful if you can do this.

Please, take the survey in one of the following languages:

English: <https://delphimanager.liv.ac.uk/COPD/>

Danish: <https://delphimanager.liv.ac.uk/COPD-DK/>

German: <https://delphimanager.liv.ac.uk/COPD-DE/>

Greek: <https://delphimanager.liv.ac.uk/COPD-GR/>

Hungarian: <https://delphimanager.liv.ac.uk/COPD-HU/>

Italian: <https://delphimanager.liv.ac.uk/COPD-IT/>

Mandarin: <https://delphimanager.liv.ac.uk/COPD-CN/>

Portuguese: <https://delphimanager.liv.ac.uk/COPD-PT/>

Russian: <https://delphimanager.liv.ac.uk/COPD-RU/>

Spanish: <https://delphimanager.liv.ac.uk/COPD-ES/>

We appreciate this is a difficult time for patients and professionals in the respiratory community. While all efforts should rightly be focused on caring for those affected by the novel coronavirus and COVID-19, we believe that research to improve care and outcomes for respiratory patients is needed now more than ever. We are sensitive to the enormous pressures faced by patients and professionals in our community and will review the timelines for this survey and subsequent work in response to the ongoing global pandemic.

Thank you very much in advance,

Kind regards,

Associate Prof. Jens-Ulrik Jensen,

Dr. Alexander Mathioudakis,

Prof. Jørgen Vestbo,

On behalf of the study team.