

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-005794/20
to the Commission
Salvatore De Meo (PPE)
(26 October 2020)**

Subject: Review of care home procedures

To date, more than 6 million people throughout the European Union have been infected by COVID-19, with around 210 000 deaths.

Facilities for the elderly and for persons with disabilities have been, and all too often still are, breeding grounds for the virus, endangering the lives of the guests and of the health workers themselves.

Data from care homes for the elderly and people with disabilities need to be examined in order to understand whether there were any problems with reception and care procedures, and what those problems were, in order to avoid further loss of life during the 'second wave' of COVID-19.

The fact that there have been cases of COVID-19 infection in these care homes shows that EU coordination is required in order to identify uniform procedures to make care homes for the elderly and people with disabilities safer.

In view of the above:

1. Can the Commission say whether the statistical data on infections recorded in care homes for the elderly and people with disabilities in all Member States are being studied and analysed?
2. Would the Commission not consider it appropriate to launch a plan to review and harmonise procedures relating to the reception and care of the elderly and persons with disabilities, in order to ensure safer conditions for them during the COVID-19 health emergency?

**Answer given by Mr Schmit on behalf of the European Commission
(15 January 2021)**

1. The Commission, together with the Social Protection Committee, is currently preparing a report on long-term care in the EU. The report will also cover the impact of COVID-19 on long-term care systems and Member States' policy responses, through analysing the available data and gathering additional evidence from Member States. The report will be published by mid-2021.
2. The Commission is supporting Member States in their efforts to protect those most vulnerable to COVID-19, including older people and persons with disabilities living in long-term care facilities. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) published guidance on the prevention and control of infections and preparedness for COVID-19 in healthcare settings, including long-term care facilities ⁽¹⁾, as well as guidance regarding surveillance of COVID-19 in long-term care facilities ⁽²⁾.

In the context of the upcoming Action Plan on the Implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the forthcoming Strategy on the rights of persons with disabilities and the upcoming Green Paper on Ageing, discussions are ongoing on the way to best implement the Pillar principles on long-term care and disability, to improve access to and quality of long-term care, as well as social support services in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

⁽¹⁾ https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Infection-prevention-control-for-the-care-of-patients-with-2019-nCoV-healthcare-settings_update-31-March-2020.pdf

⁽²⁾ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/surveillance-COVID-19-long-term-care-facilities-EU-EEA>