

IDENTIFICATION OF METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND INDICATORS OF DIRECT IMPACT OF COVID-19

The PHIRI ([Population Health Information Research Infrastructure](#)) project aims to provide a synthesis of the evidence assessing methodological issues and indicators of direct impact of COVID-19 on population morbidity and mortality.

Several practical considerations for developing and choosing health indicators were taken in Europe during the COVID-19 crisis. Therefore, it is vital to understand the methodological issues to assess how comparable, solid and consistent are the existing health indicators to measure the direct impact of COVID-19 in health promotion, prevention and care. For instance, it is difficult to compare numbers of cases between countries because of the vast differences in testing policies. Additionally, there is a gap in summarising indicators to measure the direct impact of COVID-19 used in the general population such as severe cases needing hospitalisation across studies and countries

Process:

A scoping literature review is being generated on published articles to identify indicators of direct impact of COVID-19. Calculation, data sources and use limitations will be described in a future paper. Since October 2021 a protocol is available at [Open Science Framework](#). The task has been conducted through 3 stages:

Stage 1:

A search strategy has been launched identifying **4153 records** from PubMed, EMBASE and WHO COVID-19 databases (November 2021). The Spanish leading team has trained **13 researchers** from 10 PHIRI partner institutions across Europe in using an online tool to deal with the selection of scientific articles for literature reviews ([Ryvan](#)). By January 2022, **3891** titles and abstracts were **screened** in a peer-review process.

Stage 2:

European researchers from PHIRI participating institutions reviewed **720 articles in full** potentially containing health indicators of direct impact of COVID-19. Of them, **433 matched** the inclusion criteria for retrieving information regarding health indicators of direct impact.

Stage 3:

The extraction of health indicators for the selected papers has been concluded (May 2022). That information has been retrieved from a random

sample of 66 papers out of 433 (15%). Two hundred thirty three (233) health indicators will contribute to describe how the direct impact of COVID-19 has been measured.

Planned activities:

- Assessment of retrieved indicators (June 2022)
- Dissemination
 - [XL Annual Scientific Meeting of the Spanish Society of Epidemiology](#) (San Sebastián, Spain; Sep 2022)
 - [15th European Public Health Conference](#) (Berlin, Germany; Nov 2022) – Workshop “Summarising research evidence related to COVID-19 impact on the findings”
 - [ESCAIDE Conference](#) (Stockholm, Sweden; Nov 2022)
- Paper and final report: Draft (June 2022)
- Submission for publication (July 2022)

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