TOOLKIT GUIDE Rapid responses in the context of COVID-19: Accelerated guidelines method

Validated by the HAS Board on 30 March 2020

In the context of the current stage-3 epidemic situation with respect to COVID-19 in France, it is necessary to propose a method for the elaboration of rapid responses to questions raised by the Ministry of Solidarity and Health, healthcare professionals and/or accredited healthcare system user associations stating the position of the HAS in the event of urgent situations.

A 7-step simplified process that favours cooperation between the HAS and experts (healthcare professionals, accredited healthcare system user associations), the restrictive selection of conclusive data and the use of digital communication methods.

A short, specific publication format, which can be quickly updated (new data).

Drafting method for "Rapid responses in the context of COVID-19"

- Source of requests:
  - Consultation by the Ministry of Solidarity and Health, healthcare professionals (French National Councils for Healthcare Professionals (CNPs), learned societies), accredited healthcare system user associations, in accordance with article L. 1114-1 of the French Public Health Code
  Creation of a dedicated email address: reponse.covid19@has-sante.fr to receive these requests.
  - HAS self-referral

Step 1: selection of requests and definition of questions requiring a rapid response (scoping)
- Who:
  - Chairman of the HAS Board

Step 2: data selection and analysis
- Who:
  - HAS teams (guidelines developers, librarians)
  - In liaison with experts proposed by CNPs and French learned societies

- Data selection:
  - **Restriction to best levels of evidence and in decreasing order:**
    - HCSP (French National Council for Public Health) and French health agency recommendations

- Recommendations of the French learned societies concerned
- International data: WHO guidelines
- International health agency recommendations (NICE, INESS, SIGN, etc.)
- Literature reviews
- 2019 and 2020 recent scientific literature with rapid critical review
- **Priority given to data presentation in summary table form**

Step 3: drafting of provisional "rapid responses"

- Who:
  - Small working group (HAS teams, experts proposed by CNPs, French learned societies concerned and patient associations).
  - With possibility of international expert participation.
- Methods:
  - Favour meetings over a short period (e.g.: 2 meetings over 5 days) via electronic methods (emails, telephone or video conference)

Step 4: review and consultation / information of stakeholders

- Who:
  - Healthcare professionals: CNPs, French learned societies and patient associations concerned, French college of general medicine (CMG), etc.
  - Institutional: Directorate-General for Health (DGS), Directorate-General for Healthcare Provision (DGOS), French national health insurance fund (CNAM), French National Council for Public Health (HCSP), etc.
- Methods:
  - Favour e-consultation with a short response time.

Step 5: finalising of "rapid responses"

- Who:
  - Small working group (designated HAS teams and experts proposed by CNPs, French learned societies and associations concerned).
  - With possibility of inviting international experts.
- Methods:
  - Favour e-consultation with a short response time.

Step 6: validation and publication

- Who:
  - Accelerated validation by the Bureau of the HAS Healthcare Management Committee (CRPPI) and the HAS Board.
- Methods:
  - Short, specific format.
  - Incorporation of a warning.
    - "These recommendations, drafted on the basis of available knowledge on the date of publication of this opinion, are liable to evolve on the basis of new data."
    - Updating in view of new available data possible.
  - COI managment: The experts' interests are examined by the HAS ethics officer, in liaison with the Legal Department, on the basis of the information available in the French databases (DPI-santé; Transparence Santé) and are transmitted to the members of the HAS Board for information purposes

- Possibility of the joint presence of the HAS logo and the logos of the participating CNPs, learned societies and associations.
- Publication on the HAS websites and on the websites of the learned societies and associations concerned.

Step 7: updates

– Monitoring of data and new knowledge related to COVID-19:
  - Literature monitoring performed by the HAS departments.
  - Monitoring conducted by experts (CNPs, learned societies and associations involved).
– Methods:
  - Assessment of the need to update the "Rapid response" to be scheduled at least weekly initially and on the basis of the new data available.

Format adopted for "Rapid responses in the context of COVID-19"

Short format (favour 3/4 pages), items (to be adapted as necessary)

1. **Key points of rapid responses**
2. **Context**
3. **Questions covered**
4. **Resources/useful links**
5. **Bibliographic references**
6. **Drafting method and warning**

Drafting method and warning

The method used for this rapid response is based on a summary of the most relevant available conclusive data, national and international guidelines and the consultation of experts and stakeholders (by e-consultation, date).

This document was jointly drafted by the Haute Autorité de santé (French National Authority for Health) and experts proposed by the following National Councils of healthcare professionals (CNPs), learned societies and associations, with a list of participants: HAS, experts (CNPs, learned societies and associations)

Validation by the HAS Board on: Day/Month/Year

These rapid responses drafted on the basis of available knowledge on the date of publication are liable to evolve on the basis of new data.

This accelerated guideline method in the context of COVID19 was elaborated by Sophie Blanchard-Musset, Ph.D., Project Manager, and Pierre Gabach, M.D., Deputy Director at the Division of Healthcare Quality and Safety Improvement, Head of the Clinical practice Guidelines Department.