# Evidence Synthesis Ireland Fellowship Scheme
# Review Identification Form

**Review Centre/Group Mentor**

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| Karen Cardwell, Senior HTA Analyst, Health Information and Quality Authority. |

**Review title**

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| What is the evidence on the effectiveness of **non pharmacological interventions** aimed at the management and treatment of long COVID? |

**Review type and methods**

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| Systematic review of clinical effectiveness |

**Review information**

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| The Health Service Executive requested this review and the end users will be medical professionals. The review will be supported by HIQA's COVID-19 Expert Advisory Group, which includes a wide range of clinical experts and patient representatives. |

**Review details**

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| The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) define long COVID as signs and symptoms of COVID-19 that continue or develop after the acute phase of the disease. It includes both ongoing symptomatic COVID-19 (from 4 to 12 weeks) and post-COVID-19 syndrome (12 weeks or more). Long COVID is known by several names (for example, post-acute COVID-19, post-acute sequelae of SARS CoV-2 infection, long-term effects of COVID, and chronic COVID). This research question for this review is the fourth research question in a programme of work currently being undertaken by the HIQA COVID-19 Evidence Synthesis Team. The other research questions being undertaken are:<br>• Research question 1: What clinical guidelines and or models of care are currently available for the diagnosis and management of long COVID internationally? (protocol)<br>• Research question 2: What is the epidemiology and clinical burden of long COVID internationally?<br>• Research question 3: Among those who have had a SARS-CoV-2 infection, what are the associations between risk/mitigation factors and development of long COVID? |

The aim of this fourth research question is to undertake an international review of **non-pharmacological interventions** to manage and treat long COVID and determine the effectiveness of those interventions.

The research question will be formulated using the PICOS (population, intervention, comparator, study design) framework; the current draft version is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: PICO for research question 4**

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| **Population(s)** | Individuals of any age:<br>▪ with a history of probable or confirmed SARS-CoV-2<br>▪ and meet the criteria for long COVID (as defined in the NICE guidelines*). |
| **Intervention(s)** | Any non pharmacological interventions delivered at an individual-level aimed at the management or treatment of long COVID. |
| **Comparator(s)** | Placebo, no intervention or head-to-head comparison with alternative included intervention(s). |
| **Outcome(s)** | Primary outcome is reduction in long COVID symptoms, such as:<br>▪ cough<br>▪ fatigue<br>▪ breathlessness<br>▪ muscle and joint pain<br>▪ sleep problems<br>▪ loss of smell or taste<br>▪ low mood and depression<br>▪ anxiety<br>▪ brain fog<br>Secondary outcomes are safety outcomes such as serious adverse events. |
| **Study design(s)** | The following studies will be included:<br>▪ randomised controlled trials (RCTs), non-RCTs and cohort studies using population-based registries or data<br>▪ systematic reviews and meta-analyses will be screened for eligible studies<br><br>The following studies will be excluded:<br>▪ ongoing trials without published results<br>▪ trials that did not reach any study endpoint<br>▪ other observational studies such as case-control, case series and cross-sectional studies. |

*Long COVID is commonly used to describe signs and symptoms that continue or develop after acute COVID-19. It includes both ongoing symptomatic COVID-19 (from 4 to 12 weeks) and post-COVID-19 syndrome (12 weeks or more).

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, Ireland may face significant challenges with managing potentially larger numbers of individuals with long COVID. This review will inform decision-making in Ireland regarding the management and treatment of long COVID.

**Review current status**

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| This review has not started yet. |

**Specific/desirable requirements for Fellow**

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| Familiarity with reading and appraising clinical literature would be desirable. |

**Estimated start and completion dates**

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| It is estimated that this review will take 15 weeks, starting the week commencing 5 December 2022 and finishing the week commencing 27 March 2023. |