Why assess the performance of primary care?

- Strong primary care can contribute to **strengthening the overall health system’s performance** by providing affordable and accessible care; coordinating care; and by reducing avoidable hospital admissions.
- Given the complexity of primary care, measuring its performance is a challenge involving reflections, such as: who has access to primary care services? How are providers of primary care organised? How are resources managed in the system? A sound methodology helps address these elements as **interrelated components** and leads to unprecedented results benefitting all actors of primary care.

How to assess the performance of primary care?

- Based on the main characteristics of primary care, the expert panel proposes a performance assessment model based on **specific indicators**. The panel identified **10 dimensions** for each of which it proposed **comparative key-indicators and descriptive indicators**. To guarantee that they can be applied to each health system, these indicators need to be **coherent** and follow the same criteria.

---

**DIMENSIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are the main characteristics of PRIMARY CARE?</th>
<th>Example of questions HELPING assess primary care PERFORMANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary care is <strong>universal</strong> and <strong>accessible</strong> to everyone</td>
<td>How many people are <strong>insured</strong> for primary care costs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary care relies on <strong>integrated care models</strong></td>
<td>Do <strong>GPs</strong> carry out <strong>health promotion</strong>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The <strong>patient</strong> is at the <strong>centre</strong> of primary care (person-centeredness)</td>
<td>Do patients <strong>trust</strong> their <strong>nurse</strong> or <strong>GP</strong>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary care is an <strong>integral</strong> part of the community and provides <strong>comprehensive</strong> services</td>
<td>Is <strong>palliative care</strong> at home organised?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary care is delivered by a <strong>team</strong> of professionals <strong>qualified</strong> to address a majority of personal <strong>health needs</strong></td>
<td>How many patients over 60 are <strong>vaccinated</strong> against the <strong>flu</strong>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What next?

- This model can help monitor the achievement of a health system and serve to identify opportunities for improvement.
- The opinion will feed in the report on tools and methodologies to assess the performance of primary care of the Member-States-led Expert Group on Health Systems Performance Assessment later in 2018.

The expert panel also encourages the development of a coherent performance assessment of primary care through:

- The voluntary cooperation between Member States in the exchange of best practice.
- The development of proper incentives boosting professionals: it is the primary care workforce that guarantees the success of primary care.
- The collection of patient-centred data: through new technologies that allow collecting information about quality of life, patients’ experiences and outcomes, data can systematically be collected directly from users.

---

**About the Expert Panel on Effective Ways of Investing in Health**

The Expert Panel’s mission is to provide sound and independent advice in the form of opinions in response to questions (mandates) submitted by the Commission on matters related to health care. The opinions of the Expert Panel present the views of the independent scientists who are members of the Expert Panel. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission.

**For more information and to read the opinions in full:**
https://ec.europa.eu/health/expert_panel/home_en