

## APPENDIX 3. Focus group schedules

### 3.1 Focus group schedule for people with multiple chronic conditions

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#### Opening

Tell me something about how you developed your conditions

(2 minutes each)

#### Task 1

*In the next 5 minutes I would like you to rank these aspects in order of priority (only the 5 most important). You can also add your own.*

*Following that we will discuss your rankings in the group. (The moderator will write the most common aspects on the whiteboard)*

**What is something in your daily life that is impacted by multimorbidity?**

- Physical functioning
- Energy level
- Sleep
- Fatigue
- Housework
- Emotional state
- Social relationships
- Leisure activities
- Motivation
- Finances

## **Follow-up question**

What were the things you used to do that you cannot not do anymore?

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

We know that it can be difficult to follow the recommendations for managing your conditions. Can you share some of your personal experiences in relation to complying with health recommendations?

Break and summary

## **Task 2**

Same instructions as in Task 1

**What kind of support would you like to have access to in order for you to better manage your conditions?**

- Information about your conditions
- Financial support
- Emotional support
- Managing medication
- Skills training
- Transport
- Psychological support
- Longer appointments
- Co-ordinated appointments
- Access to training facilities

## **Follow-up questions**

Is there anything in your life that you wish would be different?

If so, what would have to happen to make your life improve?

Break and summary

**We know that being physically active is a challenge for people who live with chronic conditions. Can you share your experiences of engaging in physical activity? What activities help you stay physically active? (Walking, Cycling, Swimming, Dancing, Exercising in the gym)**

### **Task 3**

*Instructions and procedure as before*

#### **a) What helps you be physically active?**

- Reminders
- Establishing a routine
- Doing something you enjoy (sport/dancing/gardening)
- Working out at home
- Good training facilities
- Exercising in a group
- Exercising with a partner
- Support from your family
- Environment
- Proximity of gym

#### **b) What are some of the barriers to being physically active?**

- Pain
- Fatigue
- Need help from others
- Practical difficulties (getting dressed)
- Interruptions during training
- Fear of injury
- Insufficient time
- Lack of self-motivation
- Lack of encouragement, support or companionship
- No parks, sidewalks, bicycle trails in the vicinity

## **Closing questions**

**We are developing a novel intervention for people who live with multiple chronic conditions. This intervention will consist of an exercise program and a self-management and education component. What would be your best advice for us?**

**Is there anything else that you would like to add?**

## **3.2 Focus group schedule for healthcare professionals**

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### **Opening question**

**Tell us something about your experiences of treating people who live with multiple chronic conditions (5 minutes)**

### *Group discussion*

**What is the most important priority for you in your consultations?**

**How do you ensure that the care you provide is individualized and tailored to your patients' needs?**

**How do you involve patients and their family caregivers in making treatment decisions?**

**What is your opinion regarding care coordination and continuity of care in the context of multimorbidity?**

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Promotion of physical activity in people living with multiple chronic conditions is extensively supported in the literature however there are significant challenges in implementing exercise recommendations in this population. Some healthcare professionals believe exercise is not a priority. What do you think about that?

### **Task**

*In the next 10 minutes I would like you to identify three facilitators and three barriers related to implementing exercise guidelines for people with multiple chronic conditions. After you have identified them please rank them in order of priority.*

Discuss the barriers, facilitators and rankings with the group. (The moderator will write the most common barriers and facilitators on the whiteboard).

### **Closing questions**

We are developing a novel intervention for people who live with multiple chronic conditions. This intervention will consist of an exercise program

and a self-management and education component. What would be your best advice for us?

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

### **3.3 Focus group schedule for partners and caregivers of people living with MCCs**

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#### **Opening question**

What is your relationship with the person who lives with MCCs?

#### *Group discussion*

Tell us a bit about your personal experiences of supporting your partners in adhering to health recommendations.

Among health advice for people living with multiple chronic conditions, we know exercise is one thing that many people with struggle with. Some can perceive it as a burden.

Did you experience exercise as something that created distance between you and your partner or as something that brought you closer together?

#### **Task 1**

*In the next 5 minutes I would like you to rank these aspects in order of priority (only the 5 most important). You can also add your own.*

*Following that we will discuss your rankings in the group. (The moderator will write the most common aspects on the whiteboard).*

**How do you best support your partner?**

- Emotional support
- Support changing lifestyle
- Running errands
- Support with medication
- Accompanying them to appointments
- Encouragement

### **Follow-up questions**

What kind of support would you like to have access to in order for you to better support your partner?

Is there anything else you want to add?

### **Task 2**

(Same instructions as Task 1)

**How does supporting them (or caring for them) impact your life?**

- Work
- Leisure activities
- Social relationships
- Stress
- Housework
- Financially

### **Follow-up question**

**How did your life change since your partner developed MCCs?**

### **Closing questions**

We are developing a novel intervention for people who live with multiple chronic conditions. This intervention will consist of an

exercise program and a self-management and education component.

What would be your best advice for us?

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

### **3.4 Focus group schedule for patient advocates**

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#### **APPENDIX 4. Focus group schedule for patient organizations**

##### **Opening question**

**What do you like the most about working for your organization?**

##### **Task**

*In the next 10 minutes I would like you to identify the 5 most significant challenges that members of your organization are experiencing in relation to self-management. Please rank these aspects in order of priority.*

*Following that we will discuss your rankings in the group. (The moderator will write the most common aspects on the whiteboard).*

##### **Follow-up questions**

What are some similar issues and challenges that member of your organizations commonly encounter?

What kind of support/resources do your members need in order for them to better self-manage their conditions (s)?



## **Patient-centeredness**

We know that a patient centered approach has been associated with higher rates of satisfaction, better adherence, and better treatment, particularly in the management of chronic illness. Nevertheless, health professionals do not always guide their actions by patient-centered orientation.

What could health professionals do different to ensure a better involvement of the patients and their carers in the decision-making process?

What action can be taken to ensure more people have access to person-centered care?

How do you support patients with a lower socioeconomic background or (ethnic) minorities?

How do you train patients to become expert patients?

## **Multimorbidity**

We know that many of the people seeking support with one condition are also living with one or more other long-term conditions. And we know that too often these individuals find themselves faced with a health and care system that does not recognize the reality of how these conditions affect them

What issues do you encounter when supporting and guiding members who live with more than one chronic illness?

What could be improved in the way multimorbidity is currently being managed in the healthcare system?

What could you do together to advocating for people with multiple chronic conditions?

What can be done to increase patients' and public awareness of the issue and impact of multimorbidity?

### **Closing questions**

We are developing a novel intervention for people who live with multiple chronic conditions. This intervention will consist of an exercise program and a self-management and education component. What would be your best advice for us?

What could we as researchers do to help you fulfill your agenda? How can we be of service to you?

Is there anything you would like to add?

Thank you for your contribution.