Policy interactions during the Dutch ‘Public Health Foresight, in the light of COVID-19’

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When the sense of urgency of the COVID pandemic increased, in March 2020, the Dutch Ministry of Health commissioned RIVM to do the study "Public Health Foresight, in the light of COVID-19."
COVID-19”. The aim of this study was to analyze Impact of the corona pandemic on current and future health and health care, to support broader consideration of measures and to be better prepared in the future. This was done by addressing not only the direct impacts, e.g. the disease burden of COVID-19, but also the indirect impacts of the measures, e.g. mental health, health impacts of changed life styles and delayed health care provision. During this 8 months trajectory, interaction with policy makers was frequent and intensive. In the context of Parliamentary elections there were constant pressures on policymakers from the virologists and hospital and ICU ward managers; as well as non-health Ministers in the government cabinet and the general public questioning decisions on whether to act or not. In the presentation we draw implications for public health experts on do’s and don’ts in interaction with policymakers.