



# Towards better health systems' preparedness and response: existing gaps and solutions

Health Management in action:  
Fostering health systems' resilience

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An EHMA Webinar Series

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#EHMAWebinars



# Our speaker

## Prof. Steve Thomas

Edward Kennedy Chair of Health Policy and Management and Director of Health Policy and Engagement for the School of Medicine in Trinity College Dublin. Health Research Board Research Leader with the RESTORE programme, focussed on health system resilience and reform.



This webinar is co-funded by the EU4Health Programme of the European Union. Views and opinions are of the speakers only.



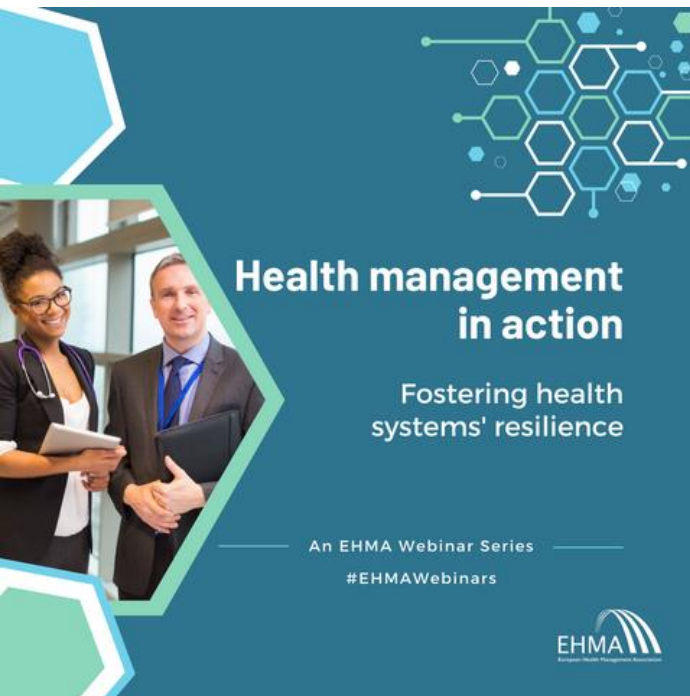
# Agenda

- **13.30- 13.40 (10 minutes):** Welcome and introduction
- **13.40 - 14:00 (20 minutes):** Presentation on “Living with Permacrisis: Health System resilience into the next shock” with Prof Steve Thomas
- **14.00 - 14.15 (15 minutes):** Q & A



## About this webinar series

Our webinar series, 'Health Management in action: fostering health systems' resilience', discusses **health management topics** that are crucial **to improve health systems preparedness and response**.




The graphic features a dark teal background with a network of hexagons and lines in light blue and green. On the left, a photograph shows a woman in a white lab coat and glasses holding a tablet, standing next to a man in a dark suit and blue tie. The text is white and positioned to the right of the photo.

**Health management  
in action**

Fostering health  
systems' resilience

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EHMA  
European Health Management Association



# About EHMA

**OUR VISION** is excellent health management for a healthy Europe.

**OUR MISSION** is to support the spread of knowledge on effective health management.

**OUR VALUES** are excellence, quality, inclusiveness, relevance, and respect.





- We are the **only membership organisation in Europe** to bring together the full health management ecosystem.
- We are a recognised and respected **amplifier of best practices** in the evolution of health management.
- We provide an environment where **evidence, challenge and experience are valued**, and complex debates on current topics can take place.



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The University of Dublin



# Living with Permacrisis: Health system resilience into the next shock

Prof Steve Thomas

Edward Kennedy Professor of Health Policy and Management

**With thanks to**

**Padraic Fleming, Catherine O'Donoghue, Arianna Almirall-Sanchez, Liz Farsaci**



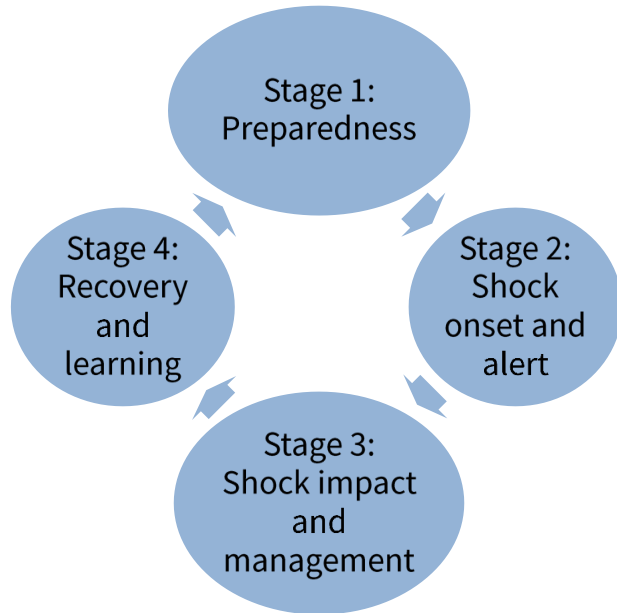


## Scope

- **Health system resilience and the shock cycle**
- **Recognising where we are**
- **Legacy of COVID-19**
- **Learning from the previous economic crisis**
- **Preparedness for the next shock**



# Health System Resilience and the Shock Cycle



**Resilient health systems are those that are able to manage well each stage of the shock cycle.**

**Health system resilience is the ability to:**

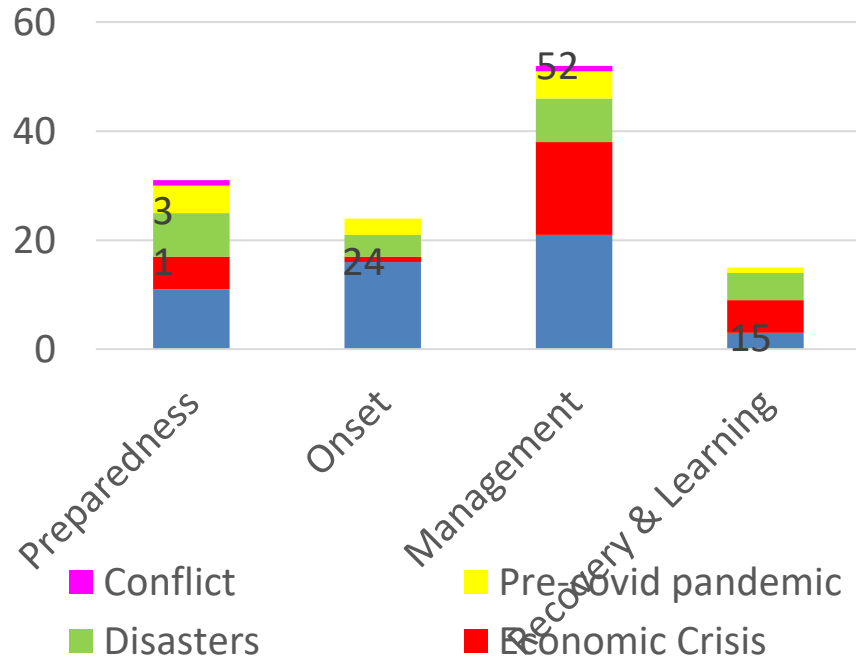
- Prepare for
- Identify
- Manage (absorb, adapt and transform), and
- Recover and learn from

Shocks to improve health system performance

<https://www.euro.who.int/en/about-us/partners/observatory/publications/policy-briefs-and-summaries/strengthening-health-systems-resilience-key-concepts-and-strategies-2020>



## Shock Cycle Stages



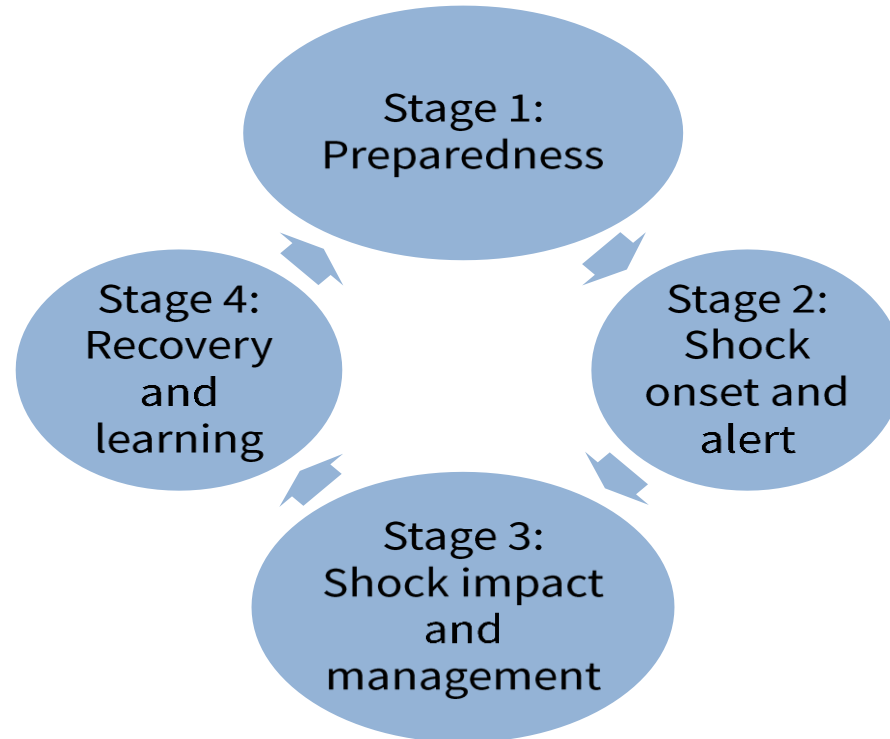
Health Policy  
Available online 13 October 2022  
In Press, Corrected Proof



Metrics and indicators used to assess health system resilience in response to shocks to health systems in high income countries—A systematic review

Pádraic Fleming<sup>a,\*,</sup> Catherine O'Donoghue<sup>a,</sup> Arianna Almirall-Sanchez<sup>a,</sup> David Mockler<sup>b,</sup> Conor Keegan<sup>c,</sup> Jon Cylus<sup>d,</sup> Anna Sagan<sup>d,</sup> Steve Thomas<sup>a</sup>

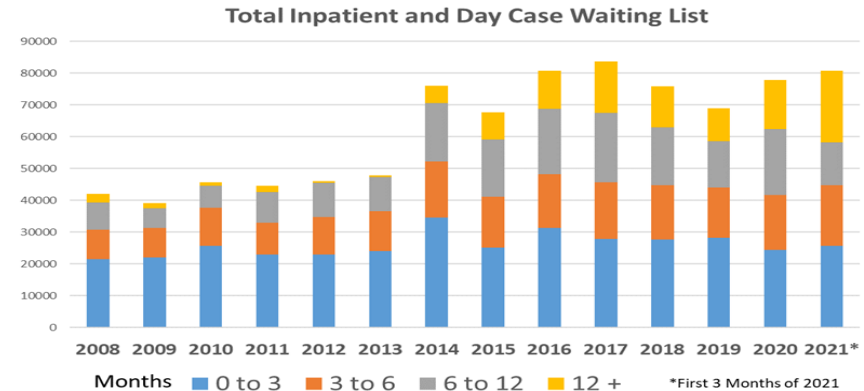
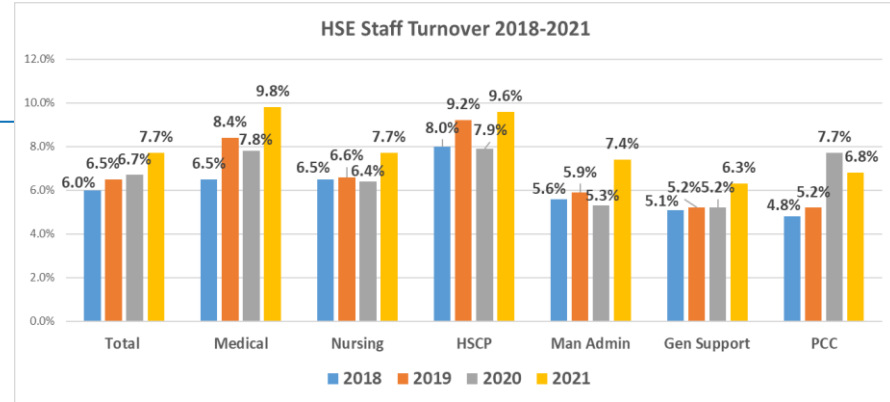
## Where are we now?



## Building from COVID-19 Legacy

### Known knows

- Staff Turnover
- Waiting Lists/Backlog
- The contested space of finance
  - Post COVID grab for health money



### Governance muscle

- Decisive action at all levels
  - Lockdowns, emergency measures,
  - innovative facility management,
  - uptake of telemedicine,
- International collaborative action
  - Surveillance,
  - Procurement,
  - Funding,
  - Learning and sharing



### Learning as we go

- **The need for fast decision-making based on limited information**

*“Once the emergency is over, I think the people who made an awful lot of right decisions will end up getting kicked up and down the street for the few they got wrong. And we needed them to be prepared to make a few wrong decisions in order to make decisions quickly enough .... There is no criteria, however, that says you have to get everything...right. Because if you take long enough to be certain that the decisions you're making are right,... you've taken too long” (Public Sector Manager, PRESTO report)*

- **Agility and Reversibility**

# How International Health System Austerity Responses to the 2008 Financial Crisis Impacted Health System and Workforce Resilience – A Realist Review (In Print)

## CMOCs emerging from 'phase 1' analysis

1. **Top-down governance** - lack of ownership and buy-in from those delivering care and a distrust of the decision-making agenda. [transparency]
2. **Perceived value shift** - a diminished view of the profession, apathetic and burnt-out. [values]
3. **Powerless and detached** - a resistance to change and conflict between front line workers and policy decision makers / management. [autonomy, empowerment]
4. **Working the system (access)** - strain on frontline workers, increases ER use but more stable health outcomes than originally predicted. [moral distress, street level bureaucrats]
5. **Health-seeking behaviour change** - led to reduction in primary care usage, increased emergency care, medication mismanagement, delayed treatment. [health literacy]



## Facing forward: into the next shock



## What is it?

### Complex Shock

- Cost of Living Crisis (fuel, food, recession, stagflation?)
- Refugees/Migration
- War

## What to do – Preparedness for Complex Cost of Living Crisis

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- 1. Introduce registries for people who are vulnerable to energy price hikes so that appropriate remedial action can be fast-tracked for these groups.**
  - Fuel poverty and ill-health
- 2. Secure financial protection of health services and health facilities from cost hikes (e.g. extra funds for energy, fuel etc)**
  - Public and private contracted
- 3. Consider dropping access costs/implementing free care for health care to preserve access to healthcare**
  - including migrants
- 4. Beef up Information systems for austerity**

## Concluding Thoughts

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- **Get used to crises**
- **COVID gave us...**
  - Governance muscle (national and international)
  - Practice at high-pressure, fast decision-making
- **Previous austerity didn't protect HR**
  - Open, honest, values and trust
- **Next Crisis:**
  - Targeted resource deployment to protect vulnerable, access and providers

## References

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**Fleming, P., O'Donoghue, C., Almirall-Sanchez, A., Mockler, D., Keegan, C., Cylus, J., . . . Thomas, S. (2022). Metrics and Indicators Used to Assess Health System Resilience in Response to Shocks to Health Systems in High Income Countries - A Systematic Review. Health Policy. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthpol.2022.10.001>**

**Sagan, A., Thomas, S., McKee, M., Karanikolos, M., Azzopardi-Muscat, N., de la Mata, I., & Figueras, J. (2020). COVID-19 and Health Systems Resilience: Lessons going forward. Eurohealth, 26(2), 20-24.**

**Thomas, S., Sagan, A., Larkin, J., Cylus, J., Figueras, J., & Karanikolos, M. (2020). Strengthening health systems resilience: Key concepts and strategies Retrieved from WHO, Denmark: <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/332441/Policy-brief%2036-1997-8073-eng.pdf>**

[https://www.tcd.ie/medicine/health\\_policy\\_management/research/current/restore/](https://www.tcd.ie/medicine/health_policy_management/research/current/restore/)



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**Thank You**



# Q & A

Type your questions in the chat box  
or raise your hand to ask your question live.



# 90-second survey

Your feedback is important to us,  
as it helps us shape and improve our webinars





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# Next webinar

## The Legacy of COVID-19

**When: Mon., 7 November 2022, 13.30-14.15 CEST**



### The legacy of COVID-19

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